

Employment

The unemployment rate for people with disabilities is nearly three times higher than the unemployment rate of people without disabilities. Federal law allows people with disabilities to be paid a subminimum wage if they have a disability. Some states, including New Hampshire, have outlawed this practice.

Q: What are your views on paying a subminimum wage based on disability?

Assistive Technology

Accessible mainstream communication and information technologies, as well as assistive and adaptive technologies, allow people with disabilities to secure and maintain employment, exercise their right to vote, participate in educational activities, and experience entertainment as readily as people without disabilities. Assistive technology can have a dramatic impact on the quality of life and independence for people with disabilities, but funding for the equipment is often limited.

Q: What do you plan to do to increase access to assistive technology for people with disabilities who need it to effectively and independently engage in their communities?

Special Education

Due to the enactment and implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), high school graduation rates for people with disabilities have increased 45% since 1995, with an associated decrease in dropout rates. Similarly, enrollment in college has doubled for students with disabilities. Nevertheless, local school districts struggle to serve students with disabilities, and those seeking higher education continue to face enormous barriers to success.

Q: How would you propose to strengthen the IDEA when it is reauthorized so that it truly fulfills its stated purpose of preparing children with disabilities for post-secondary education, employment, and independent living, including children with the most significant disabilities?

Mental Health Services

Across the United States, including in New Hampshire, officials struggle to meet the mental health needs of adults and children.

Q: What is your vision for a system of services to support people with mental illness?

Workforce Shortage

Individuals with disabilities often rely on direct support professionals (DSPs) to provide them with critical supports. Despite the growing demand for DSPs, there are hundreds of vacant positions in New Hampshire and the turnover rate hovers around 30%. New Hampshire also has one of the oldest populations in the nation with the trend predicted to continue for years to come. There is a growing imbalance in the Granite State and nationwide between those needing care to remain in the community and workers to provide that care.

Q: Please explain how you would address this immediate and growing workforce shortage.

Please enter your responses directly into our on-line portal available at
drcnh.org/2020-presidential-primary-candidate-survey-on-disability
Please submit responses by Friday June 7, 2019