

# EMPLOYER RESOURCE PACKET



**Work Together NC**  
*Possibility to Opportunity*



THE UNIVERSITY  
of NORTH CAROLINA  
at CHAPEL HILL

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Work Together NC is a cross sector collaborative that brings together self advocates, families, employers, and service providers to improve systems of support for people with ID/DD during the transition to adulthood.

**Interested in getting involved?**

Scan the QR Code and we will get you connected!



@worktogethernc



Work Together NC

## 10 MYTHS & FACTS ABOUT HIRING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

*There are many stereotypes, biases, and misperceptions about hiring people with disabilities. Most are based on a lack of information and experience.*

### THE FACTS

2.30

On a scale of one to three, employees with disabilities received a performance score of **2.30** versus 2.31 for those without a disability.



34% of respondents in the 2017 study say they experienced **discrimination** or **bias** while working at their current companies.

30%

In a 2017 study, 30% of white-collar, college-educated employees **have a disability**. Of these, 62% have an "invisible" disability.



68.4% of Americans with disabilities are **striving to work** and 40.6% want to work more hours.

#### MYTH #1

People with disabilities are not qualified applicants.

**FACT:** Employers should not assume that people with disabilities lack the necessary education, training and experience for employment. Many times, the only difference is that workers with disabilities might do things differently, which could mean more efficiently and better than others in the same position.

#### MYTH #2

The Americans with Disabilities Act gives job applicants with disabilities advantages.

**FACT:** The ADA does not give hiring preference to people with disabilities. The ADA does encourage the employment of qualified individuals with disabilities: it evens the "playing field." Employers are free to hire applicants of their choosing as long as the decision is not based on disability.

#### MYTH #3

All people with disabilities require job accommodations.

**FACT:** Less than one in four people with disabilities require job accommodations.

#### MYTH #4

Reasonable accommodations are expensive.

**FACT:** For the minority of employees with disabilities who need an accommodation, 56% of these costs less than \$600, and many cost nothing at all. There are many organizations that can help identify, fund and provide accommodations outlined in the WTI Employer Toolkit.

#### MYTH #5

Employees with disabilities have a higher absentee rate than employees without disabilities.

**FACT:** Studies by firms such as DuPont show that employees with disabilities are not absent any more than employees without disabilities.

## MYTH #6

People with disabilities are less productive than those without disabilities.

## MYTH #7

People with disabilities are more likely to leave their job.

## MYTH #8

Hiring employees with disabilities increases workers compensation insurance rates.

## MYTH #9

People with disabilities are more likely to sue me.

## MYTH #10

Disabilities are always visible.

**FACT:** Research consistently shows that people with disabilities want to work. Many people with disabilities feel that they need to work harder and perform better to prove themselves in their job role, resulting in productivity levels that are often higher.

**FACT:** There is much research suggesting that employees with disabilities have a greater tendency to stay with an organization longer.

**FACT:** Insurance rates are based solely on the relative hazards of the operation and the organization's accident experience and individuals with disabilities are not more inclined to accidents.

**FACT:** There is no evidence that people with disabilities are more likely to bring lawsuits than any other group. Follow the law and you will be OK.

**FACT:** Many people have invisible disabilities such as learning disabilities, various medical conditions, and mental health disabilities. It is always up to the individual to disclose disability, regardless.

## TIPS FOR EMPLOYERS\*

- ✓ Use **disability inclusion statements** in job advertisements and the career section of your website.
- ✓ Attend disability-focused **job fairs**.
- ✓ Post jobs on disability-oriented **job boards**.
- ✓ Ensure applications are in formats that are **accessible** to all persons with disabilities.
- ✓ Partner with **local** disability employment service providers and workforce development organizations.
- ✓ **Educate** all employees, especially managers, about working with employees with disabilities.

\* See our "Talent Pipelines" fact sheet for additional employer tips.

