

**Missouri Alliance for Full Participation**  
**One Person at a Time: Take your Legislator to Work Event**  
Frequently Asked Questions

**Q. What is the AFP?**

**A.** The Alliance for Full Participation (AFP) is a national effort, made up of a wide variety of national and local organizations that advocate for people with disabilities with the singular goal of doubling integrated, community-based, competitive employment for persons with disabilities by 2015.

**Q. What is National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM)?**

**A.** NDEAM in its current form was established by Congress in 1988. It has been under the direction of the Labor Department's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) since 2001. During the month of October, stakeholders nationwide work together to promote awareness about the talents and skills of workers with disabilities. This year's theme is **"A Strong Workforce is an Inclusive Workforce: What Can YOU Do?"** AFP plans to promote this theme through this campaign by giving workers with disabilities the opportunity to demonstrate what they can do.

**Q. What is integrated, community-based, competitive employment?**

**A.** This is defined as when a worker with a disability has a job in a community-based business, where he or she works side-by-side with other employees without disabilities, with the same expectations, responsibilities and pay as other the employees.

**Q. What is the Missouri Alliance for Full Participation?**

**A.** The Missouri AFP (MO AFP) has a similar make up as national AFP. Its membership includes over 20 organizations in Missouri that support people with disabilities. Your Missouri AFP is making every effort to double the number of individuals with disabilities who are employed in integrated, community-based, competitive employment in Missouri.

**Q. What is the "One Person at a Time: Take Your Legislator to Work" event?**

**A.** This event was designed to help give you the tools to actively engage your legislator and/or the candidates running in your district. The MO AFP is asking individual employees to invite **their** legislator or a legislative candidate to a very short visit at their place of employment, any time during the month of October. When workers with disabilities have the chance to showcase their abilities and contributions to their community, the rest of the state will take notice. The MO AFP strongly believes that if each legislator visits with at least one person with a disability **in their district**, they will come away with a greater understanding of the issues around employment for people with disabilities.

**Q. Why are we scheduling the visit in October?**

**A.** October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month. MO AFP believes that a concentrated effort during this month will help jumpstart conversations about employment throughout the state.

**Q. How can I find out which legislator represents the employee I'm working with?**

**A.** The Secretary of State for Missouri has a web site, [www.sos.mo.gov/](http://www.sos.mo.gov/).

**Q. What if they can't come in October, but could come another time?**

**A.** Be flexible. While October is the preferred month, the more important thing to focus on is getting

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the conversation flowing between you and your legislator. The earlier you start planning your visit, the better chance you'll have at finding an October date that works best for everyone.

**Q. How will the MO AFP get the word out about this event?**

**A.** This is where you and your network are incredibly important. The MO AFP will rely on its many partners (like you) to spread the word to their membership and promote this event.

**Q. What supports will the MO AFP provide to assist in making this event successful?**

**A.** The MO AFP has developed two guides to support this event, the *Facilitator's Guide* and the *Participant's Guide*. In these guides, you'll find tips and tools to help you as you plan your unique event. If you're still feeling uncertain, you are welcome to contact Charles "Chaz" Nickolaus at [CNickolaus@mpcdd.com](mailto:CNickolaus@mpcdd.com) or Liz Sensintaffar at [lsensintaffar@woodhaventeam.org](mailto:lsensintaffar@woodhaventeam.org) with any additional questions. We want you to be confident and successful.

**Q. What is the facilitator?**

**A.** The *facilitator* is the individual or group who assists the MO AFP by indentifying the employee and asking them to participate in this event. The facilitator is also responsible for sending the *Participant Info Sheet* back to MO AFP.

A facilitator could be a provider, friend, family member or just an individual. The facilitator should encourage the participant to be as independent as possible in arranging the details of this event, but also be willing and available to provide supports to the participating worker as necessary.

**Q. Can I identify more than one person in my district to participate in this event?**

**A.** The focus of this event is to change the way Missourians think about employment for workers with disabilities "one legislator, one job, one person at a time." However, this does not mean that you can only choose one. You may find that there are multiple individuals in your district who are enthusiastic about sharing their experiences. If you run into this situation, it is up to you how to proceed. Whether you find one or twenty participants in your district, there are a few key factors you should consider:

1. Does the person actually live in the district in question?
2. Is the person employed in an integrated, community-based, competitive setting?
3. Can the person enthusiastically and positively talk about their work experiences?
4. Is the person comfortable with engaging in conversation with their legislator or legislative candidate?
5. (Added Bonus) is the person registered to vote in the district in question?

**Q. What if more than one facilitator contacts the same legislator in a particular district?**

**A.** That's awesome! Giving the legislator multiple opportunities to participate in this campaign is fantastic. It will be up to the legislator to decide what will fit his or her schedule best. Just make sure you are contacting the legislator or legislative candidate who represents the employee you are working with and start planning as early as you can.

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**Q. Who is the participant?**

**A.** The participant is the actual employee with a disability. The focus of the AFP and NDEAM is to promote employment in integrated, community-based, competitive jobs. We want to showcase all that these workers are capable of when given the chance to succeed.

The participant should be encouraged to be as independent as possible in making the arrangements on their own. If the participant would like support in making some or all of the arrangements, the facilitator should be available to provide these supports.

**Q. What are the participant's responsibilities?**

**A.** The participant should be responsible for securing permission from their employer to host a visit, inviting the legislator and/or candidate, and making any other necessary preparations for the visit. For more details, please refer to the *Participant's Guide*.

**Q. How can the participant prepare for the legislators visit?**

**A.** Please refer to the *Participant's Guide* for a comprehensive list of ideas and suggestions about how to properly prepare for your visit. If you need a copy of the guide, please contact Charles "Chaz" Nickolaus at [CNickolaus@mpcdd.com](mailto:CNickolaus@mpcdd.com) or Liz Sensintaffar at [lsensintaffar@woodhaventeam.org](mailto:lsensintaffar@woodhaventeam.org).

**Q. Who should be responsible for contacting the media?**

**A.** After you have confirmed your visit, you may want to talk to your legislator and/or his or her staff about inviting the media. Because this is an election year, and in October elections are quite literally "just around the corner," they may want to take charge of inviting the media to the event.

If you work at a larger company with a media or public relations department, you should also discuss a media visit with them. By working with them you can rely on their already established relationships, and make sure you aren't breaking any rules.

As a participant, you can also take charge on your own to contact the media in your area. An example of how to write a press release is included in both the *Facilitator's* and the *Participant's Guide* for your convenience.