



Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board

Supported Employment Resources

*Transforming lives through
supported employment and
supported education services*

November 2018

Welcome to the CSB Supported Employment resource services!

We are glad that you found us. We are here to help you work towards life goals that involve:

- Getting and keeping a job.
- Learning about career choices and barriers to employment.
- Volunteering in the community.
- Completing your GED.
- Continuing your education through college or industry certification.

The CSB follows an Individual Supported Employment model based on evidence-based practices. Our Supported Employment program helps people with disabilities participate in the competitive labor market, helping them find meaningful jobs and providing ongoing support with a team-based approach. If you choose to work with our program, you will work with an employment specialist – sometimes called a workforce specialist or job coach – to help you find and maintain employment.



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**Community
Services Board**

Supported Employment principles

- Participation is based on your choice. No one is prevented from participating and no one is forced to participate in our program.
- We believe in team work. This often means that we meet with you and your case worker, residential counselor, and other important people in your life to make sure that we are all on the same page working toward your goals.
- We are here to help you find a competitive job that pays at least minimum wage and that is open to anyone in the public.
- We will work with you to start a job search almost immediately, as soon as we complete the intake and better understand your interests and skills.
- We will provide you with continuous support until you tell us you no longer need our help.
- Together we will find a job based on your skills, education, work experience, desired location and other personal preferences.

What about getting help with going back to school?

In addition to Supported Employment Services, the team also offers Supported Education Services. We can assist you with taking steps to reach your educational goals whether you want to sign up for GED classes, classes at the local NOVA Community College campus, or a 4-year institution. We can help you explore other training options as well. This is a relatively new service that we provide, which includes:

- Helping to fill out college applications.
- Going with you to local colleges for tours and admission interviews.
- Helping make connections to disability services offices at local colleges.
- Assisting with filling out financial aid applications and going with you to college financial aid offices.
- Assisting with finding educational tutors and study preparation assistance.

- Assisting with finding adult education classes.
- Assisting with finding GED classes.
- Assisting with preparation for the written driver's license test.

What is the role of my assigned employment specialist?

You will meet with an employment specialist (ES) and your case manager for an initial intake appointment. At this appointment, your ES will talk with you and your case manager about your educational and job goals. They will ask you a lot of questions to find out about your experience and work history, and what your goals, hopes and dreams are for your future.

Your ES works as a coach helping you to reach your employment goals. They will explore available job options with you based on your skills and experience. They will help you prepare a résumé, fill out job applications, figure out what to wear and help you practice for an interview. They will guide your efforts and match the amount of effort you are giving in your job search.

It is not employment specialist's job to give you a job, but to help you better navigate the path toward getting your own job. If you want someone to get you a job or give you a job, then it might be better to contact a job placement agency or a temporary job placement agency. Your ES can give you information on this as well.

How do I get a job coach or employment specialist?

Talk to your CSB case worker about your desire to get a job. They can fill out a referral for you to receive CSB Employment Services.

What if I'm not receiving CSB services but have a serious mental illness or substance use issue and live in Fairfax County?

If you are a resident of Fairfax County or the cities of Fairfax or Falls Church and you are receiving services from an outside service provider for mental health or substance use problems, you may access CSB supported employment services. To do so, call CSB Entry and Referral at 703-383-8500 and state that you would like a

referral to CSB Integrated Referral and Transition Team (IRTT) Supported Employment Services for one-on-one job coaching.

Setting your job goals

Some people come to us knowing very clearly what their goals are regarding employment, career development, and educational pursuits, while others are not sure what they want to do but know that they want something else in life. For those of you who are not sure what you want, our employment specialists will meet with you to talk about your interests, your strengths, your weaknesses, your values, your desires, your hopes and dreams. The staff you are assigned to may ask you to complete a range of assessment tools and interest inventories. They may ask you to go on some informational interviews. They may ask you to do a situational assessment where you go and try out a job for a day or two to see if it really fits what you are looking for.

Getting a job

Once you have decided on the type of job you would like to have, staff will work one-on-one with you to find that type of job in a location that is close to you. Job-seeking activities we'll work with you on might include:

- Contacting employers who are actively hiring.
- Seeking out hidden job opportunities.
- Helping you develop a résumé.
- Helping you prepare for possible interview activities.
- Helping you put together clothing for interviews.
- Helping you find transportation options to and from possible jobs.
- Helping you fill out online and in-person job applications.
- Helping you figure out who to use as references on job applications.
- Helping you figure out if a particular job will fit with your schedule.
- Helping you determine if you need additional education to keep a job or get a new one.