## SOURCES & ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Disabilities and Inclusion – US Findings, Center for Talent Innovation (2017). [https://www.talentinnovation.org/\\_private/assets/DisabilitiesInclusion\\_KeyFindings-CTI.pdf](https://www.talentinnovation.org/_private/assets/DisabilitiesInclusion_KeyFindings-CTI.pdf)
- EmployAbilities (<https://employabilities.ab.ca/myths-facts-about-hiring-people-with-disabilities/>)
- Kessler Foundation National Employment & Disability Survey (2015) [https://kesslerfoundation.org/sites/default/files/filepicker/5/KFSurvey2015\\_ExecutiveSummary.pdf](https://kesslerfoundation.org/sites/default/files/filepicker/5/KFSurvey2015_ExecutiveSummary.pdf)
- National Business & Disability Council at The Viscardi Center (<https://www.viscardicenter.org/nbdc/>) SHRM ([shrm.org](https://shrm.org))
- The Business Journals (<https://www.bizjournals.com/bizjournals/how-to/human-resources/2014/11/4-myths-about-hiring-employees-with-disabilities.html>)



View our full toolkit of resources at [www.WorkToInclude.org](http://www.WorkToInclude.org)

[www.WorkToInclude.org](http://www.WorkToInclude.org)

**WORK\*TO  
INCLUDE**

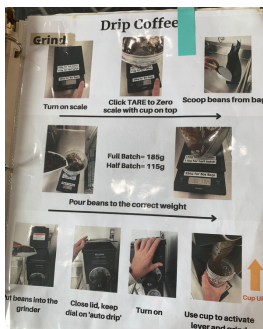


# Tips for Supporting People with ID/DD in the Workplace

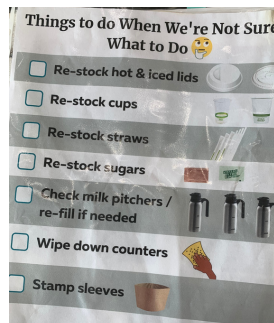
**\*Note: Many of these supports will benefit everyone in the workplace, not just people with disabilities! While they may take some time/effort to implement at first, building these supports into the workplace environment will ultimately create a more intuitive, flexible, accessible, and efficient, and productive workplace for *all*.**

1

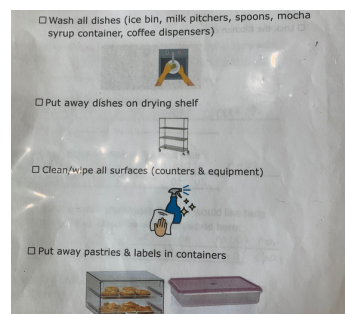
## Try different formats for presenting information/directions and providing training



Picture Based Task Analysis



Written Instructions/Checklists



Label equipment



Object based directions



Model / demonstrate tasks



Provide video tutorials

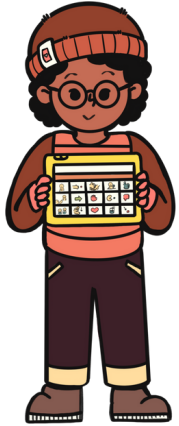


"Hands-On" learning by doing, including repetition & practice!

# Tips for Supporting People with ID/DD in the Workplace

## 2

### Validate diverse forms of communication.



- Some (not all) people with ID/DD may communicate via gestures, signs, vocalizations, an AAC device/iPAD, typing, or symbol or letter boards
- Workplace relevant “scripts” or communication cards may be helpful for someone with complex communication needs. The individual should be involved in determining/creating these supports to the greatest extent possible. For example:
  - a customer service script for taking an order
  - a card that says “I need a break” which can be given to the supervisor if needed
  - a script for what to say when answering the phone



### Communication and Interaction Tips



- Avoid using “baby talk” with adults with ID/DD, as it is patronizing. Use a natural, casual tone of voice.
- If an individual struggles with speech intelligibility, it is more respectful to (1) kindly ask them to repeat themselves or (2) offer an alternative format of communication versus “pretending” to understand
- Consider individual preferences and accessibility in the interpretation of instructions, specifically written words. Some individuals may benefit from plain language; people from varied cultural backgrounds may prefer translated instructions; videos should have a closed captioning option.
- Due to auditory processing differences, some people with ID/DD need wait time to process information and formulate a response. Allow extra time before moving on, and then rephrase the question if needed.
- Use specificity when making requests or offering explanations. Implied meanings, metaphors, similes, and idioms are often too abstract or easily misinterpreted. For example, a statement like “textas will dry out if you leave the lids off” is implying that the lids need to be put back on the textas otherwise they’ll dry out. It is more effective/accessible to say “put the lids on the textas when you have finished using them.”

