



Valley Forge

Educational Services

CUSTOMIZED WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS

A Blueprint for Employment Success

Our adult employment services are focused on community inclusion and person-centered support to help individuals with disabilities obtain and maintain employment. Services are based on the unique skills, interests, preferences, support needs and goals of the job seeker.

- **Customized Employment.** Customized Employment is designed for a person with a significant disability and is based on an assessment of their strengths, needs, and interests. An employment specialist works collaboratively with you and an employer to negotiate a customized job, the provision of supports and the terms of employment to match your skills and conditions necessary for success with the unmet needs of the employer.
 - ◆ **Career Discovery and Assessment.** This planning process involves getting to know a person before developing a plan for employment. Activities include observing you in settings in which they are comfortable as well as assessing personal strengths, needs, preferences and work experiences that support your employment vision. The discovery and assessment information is incorporated into your vocational profile outlining the ideal conditions for employment.
 - ◆ **Job Development.** An employment specialist works with the individual to practice interview skills, create a resume and connect with employers in the community. A specialist strategically develops a list of potential employers that match your contributions, conditions and preferences for employment with the needs of the employer.
 - ◆ **Job Retention Services.** Support services may include employer training and consultation, site visits, evaluations of your performance on the job and team meetings.
- **Supported Employment.** Supported employment provides individualized supports that enable you to choose the kind of job you want and to become a successful member of the workforce. The employment specialist provides support in an inclusive community work setting. Support is provided on both a short-term and long-term basis depending on your individual needs. The ultimate goal is for you to become independent at work.
- **Recreation and Leisure Services.** Social gatherings and activities with peers allow individuals to independently cultivate relationships and improve interpersonal skills.

For more information:

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Frequently Asked Participant Questions

Q. How do I get started with Customized Workforce Solutions (CWS)?

A. The intake process is the first step in meeting your employment goal. Participants may be referred by their Supports Coordinator, representatives of funding sources or you may start the process on your own by filling out our inquiry form at vfes.net/cwsinquiry. Once we receive your information, a CWS employment specialist will review your information and call you to schedule an intake meeting.

Q. What happens at the Intake Meeting?

A. During the intake meeting, we begin to help you identify your personal skills, interests, goals, strengths and possible barriers to employment. In this session, we will also review available funding sources. After the initial intake interview, your employment specialist will work with you to develop jobs and provide job coaching.

Q. What is the time frame for finding employment?

A. It varies, each participant's time frame will vary depending on their personal needs. We know that everyone who comes through the doors at CWS is eager to find and maintain a job, so we try to help make the process as engaging and timely as possible.

Q. How does CWS determine the right path for me?

A. CWS focuses on employment based on your strengths and abilities. Through customized employment, CWS starts with a discovery process to evaluate your strengths and work preferences and uses that information to find the right job match.

Q. Do you offer job training?

A. CWS will provide on-the-job training and will help you become accustomed to your new job and all of the tasks that are involved in that new job. CWS does not provide specialized pre-training to learn new skills such as culinary skills or advanced office skills.

Q: What is an employment specialist and how long do I need one?

A. An employment specialist is a professional who works to help you discover your vocational interest and work preferences. On the job, the employment specialist supports you as you become an independent, competent and confident member of the workplace. An employment specialist might come to orientation with you, help you talk to your manager, or help you advocate for yourself in the workplace. An employment specialist will gradually reduce support as you and your employer feel confident about your job.

Q: Do you provide transportation?

A. To find and retain a job you will need to have a means of transportation. CWS can assist you in exploring transportation options that are appropriate for you. If necessary, the staff will teach you to access public transportation safely.

Q: Will my extensive or challenging support needs prevent me from getting a job?

A. We believe everyone who wants to work can work, and CWS helps to find creative employment solutions to fit your unique needs.