

## What is Supported Employment?

Most people with developmental disabilities want to participate in their communities as productive citizens and coworkers. Supported Employment provides the added support a person with developmental disabilities needs in order to **get** and **keep** a job. Commonly known as Integrated Employment, these programs market an individual's job skills to local businesses who directly pay the employee a taxable minimum wage or higher. We provide varying degrees of job coaching and instruction to both the individual and co-workers; helping to promote independent and self-sufficient members of our community.

## Why Does Employment for Individuals With Developmental Disabilities Matter?

- Results in cost savings in paid state benefits (medical and financial)
- Is a required service option for all individuals on the federal waiver program, and captures federal match on state funds
- Supports individuals to become taxpaying citizens, participants and contributors to their community; promotes self-sufficiency and reduces reliance on other state funded services
- Increases independence, which assists families to meet respite needs
- Supports businesses and communities to be in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act through technical assistance and education associated with supported employment

“Think of the person not as someone with developmental disabilities but as someone with diverse abilities. In my experience, those diverse abilities have included: almost fanatical attention to detail, loyalty to the organization, consistency with work output, ability to help instill a team environment, and a very strong attendance record.

Brian K - District Manager, Safeway”

## How Does Supported Employment Services Fit With Other Available Services?

- The Washington State Legislature affirmed the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) focus on employment in 2012. Legislation included the stipulation that those not successful in finding a job after 9 months may choose community based, non-work support services (also called Community Access)
- In addition to employment and Community Access services provided through the County, DDA provides other supports to eligible individuals to live in the community. Individuals complete an assessment process to determine their support needs
- Individuals with higher support needs work fewer hours on average, but typically receive more personal care and respite support (Source: WA State Auditor's report No. 1009938)

“Having the supported employee has helped pick up the slack around here.  
**It helps us be more efficient and keeps our store up to par.**

Subway, Bremerton”

## Who Provides Supported Employment Services?

Counties contract with accredited vocational agencies using state general funds and Medicaid match. These agencies hire and train staff to work with local employers to identify staffing needs and market individuals with developmental disabilities. Staff are trained to safely and effectively support individuals within the work environment and increase the individual's independence on the job.



Not only have **we gained an efficient, detail oriented worker**, but we have gained a valued member of the Connelly Law family **whose impact has greatly affected every member of our staff for the better**. Our employee provides hard work, dedication, and a sense of humor that is unmatched.

Connelly Law Offices, PLLC, Tacoma



## What Factors Influence Employment Outcomes? (i.e. getting a job)

- State policy and practices which support integrated employment
- Quality of vocational providers and their staff
- Individual and family support for and participation in employment search
- Local employment markets (More rural communities typically lack the breadth of employment opportunities)
- Transportation and other resources which differ between communities
- Training & technical assistance



We all have the right to work, if we want to work. A disability does not mean no ability.

Dea Itterley - Operations Manager  
Bishop Victorian Swan Hotel, Port Townsend, WA

