

# Family Guide for Selecting an Employment Service Agency

This guide is intended to help you prepare for an informed conversation with employment service agencies to help you determine which may be a good fit for your student. These questions are **only a guide**. Think about your student's interests, talents, and skills along with the best support he or she needs to be successful.

## Before you Begin

- King County provides a list of approved School-to-Work (S2W) employment service agencies that includes contact information.
- Employment service agencies (Agencies) are often referred to as “vendors”, “providers”, or CRPs (Community Rehabilitation Programs).
- Agencies are also interviewing you. Employment services are not an entitlement like school.
- Select an agency as soon as possible. Agency capacity to serve all students is often not available as students begin their 21<sup>st</sup> school year.
- Some school districts, through a competitive public process, have already selected an agency to serve students in their transition program. King County provides a grid as a guide or ask King County staff to be sure.
- Interview at least 3 agencies if your school district has not already selected one for their transition program.
- You may come up with more questions as you go along. It is OK to meet with agency staff more than once!
- King County staff are available to help answer questions: **Search “King County School-to-Work Program”** for program information, documentation and staff contacts.

## Sample Interview Questions

### About the Employment Agency

- How many years has your agency been in operation? Do you have other services than employment?
- How long has your agency been contracted by King County to provide S2W services?
- What would you say is your agency's most notable accomplishment? Anything else to share?
- How many job coaches does your agency employ? How many serve King County S2W students? Do they serve other individuals, or focus on transition age?
- How many years of experience do your S2W staff have?
- How often do you experience staff turnover? How long can my student expect the same staff supporting them?
- Does your organization anticipate any changes in the near future (expansion, new contracts, reductions in services, etc.)?
- What training do your job developers and job coaches have?
- Why do you think people with intellectual/developmental disabilities can or should work?

### Working with Schools

- What are the primary school districts you serve? How long have you served students there?
- What would the schools and teachers you work with say about your organization and services?
- How do you keep teachers informed of services? How often?
- What information do you gather from school and the transition program?
- Do you provide other work experiences for students beyond internships developed by the school?
- Do you attend IEPs? Why or why not?

- Are there ways you work with schools and teachers to improve their transition program and services?
- Have you had past differences with a school or teacher? If so, how did you resolve the situation? Do you still work with that school?

### **Working with Families**

- Would you be willing to interview with us at our home?
- Can I come to your organization? Can I meet with agency directors?
- If I have a concern with services, how does your agency address them? Who do I contact?
- How do you help families understand employment services?
- Do you provide training for employers, employees or family members?
- How do you keep families informed of services? How often?
- What do you want and need from families to help students get employed?
- What are the steps I need to know to sign my student up with your agency?

### **Working with Students**

- Are you the person who will work with my student? If not, how do you make sure students are a good fit with your staff?
- What kind of activities do you do with students to get to know them?
- What are your resources and ability to serve students who need extra or specialized support (e.g. behavior, communication, etc.)?
- What is your overall approach to job development?
- How does your agency develop job leads for individual S2W students? Does it change for different students?
- Will the job developer also provide on-the-job training or will another staff person be hired to do so?
- How long do you usually provide job coaching for a new worker Do you develop natural support (those other than paid support for students)?
- Describe factors you consider when seeking a match between a student and an employer?
- How long are S2W students served by your agency?
- Do you help support or develop transportation services for the student when a placement has been determined?

### **Service Levels and Outcomes**

- How many people does your agency serve in supported employment? How many are S2W students?
- What is your S2W job placement rate?
- What is the average amount of time it takes for a student to get a job?
- How long do students remain employed? Do they progress into new jobs?
- How many hours of work per week does your agency average for S2W students?
- How many employers do you have right now with supported employees?
- Who are some of the employers that have hired S2W students? What types of jobs?
- How long do your students typically continue services after S2W?