



Getting the Most from Employment Services

*Your
guide to
entering
or returning
to the workforce*



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Getting the Most from Employment Services

As you prepare to enter the workforce, you will be faced with many choices. One of the most important decisions will be choosing the agency that will support you to find and keep a job that you like. There are many agencies in Rhode Island which provide employment services for people with disabilities. The information provided in this Guide will help you choose those agencies which best match your support needs and career goals.

Being an informed customer will help you get the most from your employment services. This Guide offers lists of sample questions to help you to learn about an agency, the services they provide, and the people they support. Choose questions from each list and use them to interview agency staff and individuals receiving services.

For a list of agencies providing employment services in Rhode Island, go to www.sherlockcenter.org; click the link for the “RI Employment Service Agencies” from the main menu. To request this list in alternative format, contact the Sherlock Center.



Additional copies of this Guide are available from the Sherlock Center. The Guide is available in electronic format at www.sherlockcenter.org. To request the Guide in an alternate format, contact the Sherlock Center.

Best wishes!

Sample Questions to Ask the Agency

How long has the agency been providing employment supports?

How is your employment staff trained?

What kinds of disabilities do the people you support have?

Does your agency offer job preparation classes? If so, please describe.



Who are some of the employers that work with your agency?

How many people does your agency support in individual jobs in the community?

Do you offer to help people advance in their careers/ company? Give examples.

How many people receive benefits from the employer (e.g., health insurance, paid vacation, paid sick time, retirement plans)?

Does your agency sponsor group employment sites? (groups of people with disabilities working in a business)

Are the groups used for training or long-term employment?

How many people are working in group sites?

Does your agency have a process if I have a problem or complaint?

Can you give me some examples of problems or complaints and how they were resolved?

List your own questions here:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

TIME SAVING TIP!!

When contacting agencies...

- Ask for the Director of Employment Services
- Ask if the agency assist people with your kind of disability
- Ask if the agency contracts with the state agency that funds your employment services



Sample Questions to Ask about Services

What type of jobs has your agency found for individuals with disabilities?

What career planning process do you use?

How long does it usually take to help someone find a job?

Do people choose their own employment staff? If so, how do I get to choose?

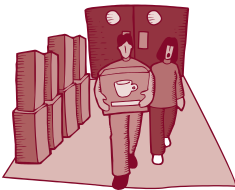
How many hours per week will staff spend to help me find a job?

How many people does an employment staff person work with at one time?

Do people typically participate in the employers' own orientation and training programs ?

What are the average weekly wages and hours of work for employed individuals?

How many people have been promoted in their jobs?



What kinds of supports can I receive after I am hired?

How do staff help people to make friends on the job?

What transportation supports are available?

If I am laid off, or not working, what agency services can I expect?

List your own questions here:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Sample Questions to Ask People Served

Are you satisfied with the employment supports you receive?

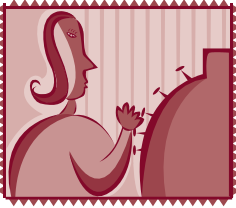
Do you have control over the services you receive?

Do support staff (employment counselors, job coaches and others) treat you with respect?

Did you help develop your employment plan?

Do staff discuss with you the progress on your plan?

Did you ever have a problem with the employment agency or your support staff? What did you do? How did it work out?



Do you like your job? If not, what help are you getting to find another job?

Do you receive the help you need to improve in your job?

Do you get the help you need to make friends on the job?

Do you have other plans for employment beyond your current job?

Does your job relate to your long-term career goals?

Are you getting the help you want to pursue your future goals for employment?

Are supports available at night and on weekends?

Does the employment agency sponsor work support groups?



List your own questions here:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Things You Can Do

- * Contact your counselor, case manager, or employment staff often (at least once a week).
- * Stay informed about service options and rights.
- * Thank counselors, case managers, or staff for their work.
- * Talk to other people receiving services for ideas to get the most from your agency.
- * Participate in as much of your job development plan as you can.
- * Participate in job support activities (resume class, support group, interview skills, etc.).
- * Take your own notes or tape record discussions at meetings.
- * Keep records of all planned services, including: the activity and who will do it, when and how often it is done, and results you expect.
- * Schedule reviews of your employment plan.
- * Be honest and clear about what you expect; expect high quality.
- * If you are not satisfied with services or the results, let people know and ask for help .
- * If things are really not working for you, interview other agencies. You may find a better match!



