

# AGENDA

- Welcome and Introductions
- What is Employment First?
- Individualized Employment
  - Best Practice: Customized Employment
- How to Approach Employment During COVID-19
  - Virtual/online approaches
  - In-person employment
  - Self-Employment
- Resources and Tips



# What Is Employment First?

Employment First is a movement to deliver meaningful employment, fair wages, and career advancement for people with disabilities.

- Employment in the general workforce is the first and preferred outcome for all working age people with disabilities, regardless of disability.
- With access to assistance and supports to ensure job success, all working age adults and youths can work in jobs fully integrated in the workforce, alongside co-workers without disabilities, earning minimum wage or higher.
- Access to “real jobs with real wages” is critical for people with disabilities to live lives free of poverty, dependence, and isolation.



# California APSE



**CALIFORNIA** **WHAT WE DO**

**APSE**

**Employment First**

**Employment for All**

California APSE is a community network that collaborates to increase competitive integrated employment for all people with disabilities through advocating and education

[Learn More](#)

[californiaapse.org](http://californiaapse.org)

# California APSE

## ADVOCACY

- Champion the Employment First principle that employment and careers be the expected and preferred outcomes of all publicly funded services for those with disabilities.
- Change philosophies, policies, practices and funding to advance employment, career development and economic advancement for people with disabilities.

## EDUCATION

- Promote attitudes and beliefs that fully include and support people with disabilities to be part of the economic and social mainstream, to achieve careers and lifestyles like anyone else.
- Empower individuals with disabilities to fully recognize their abilities.
- Raise awareness within the business community as to the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities.

# Employment First in California

- “It is the policy of the state that opportunities for integrated, competitive employment should be given the highest priority for working age individuals with developmental disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities.”

*Welfare & Institutions Code section 4869(a)(1) (2013)*

- What this means: if a person 16 or older with an intellectual or developmental disability asks for CIE, they should not be told “no.” *California is an Employment First state!*



# Key Provisions of the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Rule

- Applies to both residential and day program/employment settings
- These rules dictate what states can do with federal Medicaid monies that they receive
- By 2023 (originally 2019), states cannot use this money to pay for segregated sites and services. (Providers and states will have had close to a decade to make these changes.)
- The HCBS Rule requires that states offer individuals a choice of a “non-disability specific setting,” *which means the opportunity to work in competitive integrated employment*
- This is a game changer for increasing opportunities for CIE, so ask for it and demand it!
- All states must assess their current capacity of non-disability specific settings and develop a plan to increase capacity so that all individuals have a real and meaningful choice for CIE

# Individualized Employment Supports

- Traditionally, employment supports have been provided to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities through programs in segregated settings.
- Progressive employment providers utilize person-centered planning models tailored to an individual's interests, strengths, and autonomy.
- The need to transform is driven by best practices and evidence of better outcomes, as well federal regulations like the Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Rule.
- To be eligible for federal funds, by March 2023, all employment services must:
  - Maximize opportunities and choices for individuals (see Informed Choice publication at [https://www.communityinclusion.org/pdf/TO31\\_F.pdf](https://www.communityinclusion.org/pdf/TO31_F.pdf))
  - Ensure individual preferences are supported and rights are protected
  - Make sure people have opportunity to work and spend time with their non-disabled peers
- What do best practice employment supports look like?

# Customized Employment

*A modern approach to employment services*

## Discovery

- Get to know your strengths, interests, talents, preferences, skills, values, personality traits, goals, etc.
- Identify your ideal conditions of employment

## Field research & informational interviews

- Learn about possible businesses in your community where your ideal conditions of employment might exist
- Understand the needs of these businesses and how you might be able to add value

## Make a match

- Propose or create a customized job that fits your strengths, interests, talents, preferences, etc. **and** fills a need for the business
- It has to make business sense



# Customized Employment

## Step 1: Discovery

Goal: Identify your ideal conditions of employment.

