

Employment for Individuals with Disabilities – An Overview

New Mexico

Supports are available to help people with disabilities work and earn wages

People with intellectual and developmental disabilities can work with co-workers who may or may not have disabilities and earn competitive wages. There are many ways to support someone with a disability who is looking for a job and as they gain skills to keep a job. These could include Supported Employment, Customized Employment, and/or Self Employment. Contact NM DVR to learn more.

A **Supported Employment** approach provides support to an individual to be successful in a job. Support services could include a Job Developer to search and assist searching for and applying for existing jobs. A Job Coach can provide on-the-job training to develop new skills, learn job tasks and provide on-going support, decreasing assistance as the individual gains new skills.

A **Customized Employment** approach often works well for people with complex disabilities or other obstacles to employment. This can be the most effective method, as the job itself is individualized for the job seeker. It starts with a Discovery process where the Job Developer works with those who know the job seeker to identify their interests, strengths, and conditions. Businesses and employers are interviewed to find their unmet needs, and to see if this could be a good match for the job seeker.

Self-Employment or Microenterprise may be an option for employment. Someone who is self-employed owns their own business. Through the process of Discovery, the interests and strengths of the job-seeker are identified, and a plan is developed for setting up a small business or a microenterprise. NM Small Business Development Center (NMSBDC), or other community organization, may be able to help individuals develop a formal business plan. This can be very helpful in determining what will be needed.

Self-employment provides people with disabilities the opportunity to create and manage their own work, increase their independence and work according to their own schedule. Examples of a microenterprise or self-employment include:

- Owning a popcorn stand
- Selling a specific product at local events
- Making a product to sell online or at local events

What assistance does a Job Developer provide?

Job Developers identify jobs that match the job seekers interests, skills, needed supports and the unmet needs of a potential employer. They might provide assistance to develop a resume, complete job applications, call potential employers, search for job opportunities and job fairs, etc.

How do Job Coaches help?

Employers teach the job skills and the job coach supports those skills with reminders, checklists and assistance as needed on the job. Examples might include:

- Coaching someone to stock items in a grocery store, and providing assistance.
- Setting up a work station for folding sheets and towels for someone who works at a hotel laundry service.
- Teaching and assisting an individual to clean and sanitize toys, chairs, and/or equipment in a library, fitness center, or doctor's office.



NM DVR

1-800-224-7005

www.dvrgetsjobs.com

NM Small Business Development Center (NMSBDC)

800 281-7232

www.nmsbc.org

Helpful Videos:

Supported Employment Process

<https://youtu.be/0V04MwKm0fQ>

Customized Employment and Discovery

<https://youtu.be/G86GpkfMneg>

and

<https://youtu.be/FPIeCubuPo>

Self-Employment and/or Microenterprise

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2vhBSqnGDZU>

and

<https://youtu.be/PsF9fs5DFIc>

and

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xv2xf63KGJ0>

Questions?

Call the CDD Information Network

1-800-552-8195

or visit our website at <https://goto.unm.edu/x8gmt>

Informational Tip Sheets: