

Presenter Bios:

Melanie Honsbruch:

Benefits Counseling; Curriculum Developer & Trainer, Colorado Office of Employment First (COEF)

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Melanie Honsbruch, CPWIC, is a Curriculum Developer / Trainer specializing in Benefits Planning, for the Colorado Office of Employment First. She has worked for 21 years providing Colorado communities, persons with disabilities and their families' information on accessing benefits, navigating community systems, and the interactions between public benefits and employment. Melanie strives to increase access to Benefits Planning services throughout Colorado, and support those that provide the service. Melanie has been a member of the Colorado Association of People Supporting Employment First (Colorado APSE) and served on the Benefits Planning Subcommittee since 2017.

Lee Sylvester:

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Lee Sylvester, WIP-C, Employment Services Administrator, Developmental Disabilities Resource Center (DDRC). Lee has been a member of APSE for over 10 years and more active with the Benefits Navigation committee since 2023. He is currently leading DDRC's rollout of benefits planning support for both DVR and HCBS Waivers. He is a graduate of the Emerging Leaders Program and has supported statewide efforts in Customized Employment, Community Inclusion, and Employment First strategies through his current position and previous roles at other organizations.