- Important information to gather:
  - What are your dreams and goals?
  - What are your talents, skills, interests?
  - What are your values, personality traits and environmental preferences?
  - What are your dislikes and possible challenges?
  - What solutions or accommodations work for you?
- How to gather this information:
  - **Spending time with you** in different settings and situations
  - **Interviews and conversations** with family, friends and other people who know and like you
  - **Observations** of you at home, school, work, day program, community, etc. doing things you enjoy, things you might want to do for work, and trying new things
  - **Career assessments** including formal, informal, situational
  - **Experiences** including job shadowing, volunteering, informational interviews, visiting real work settings
- Information is compiled in a vocational profile

# Customized Employment

## Step 2: Field research & informational interviews

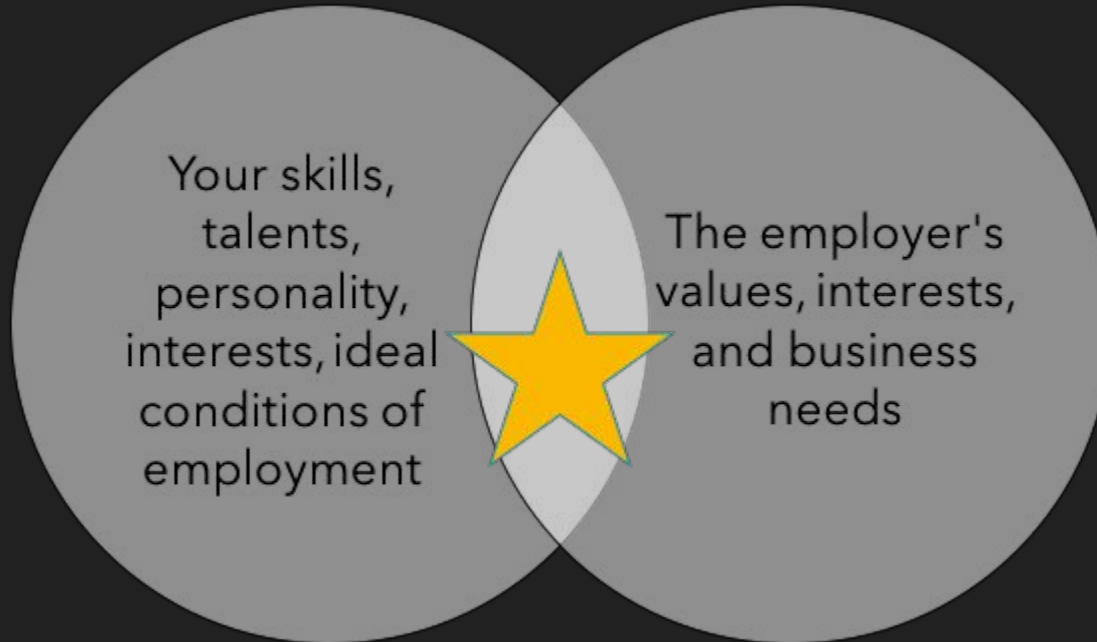
Goal: Identify businesses in your community that match your ideal conditions of employment and understand how you and your skills might add value to them.

- Your job developer or employment specialist will:
  - **Research** new industries based on your interests and goals.
  - **Research** specific businesses in your area.
  - **Network** to get connected to people who can help us learn.
  - **Conduct informational interviews** with employers to learn even more. We do not expect a job to come from these informational interviews!
  - **Spend time at the business** to understand what happens there and how it operates and to look for opportunities where you could add value.
- They will look for opportunities to add value:
  - Customer / employee complaints
  - Backlogs, long wait times
  - Unassigned but critical tasks
  - Wasted resources or personnel
  - High turnover
  - Workload fluctuations (rush times, crunch times)

# Customized Employment

## Step 3: Making a match

Goal: Propose and negotiate a customized job.



# Employment During COVID-19

If you, as an individual with I/DD, want to focus on employment during COVID-19, what are your options?

- (1) Virtual/online preparation for employment
- (2) Work in the community with precautions;
- (3) Self-employment

For more guidance/webinars:

<https://griffinhammis.com/resources/covid-19-guidance>

# Employment During COVID-19

When deciding how to approach employment, the individual should consult with their circle, but their personal wishes must be paramount.

The key is finding a balance between what is important TO an individual and what is important FOR an individual.

<b>Important TO</b>	<b>Important FOR</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● People, places and activities in their life</li><li>● Routines and things in their life</li><li>● Pace/quality of life, social identity/status</li><li>● Having control/choice re: the above</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Health and safety</li><li>● Minimizing/managing risk</li><li>● What others see as necessary for a successful employment experience</li></ul>

# Use Teamwork to Identify Possibilities

- Hold virtual brainstorming meetings with your family/circle of support to discuss and identify emerging job themes.
- Your provider can work with family/circle to identify small businesses in theme areas, and identify possible social connections to businesses.
- Your provider can help develop lists of additional small businesses to visit and get advice based on your job themes.