## 3

### Identify tasks that align with the individuals strengths and interests

- Many (not all) people with ID/DD thrive with tasks that are repetitive and sequenced, with a clear indication of start and finished.



# Tips for Supporting People with ID/DD in the Workplace

## 4 Establish a sensory friendly work environment

While the sensory needs of people with ID/DD are very diverse and individualized, the following adjustments are likely to be beneficial for both your employees and customers/patrons:



- Minimize use of fluorescent lighting or use shields or dimmers to reduce the intensity. Non-flickering LED or incandescent bulbs are good alternatives.
- As much as possible, allow space for movement. Do not attempt to suppress or discourage stimming (i.e., hand flapping, rocking, finger flicking), as it is important for the emotional and sensory regulation of many people with ID/DD. If stimming interferes with job performance, bring these concerns to the individual's job coach or service provider so that alternative regulation strategies can be explored.
- Avoid decorating with overly bright colors or abrasive textures
- Designate a space or room for resting/recharging
- Limit strong smells including air fresheners and potent cleaning solutions
- Welcome the use of sensory tools such as noise cancelling headphones or fidgets

## 5 Provide structure

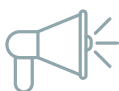


- Many people with ID/DD benefit from predictability, routine, and clear expectations. Incorporating schedules, checklists, and timers can support optimal productivity
- As much as possible, spaces within the workplace should be designated for specific tasks or expectations. For example:
  - have a clearly defined break space
  - arrange tools/materials left → right in their order of use
  - marks on the floor can show where employees should stand or position themselves in the workflow
  - tablespots designated and labeled for certain activities when possible.

## 6 Encourage self advocacy and self determination

**Self determination:** As much as possible, employees should be involved in choosing their own supports. Choice can also be incorporated in the order of tasks assigned or the tasks themselves. Consistently ask for feedback on how supported your employee is feeling, and allow time for trialing a variety of supports if needed.

**Self Advocacy:** Some people with ID/DD may find it difficult to ask for help. Support the individual to identify who to ask for help and how to make the request, based on the workplace context/situation. Role playing different scenarios can be helpful, as well as providing appropriate communication tools (i.e., a “need help” communication card or script)





## Site and Source

## Description

### Job Seekers Toolkit

#### **NC Department of Health and Human Services / Vocational Rehabilitation Services**

NC Vocational Rehabilitation offers a variety of services for employers, including assistance with recruitment and hiring, sensitivity/diversity training, accessibility consultation, tax incentives education, on the job training, and retention services.

- NCCDD's [website](#) offers a summary of VR's offerings for employers
- For more information, contact your local NCVR office or visit their website at [ncdhhs.gov/divisions/dvrs](http://ncdhhs.gov/divisions/dvrs)

### North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities

NCCDD improves the opportunities and lives of North Carolinians with I/DD and their families through advocacy, capacity building and systems change. The NCCDD funds a number of initiatives related to the employment of people with ID/DD.

#### **Example resources:**

- [Employing People with Disabilities: In Their Own Words](#)
- [Assistive Technologies and Accommodations](#)
- [Inclusive Employment Lookbook](#)
- [Everybody Works NC Campaign](#)

JAN provides free consulting services for all employers, regardless of size or type (e.g., private, federal, state, or local government, etc.). Services include individualized consultation about all aspects of job accommodations, including the accommodation process, accommodation ideas, product vendors, referral to other resources, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance assistance.

#### **Example Resources:**

### Job Accommodation Network

- [Workplace Accommodation Toolkit](#)
- [Accommodation and Compliance Series: Employees with Intellectual Disabilities or Cognitive Impairment](#)
- [Accommodation and Compliance Series: Disability Disclosure and the ADA](#)
- [Accommodation and Compliance Series: Disability Etiquette](#)
- [Accommodation and Compliance Series: Job Coaches](#)
- [Accommodation and Compliance Series: Tax Incentives](#)
- [Accommodation and Compliance Series: Universal Design in the Workplace](#)





## Site and Source

## Description

**The Integrated Employment Success Tool****Autism CRC**

This tool is designed for employers of Autistic adults, although it may be helpful for accommodating other disabilities in the workplace as well. It includes evidence based tips for success in all stages of the hiring process, from advertising the job to maintaining ongoing support.

