

# EMPLOYMENT SERVICES – SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

## Scope of Services

### Program Purpose

Ability KC's supported employment services provide an opportunity for persons with most significant disabilities to experience the social and economic rewards of competitive employment while continuing to receive on-going support services.

Services are designed for adults 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 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 following services and supports are available as part of supported employment:

- Case Management: Each person served is a member of his/her own rehabilitation team consisting also of a Community Employment Specialist, and a Community Job Skills Trainer. The team's task is to design a program will provide the best opportunity for a positive outcome.
- Job Development: Based on the strengths, abilities, needs, and preferences identified during the assessment, the person served will be assisted to obtain employment in an integrated setting, at a commensurate wage, and in a work environment that will foster inclusion of the person served. This process will entail more than just "getting a job." The goal is to facilitate the relationship between the person served and the employer, leading to the development of natural supports and the assurance of job retention.

- Job Supports: Taking into consideration the needs and preferences of the person served, job supports will be provided. The first objective of job supports will be to assist the person served with transition into employment and to assist with development of the employee – supervisor relationship. The Community Employment Specialist will initiate the Discovery/Exploration assessment process to help identify the Client’s interests, skills, qualifications, and natural supports. Simultaneously the Community Job Skills Trainer will assist in the development of resources within the company that will provide ongoing support for the person served. As the person served begins to experience success, the Community Employment Specialist and/or Community Job Skills Trainer will focus on maintaining these natural supports which are the key to employment retention.
- Follow Up Services: Once the person served is established in the job, active job coaching is decreased and the person served is transferred to follow up status. Support continues on a less frequent basis, focusing on established natural supports and any new training that might be required as the person served advances within the company.

Services are provided in the Ability KC office or in the community, based on support needs of person served. Services are provided by the following professionals.

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

Assistive technology services or driver’s evaluation and training services may be arranged concurrent with job placement services.

In addition, the following services are available through other departments on our campus:

- Cognitive remediation for traumatic brain injury survivors
- EXCEL – Fitness and Conditioning Program
- Neuropsychological testing
- Nursing
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Speech and Language Therapy

If Ability KC does not directly offer a service needed by someone participating in our program, we will make every effort to locate and refer 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, disability, national origin, religion or cultural background. We request a referral meeting in collaboration with the funding source. Referral information is shared 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 18.)
- 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. ABILITY KC does not provide psychiatric or substance abuse treatment.

## Referral Procedures

People interested in services are always encouraged to communicate with the Employment Service manager of Ability KC before beginning a program. We will provide a tour of the facility if requested, talk about an individual plan of services and introduce staff. The Employment Services Department does not routinely require that people be screened prior to acceptance for services. We rely on sponsoring/referring agency's knowledge of our programs and services to ensure appropriate referrals. The referring agencies can be the Missouri Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Kansas Department for Children and Families, 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 Branch Manager, who will arrange a start date or connect the caller with the appropriate staff person.



## 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 case manager is assigned to 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 sponsoring 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, and/or Community Job Skills Trainer 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.

Ability KC provides active follow-up support services to people placed in jobs and, if appropriate, their employer for at least ninety days. Follow-up support services to people participating in supported employment are not time limited.

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

## For More Information

Please contact our Branch Managers:

- Kansas City: Amy Ditty at 816.213.5732 or amy.ditty@abilitykc.org or Melissa Tola at 816.916.1684.
- Warrensburg & Sedalia at 816.213.5732 or amy.ditty@abilitykc.org.