Social Security Work Incentives

Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA)

DHS – Office of Rehabilitation Services

40 Fountain Street, Providence, RI

Phone: 401-421-7005, 401-421-7016 (TDD),

401-272-8090 (Spanish)

www.ors.ri.gov

Community Work Incentive Coordinators (CWICs) are available to work with beneficiaries of SSI and/or SSDI to help them use social security work incentives to their best advantage to reach financial independence.

The Work Site

www.socialsecurity.gov/work/

The Redbook on Work Incentives

www.ssa.gov/redbook/

Ticket to Work – The Ticket Program

Phone: 1-866-968-7842

www.yourtickettowork.com

For a list of Rhode Island Employment Networks, click “Directory of ENs”

Sherlock Plan – Medicaid Buy-In

www.rhodestoindependence.org

The Medicaid Buy-In law, also known as the Sherlock Act or Plan, allows qualified Rhode Islanders receiving SSI or SSDI payments to continue receiving government-subsidized health coverage in the form of Medicaid even if they return to work and exceed the income threshold that currently exists for Medicaid eligibility.

Resources

RI Department of Human Services, Office of Rehabilitation Services

40 Fountain Street, Providence, RI
Phone: 401-421-7005, 401-421-7016 (TDD),
401-272-8090 (Spanish)
www.ors.ri.gov

RI Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals

6 Harrington Rd, Cranston, RI 02920
www.bhddh.ri.gov

Division of Developmental Disabilities

Phone: 401-462-3421, 462-6087 (TDD)

Division of Behavioral Healthcare

Phone: 401-462-2339

RI Department of Labor and Training - netWORKri

www.networkri.org

Pawtucket

175 Main Street
Pawtucket, RI 02860
Phone: 401-722-3100
TDD: 401-222-3450

Woonsocket

219 Pond St.
Woonsocket, RI 02895
Phone : 401-235-1201
TDD: 401-235-1284

Providence

One Reservoir Ave,
Providence, RI 02907
Phone: 401-462-8900
TDD: 401-462-8966

Newport

Re-Employment Office
73 Valley Road
Middletown, RI 02842
Phone: 401-847-2038

West Warwick

1330 Main Street
West Warwick, RI 02893
Phone: 401-828-8382,
TDD: 401-828-8927

Wakefield

Stedman Complex,
4808 Tower Hill Road
Wakefield, RI 02879
Phone: 401-782-4362

Resources

Rhode Island Department of Education - Office of Student, Community, and Academic Support

Phone: 401-222-3505

www.ride.ri.gov/Special_populations

RI Regional Transition Centers and Regional Vocational Assessment Centers

East Bay

317 Market Street, Warren, RI 02885

Phone: 401-245-2045 www.ebecri.org

Northern RI

640 George Washington Hwy, Suite 200

Lincoln, RI 02865

Phone: 401-721-0709 www.nric-ri.org

Southern RI

646 Camp Avenue, North Kingstown, RI 02852

Phone: 401-295-2888 www.ri.net/sorico

Providence

434 Mt. Pleasant Ave., Providence, RI 02908

Phone: 401-278-0520

West Bay

144 Bignall Street, Warwick, RI 02888

Phone: 401-941-8353 www.westbaycollaborative.org

Rhode Island Disability Law Center

www.ridlc.org

275 Westminster St., Suite 401, Providence, RI 02903

Phone: 401-831-3150, 401-831-5335 (TDD)



CONTACT LOG

Agency _____

Date _____ Time _____

Contact Person _____

Interview Date _____ Time _____

Notes _____

Agency _____

Date _____ Time _____

Contact Person _____

Interview Date _____ Time _____

Notes _____

Agency _____

Date _____ Time _____

Contact Person _____

Interview Date _____ Time _____

Notes _____

Agency _____

Date _____ Time _____

Contact Person _____

Interview Date _____ Time _____

Notes _____

NOTES



Getting the Most From Employment Services

*A joint project of the Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities,
Rhodes to Independence, and the
Employment First Provider Workgroup.*

Rhodes to Independence

The University of Rhode Island, College of Pharmacy
350 Fogarty Hall
Kingston, RI 02881
<http://RhodestoIndependence.org>
401-462-6163



Rhodes to Independence is funded by a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Medicaid Infrastructure Grant.

Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities

Rhode Island College
600 Mt. Pleasant Avenue
Providence, RI 02908-1991
<http://www.sherlockcenter.org>
401-456-8072 (V), 401-456-8773 (TDD)



Promoting membership in school, work and community.