**Disability:IN NC**

Disability:IN North Carolina provides a number of programs and technical assistance empowering businesses and other employers to achieve disability inclusion and equality.

Example Resource:

[The Disability Equality Index](#)

A comprehensive benchmarking tool that helps companies build a roadmap of measurable, tangible actions that they can take to achieve disability inclusion and equality.

**Employer Assistance and Resource Network on Disability**

Supports employers to recruit, hire, retain, and advance qualified people with disabilities.

Example Resources

- [Neurodiversity Inclusion: Checklist for Organizational Success](#)
- [Inclusion at Work: A Framework for Building a Disability Inclusive Organization](#)
- [Neurodiversity in the Workplace](#)
- [Accessible and Authentic Interviews for Candidates with Disabilities](#)
- [Business Benefits of Neurodiversity](#)
- [Inclusive Recruitment: Applicable Laws and Regulations](#)

**Autism at Work Playbook**

ACCESS-IT Research Group studied the Autism @ Work programs of four leading employers: Microsoft, SAP, JPMorgan Chase and EY. In their research, Dr. Annabi and her team systematically examined how the firms established their programs and how they sustain them. The researchers analyzed key organizational strategies, employment and resourcing models, and hiring and onboarding practices. In their analysis, the researchers distilled best practices and developed this guide for other organizations to use to get their programs started.





### Site and Source

### Description

#### **What can YOU do? The Campaign for Disability Employment**

A highly collaborative effort among several disability and business organizations that showcases supportive, inclusive workplaces for all workers. The CDE's campaign called "What Can YOU Do?" features a series of public service announcements (PSAs) and coordinating media products, all designed to promote positive employment outcomes for people with disabilities

#### **Self Disclosure Resources**

This tool provides sample language that can be shared with apprentices, employees and managers regarding the self-identification and disclosure process surrounding disability. This resource is intended to provide language and information about self-disclosure. Feel free to copy and paste relevant information presented here into company handbooks or staff resources.

#### **Job Interview: Disability Related Questions**

This resource provides a guidance regarding questions that can and cannot be asked in an interview, according to the rules of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).



**The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** is a civil rights law that was passed in 1990. A civil rights law is a law to make sure that people get treated fairly. The ADA makes it illegal to discriminate against people with disabilities in public places. Restaurants and stores are examples of public places. The purpose of the law is to make sure that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else in the community.

More Information:

[Job Accommodation Network: Disability Related Laws](#)

[Job Applicants and the ADA US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#)

[Persons with Intellectual Disabilities in the Workplace and ADA – US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#)

[Employer and ADA– Myths and Facts– US Department of Labor](#)

[Americans with Disabilities Act– Pacer](#)

[Guidance Document for Implementation of the ADA – APSE](#)

[Employer's Practical Guide to Reasonable Accommodations Under the ADA](#)

**The Rehabilitation Act of 1973** does a lot of the same things as the ADA. The difference is that ADA protects people with disabilities from discrimination in public places and the Rehabilitation Act protects people with disabilities from discrimination by the government. It also includes any businesses that get government money. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act is particularly important for students. It is meant to make education accessible to everyone. Section 504 makes sure that students who need disability-related services in schools can get them.

More Information:

[Job Accommodation Network's Accommodation and Compliance Series: Disability Related Law](#)

[Rehabilitation Act of 1973– Pacer](#)

[Section 503– US Department of Labor](#)

**The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)** is a law passed in 1938 and it did some very helpful things. It made a minimum wage for everyone in the United States. The minimum wage is the smallest amount that a boss is allowed to pay an employee for their work. But the Fair Labor Standards Act leaves some people out. The part of the law that leaves out disabled people is called Section 14(c). Section 14(c) lets companies pay disabled people less than the minimum wage. Companies get a special piece of paper called a 14(c) certificate. The certificate says that the company is allowed to pay disabled people less than the minimum wage.

For more information regarding the FLSA, contact your nearest Wage and Hour District Office. To find your nearest office, check your local telephone directory under U.S. Government, Department of Labor.

