

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES – GENERAL OVERVIEW

Scope of Services

Program Purpose

Ability KC's Employment Services Department provides a variety of services designed to help participants find and keep employment that matches their abilities, strengths, needs and interests.

Services are designed for adults (and transition students age 16 and older) who experience a disability that impacts their ability to select, secure or retain employment. In addition, many participants experience the consequences of limited economic resources and/or vocational preparation. Some common issues presented include:

- Unemployment or underemployment
- Unknown employment needs or potential
- Unclear vocational goals
- Lack of knowledge regarding vocational/community options
- Lack of marketable work skills
- Poor job seeking skills
- Poor work habits
- Poor independent living support systems or skills
- Uncertain of technology which may be helpful in a job setting

The mission of Ability KC is to serve people with disabilities, but services focus on the strengths, abilities and choices of the people we serve, not the disability.

Services Offered

The hours of operation typically range from 8:00am – 5:00pm but may include evenings or nights depending upon the needs of the employer and the person served. Days of service can range from Monday through Sunday but are typically from Monday – Friday. Ability KC provides employment services throughout four locations: Kansas City, Warrensburg, Clinton and Sedalia. In addition, Summer Work Experience Programs are provided in Clay County. The following services and supports may be selected by the participant to meet his/her individual needs. We currently offer:

- Discovery/Exploration Assessment and Aptitude Testing
- Consulting Services (business and private insurance referrals) ex: Iconex
- Employer Work Training Programs (Iconex)
- Employment Services for participants with TBI
- Job Placement
- On-The-Job Supports
- Organizational Employment (Ability KC Industries)
- Supported Employment
- Transition to Employment Services for Medical Patients

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These services include the following individual activities:

Services Offered:

Services are provided in Ability KC office and in the community, depending on the location of the individual's served. The following professionals provide the service:

Employment Services Manager – employed by Ability KC

Employment Services Program Coordinator – employed by Ability KC

Community Employment Specialist –employed by Ability KC

Community Job Skills Trainer – employed by Ability KC

- Assistance to develop a coordinated, targeted plan of service
- Assessment of job related aptitudes, interests, learning styles and academic abilities
- Exploration of career interests and job choices
- Labor market research
- Community-based assessment sites
- Job placement assistance
- On-the-job supports and follow-up after starting a job

Assistive technology and/or driving assessment and training services may be arranged concurrent with employment services.

In addition, the following services are available through other departments with Ability KC:

- Assistive Technology Services
- Cognitive remediation for traumatic brain injury survivors
- Driver's Evaluation and Training
- EXCEL – Fitness and Conditioning Program
- Neuropsychological testing
- Nursing
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Return to Work Navigator Services
- Speech and Language Therapy

If Ability KC does not directly offer a service needed by participants in our programs, we will make every effort to locate and refer the individual(s) to another community agency that does.

Program Admission Criteria

Services are designed for adults who experience a disability that impacts their employment options and who may reasonably be expected to benefit from available services. ABILITY KC is committed to serving a diverse clientele and does not restrict acceptance for services due to sex, race, color, religion, culture, national origin, disabling condition or source of payment for services. We request that helpful information be forwarded by the referring agency before starting services. This information will be used to develop an individualized plan of services and includes relevant medical history, psychological information, social information and summary of previous services and supports.

Persons receiving employment services must:

- Be at least 16 years of age (some work settings require that participants be at least 16.)
- Be able to care for their personal needs (e.g. feeding, bowel and bladder control, medication management) or can direct such services if provided by a personal assistant. When personal assistant services are to be used, the assistant should be selected, arranged for and paid by either the participant or his/her sponsoring agency.
- Possess sufficient emotional control so as to pose no physical threat either to themselves or to others.
- Have their own transportation arranged to and from their place of residence.

Individuals with uncontrolled seizure disorders or diseases which are communicable by casual contact are not eligible for services.

The Employment Services Department does not provide psychiatric or substance abuse treatment.

The Employment Services Department does not provide medication administration of any kind.

Referral Procedures

Upon Referral, Community Employment Specialist, Employment Services Manager or Employment Program Coordinator will meet with the individual referred, review screening plan of services and introduce staff. The Employment Services Department in collaboration with the referral source, provides a screening prior to acceptance for services. The services and expectations of participation are shared with potential clients. The referring agencies can be the Missouri Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Kansas Department of Social Services and/or County Board of Services. There is no fee to the program participant as the referring agency will pay for the authorized services accordingly. Program length will vary depending upon the desires of the person receiving services and the sponsoring agency representative. Average program lengths have been established to guide the initial authorization for services but may be modified to meet individual needs.

Scheduling of most services may be handled through a phone call to the Employment Services Manager, Community Employment Specialist, Employment Services Program Coordinator or Workshop Operations manager, who will arrange a referral meeting or connect the caller with the appropriate staff person.



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Service Philosophy & Delivery

Services at Ability KC are driven by the active participation of the person receiving services or, as appropriate, a family member or advocate of their choice. A Community Employment Specialist or other assigned case manager will help coordinate activities outlined in the service plan and ensure that efforts are integrated and directed towards the outcomes targeted. This coordination includes regular communication with the person receiving services, sponsoring agency representatives, staff providing services and others identified by the person receiving services. This is usually in the form of frequent, informal conversations and periodic formal meetings. Revisions to the plan of services may be initiated as a result of this communication.

Written reports are sent to the referring agency representative at specified progress points throughout the program and at the completion of services. People receiving services are encouraged and supported in developing their own plan of action as a result of services. At a minimum, they will have the opportunity to discuss the recommendations and results to be included in the final written report. This will occur in a meeting with their community employment specialist or other assigned case manager and/or in a formal discharge conference.

Discharge will be arranged when all parties agree that targeted outcomes have been accomplished or when additional services are no longer desired. Discharge planning and decisions consider the following: the person's ability to work independently, progress toward achievement of program goals, lack of goal achievement or potential, refusal to receive or obtain further services., non-compliance with organizational policies, need for further care intervention, and/or need for referral to outside agencies. Exit summaries are prepared upon discharge, which summarize specific outcomes achieved and/or recommendations for future services.

Ability KC provides follow-up support services to people placed in jobs and, if appropriate, their employer for ninety days. Individuals who are unable to retain community employment during that ninety-day follow-up period are offered assistance to locate alternative employment or other services. Follow-up support services to people participating in supported employment are not time limited.

Participants who leave organizational (sheltered) employment for a community job are guaranteed re-employment for a ninety-day period.

Contact with all persons served in the Employment Services Department is attempted three and twelve months after discharge to assess the customer's satisfaction and the long-range impact of services.



For More Information

Please contact our Branch or Operations Managers at:

- Kansas City at 816.213.5732 or amy.ditty@abilitykc.org
- Warrensburg & Sedalia at 816.423.9210 or misty.murphy@abilitykc.org
- Ability KC Organizational Employment at 816.472.7799 or marla.nerlson@abilitykc.org



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