Keeping your job

There are many components associated with keeping a job. We can provide support to help you with things like:

- Negotiating work hours and pay.
- Showing up on time.
- Attending as scheduled.
- Understanding all the tasks of your job.
- Communicating effectively with your boss and coworkers.
- Understanding the politics of the workplace.
- Becoming an expert at your job.
- Providing excellent customer service.
- Managing stress on the job.
- Dealing with feelings related to wanting to quit a job.

Long-term support

Getting a job isn't the end of the employment process, it is really just the beginning. Once you have a job, your supported employment specialist generally checks in with you once a month to see how things are going and to talk about the various components of keeping your job. At times, long term support can revert to active job seeking. Or you may decide after you are at a job for a while that you would like to work on getting a promotion or look for a different job. When your circumstances change, staff can provide more support to help you reach your goals. Starting a job may spark a whole new career perspective! Consider the following:

- We will provide support to you if you desire to advance at your job. This may include helping you to decide whether you want to take on advanced/or greater responsibilities, obtaining additional training and other challenges that come with job advancement. We can walk you through the pros and cons and the steps needed to gain additional education and or experience to advance.
- If you are seeking a *career*, not just a *job*, we will talk with you about your future personal goals and not restrict them to just the job at hand.
- If you would like us to, we will talk to your employer to get feedback on your performance and help you learn how to build a career at your current place of employment if that is your desire. Career success is

dependent on the individual employee as well as the employer, and the feedback of other stakeholders is important.

Where are Supported Employment services provided and who works there?

Employment Specialists work in a variety of locations throughout the county. Staff have offices in each of the county outpatient mental health facilities, however most staff meet with the clients in the community near the locations where they reside or want to work. Staff often meet with people in places like the library, Starbucks, Panera, community-based Skill Source centers and drop-in centers. The CSB has a collaborative relationship with supported employment vendors in the community, who work side by side with CSB employees to provide supported employment services.

The county outpatient mental health centers are:

- Merrifield Center, 8221 Willow Oaks Corporate Drive, Fairfax, VA 22031
- Heritage Center, 7611 Little River Turnpike, Suite 200, Annandale, VA 22003
- Gartlan Center, 8119 Holland Road, Alexandria, VA 22306
- Chantilly, 14150 Parkeast Circle, Suite 200, Chantilly, VA 20151
- Northwest Center, 1850 Cameron Glen Drive, Suite 600, Reston, VA 20190

What else?

You may have questions that haven't been covered so far. Here are some questions we hear frequently – if you need more information, please let us know.

Q: People tell me not to work because it will be too stressful. Is that true?

A: Work is a part of recovery. If getting a job is your goal, we will help you reach that goal. We will discuss ways to help you get back into the job market and to deal with stressors related to work.

Q: If I work will I lose my benefits?

A: We will work carefully with you around your benefits. We can refer you to a professional benefits counselor who will help you understand the impact of receiving a pay check on your benefits.

Q: Can you get me a job that pays me \$65,000 a year?

A: That all depends on your qualifications. We have helped people get salaries in that range. These folks however are highly educated and have lots of good experience in their desired field of work. The salary that you get is contingent upon your education, experience and references.

Q: Do I have to let employers know about my disability?

A: You are not required to tell employers about your disability. That is an individual choice that we will discuss with you. Sometimes there are benefits of having your employment specialist contact your employer on your behalf, accompany you to interviews, and talk to the employer about the kind of support we can offer both you and them while you work at your job. We will gladly talk more with you about your concerns around this decision.

Q: Can you help me get my driver's license?

A: We can help you study for the written portion of your driver's license. If you have a license but have misplaced it, we can assist you with getting the replacement forms filled out at the Department of Motor Vehicles. We also can assist you with getting a non-driver's identification card at the DMV. We cannot pay for your license nor can we assist you with the in-car portion of preparing for the driving test.

Q: Can you help me get my green card?

A: Before you are referred for Supported Employment services, you should already have a "green card," also known as a Permanent Resident Card. Your case manager can help you get a green card.

Q: I want to start my own business. Can you help?

A: Staff can help you find classes and see what is available in the community to help with starting a

business. In the past, staff have offered guidance for starting businesses like dog walking, day care and web development.

Q: Can you help me learn computer skills?

A: Our staff can work with you on setting up an email account and filling out applications electronically. We can also help connect you with resources in the community that focus on developing computer skills.

Q: I've heard about "DARS" – what is that?

A: DARS is the Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services (www.vadars.org). We work collaboratively with DARS; in most cases when you are referred to us you are also referred to DARS, unless you specifically state that you do not want a DARS referral. We provide up-front support and often by the time DARS is ready to open your case, you may already be employed. Once your case is open/eligible with DARS, CSB employment services will transition you to all DARS services.

Additional questions, comments or suggestions for employment collaborations?

- Contact Lori Bell, Mental Health Manager, Contracts and Employment Services: Lori.Bell@fairfaxcounty.gov, 703-324-7009.