[Definition from from Job Accommodation Network's Accommodation and Compliance Series: [Disability Related Law](#)]

**More Information:**

[Job Accommodation Network's Accommodation and Compliance Series: Disability Related Law](#)

[The Employment of Workers with Disabilities at Subminimum Wages](#) **\*Highly Controversial\***

[Recent News Article: Many People with Disabilities are Paid Pennies. Build Back Better Could Help End That.](#)

[Disability Rights NC: Sheltered Workshops and the Subminimum Wage in NC: Incentives and Accountability](#)

**The Ticket to Work Program** is for people who receive Social Security disability benefits. It is meant to help people with disabilities find and keep jobs. It offers training, career counseling, job referrals and other services. It is open to most people ages 18 to 64 who are receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

It is a free program. Public or private groups work together with the Social Security Administration (SSA) to help people with disabilities find and keep jobs. These groups are divided into 2 types of services:

1. Employment Networks (EN): These are employers, nonprofit organizations or government agencies that offer services to people who may have more experience or need less support. These services might be training, career advice, job placement and/or workplace support.
2. Vocational Rehabilitation agencies (VR): These are state-level agencies that offer services to people who need more significant support to make it possible for them to work. These services might be education, skills training, workplace accommodation and/or other supports. Job seekers who complete a VR program may shift to an EN to get continued support.

More Information:

Job Accommodation Network's Accommodation and Compliance Series: [Disability Related Law](#) ]

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**The Workforce Investment Act (WIA)** was passed in 1998 to help both people looking for jobs and businesses looking for employees. It helps job seekers learn the skills that they need to be successful at work. Then it helps businesses find these job seekers so that they can hire them. To do this, the WIA uses One-Stop Centers. These One-Stop Centers serve as a single location where people can learn about jobs that are available and the services that can help them to find and keep a job. Anyone who needs help finding a job can use the One-Stop Center, including people with disabilities. There are no eligibility requirements for core services.

More Information:

Job Accommodation Network's Accommodation and Compliance Series: [Disability Related Law](#) ]

[Rehabilitation Act of 1973– Pacer](#)  
[Section 503– US Department of Labor](#)

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**The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)** became law in 2014. This law gives money to state vocational rehabilitation (VR) programs to support students with intellectual disabilities find a job. Each state's VR program must offer pre-employment transition services for students with disabilities. This might include job counseling, internships, transition to post-secondary education, workplace readiness training and/or instruction in self-advocacy.

More Information:

[Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act– Pacer](#)  
[WIOA: What it Means for People with IDD– Arc of the Triangle](#)

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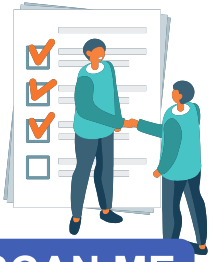
## Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Recent Changes to Segregated Employment in NC

More than 1,000 people with disabilities are working in sheltered workshops or Adult Developmental Vocational Program settings across North Carolina, where workers with disabilities are typically separated from nondisabled workers and most are paid far below the minimum wage, according to the group Disability Rights North Carolina. year the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services will begin phasing out these programs and instead offer support to get people with disabilities into what it calls competitive integrated employment. That is when someone with a disability is paid minimum wage or more and receives the same benefits and chances for promotions as nondisabled co-workers. [Definition from a 2022 article by [Spectrum News](#) ]

More Information:

- [Disability Rights NC: Changes to Segregated Employment in NC](#)
- [NC DHHS: NC Agrees to End Segregated Employment Services](#)

# Employment Services



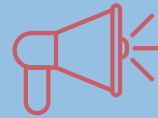
SCAN ME

Employers in the Triangle / Triad are fortunate to be in one of the most concentrated regions for disability employment services!

Work Together NC has established a growing database of the services that may be available to your employees. Many of these organizations serve as a resource to employers as well and could assist you with employee recruitment and implementation of inclusive practices. Employers are encouraged to contact any of these agencies to inquire about their offerings for employers!



## We want to hear from you!



Let us know your feedback! Should we make this an annual event? What other topics or questions should be covered? Please scan the QR code to access the survey!

SCAN ME



## Summit Evaluation Survey



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*Possibility to Opportunity*



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