# Vocational Profile & Job/Business Development Plan

- Work with your provider to develop a vocational profile that summarizes information learned through Discovery and confirms your job themes.
- Develop electronic materials that support job development: video portfolios, social media presence, or other quality digital materials that portray you in an engaging manner, highlight what you can do, and tell your story.  
<https://www.visme.co/blg/create-visual-resume>
- Your provider can help develop lists of businesses related to each of your job themes and formulate a job development plan.

# Financial Needs and Goals

You and your provider can take this time to discuss your financial needs and goals. Consider:

- Completing a Benefits Planning Query (BPQY) from SSA <http://www.ssa.gov/redbook/eng/resources-supports.htm>
- Getting benefits counseling from a Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) project
- Running basic numbers re: your expenses, income, and budgeting needs <https://ca.db101.org>
- Learning about CalABLE accounts, which allow you, family and friends to contribute up to \$15,000 per year without affecting your disability benefits <https://www.calable.ca.gov/>
- Learning how to reduce the impact of income on your benefits by deducting Impairment Related Work Expenses <https://www.disability-benefits-help.org/glossary/impairment-related-work-expenses>
- For questions, see Virginia Commonwealth University materials related to benefits and COVID 19: <https://vcu-ntdc.org/resources/covid19FAQ.cfm>.



# Working in the Community During COVID-19

- Primary considerations: health and safety  
[Working During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Guide for Informed Decision-Making](#) by the Institute for Community Inclusion
- Tools to help self-advocate re: social distancing, masks, other safety norms  
FAQs regarding employment: [Legal Aid at Work](#)  
Job Accommodation Network: <https://askjan.org>
- Transportation  
Example: <https://ucpsacto.org/programs-services/transportation>
- Virtual Customized Employment services: [Virtual Discovery Service Delivery Guidance](#) and [Virtual Customized Job Development Service Delivery Guidance](#) resources by Griffin-Hammis Associates

# Self Employment & Micro-Enterprise

- Identify job seeker skills, talents and interests.
- What can job seeker can do themselves and where do they need support?
- Look at social capital and networks.
- See if there are other companies already providing the goods or service.
- Test the idea, make a plan, look for resources.

Book that will walk you through the entire process:

<https://www.griffinhammis.com/resources/publications/>

# COVID-19-Related Business Creation

- Delivery services
- Cleaning assistance
- Take-out and curbside needs
- Protective gear- shields, masks, accessories
- Table/chair rentals
- Printing services- signage, take out menus
- Resources and accessories for technology use
- Work from home and recreation needs
- Web services and technology assistance

# Resources for Self-Employment

- Department of Rehabilitation can provide funding for supplies and business needs
- Social Security Plan to Achieve Self Support (PASS) plan  
<https://www.sa.gov/pubs/ED-05-11017.pdf>
- Funding for a job coach from Regional Center or Department of Rehabilitation
- Small Business Administration <https://www.sba.gov/>
- Core of retired executives who offer time to mentor and talk about business for free  
[SCORE.org](https://www.score.org/)
- Micro-enterprise center networks [www.cameonetwork.org](https://www.cameonetwork.org)
- Other grants and loans may be available locally

# Additional Resources

[50 Videos for Career Path Exploration](#)

[Virtual Job Shadowing](#)

[Explore Work](#)

[T-Folio](#)

[The Institute for Community Inclusion](#)

# If You Want to Focus on Employment

- Ask for a provider who uses a **customized employment** approach.
- To find a provider/staff member who is well-trained in customized employment, ask for someone who:
  - Is ACRE certified
    - See <https://www.acreducators.org> ACRE (Association of Community Rehabilitation and Education) for a list of trained individuals.
  - Passed the CESP exam
    - See <https://apse.or/cesp-central/> for a list of CESP Certified Employment Support Professionals.
- If you are interested in self-employment, ask for job coaching to support you in developing your self-employment plan.

- Feedback
- Brainstorm
- Questions



Join us Wednesday, August 12th  
at 11:00 am

California APSE will be presenting and discussing best practices for redesigning services to maintain individualized and person-centered supports during the COVID-19 pandemic.

For registration and more info:

[CaAPSE@APSE.org](mailto:CaAPSE@APSE.org)



Thank you for joining  
California APSE!

