

# EMPLOYMENT RESOURCE PACKET FOR SELF ADVOCATES AND THEIR FAMILIES OR SERVICE PROVIDERS



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



THE UNIVERSITY  
of NORTH CAROLINA  
at CHAPEL HILL

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!



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@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.

**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.

## MYTH #7

People with disabilities are more likely to leave their job.

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

## MYTH #8

Hiring employees with disabilities increases workers compensation insurance rates.

**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.

## MYTH #9

People with disabilities are more likely to sue me.

**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.

## MYTH #10

Disabilities are always visible.

**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](http://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)

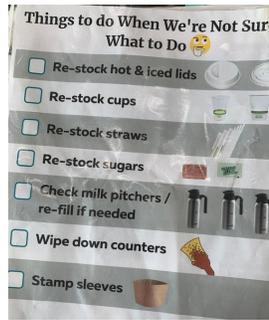
# Tips for Supporting People with ID/DD in the Workplace

**\*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.**

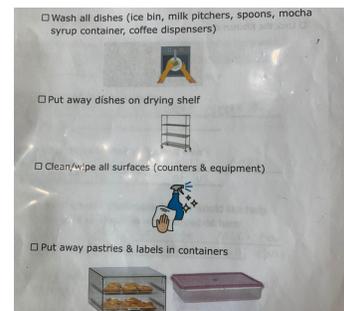
## 1 Try different formats for presenting information/directions and providing training



Picture Based Task Analysis



Written Instructions/Checklists



Label equipment



Object based directions



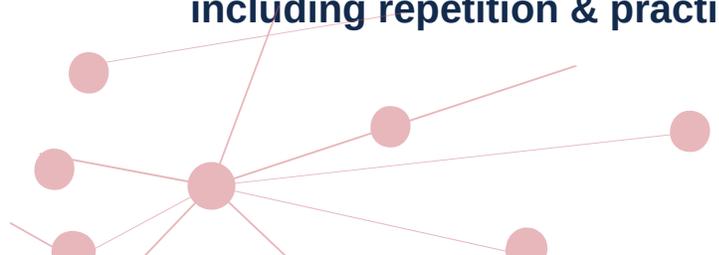
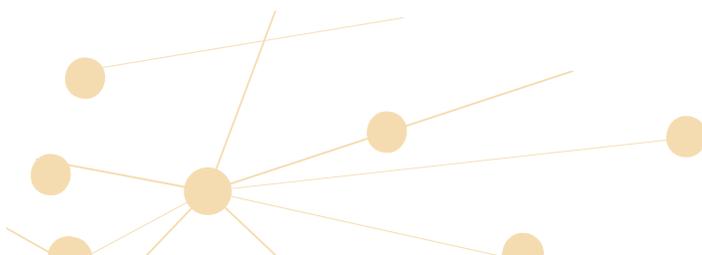
Model / demonstrate tasks



Provide video tutorials



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



## 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 respect. 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



This toolkit is designed to help you gain skills for your job search.

[By Youth For Youth:](#)  
[Employment](#)  
National Collaborative on  
Workforce and Disability



This guidebook introduces youth with disabilities to topics such as finding and keeping the right job, disability disclosure, accommodations, and mentorship.

[Job Accommodation](#)  
[Network](#)

This website includes a search tool to help you identify accommodations (supports in the workplace) that may be helpful for you. They also offer free consultation, email templates for requesting accommodations, and other helpful resources.

[www.OurAbility.com](#)  
[www.Abilityjobs.com](#)  
[www.SourceAble.com](#)  
[www.Disabledperson.com](#)  
[HireAutism.org](#)

These sites include job postings from employers who are hoping to hire people with disabilities.

[CareerOneStop.org](#)

[MyNextMove.org](#)

[OnetOnline.org](#)



These sites offer a search tool for exploration of jobs, job requirements, and job training options. They also include self assessments to identify jobs that align with your strengths and interests

[Customized Interview](#)  
[Worksheet](#) –  
Training Resource  
Network, Inc.



This worksheet can help you organize your thoughts in preparation for an interview.



Site and Source

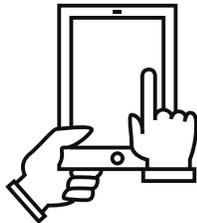
Description

[Working While Disabled:  
How We can Help  
Social Security  
Administration](#)



This guidebook explains the rules around working and receiving disability benefits.

[Practice Job Application](#)



This standard application can be used to practice applying for a job. It can also be a good reference so you can have most of the information you need for different applications all in one place.

[Disclosure Decisions](#)



This handbook guides individuals with disabilities through decision making, i.e, pros and cons, around sharing their disability with their employer (called self Disclosure)

[Resume Builder](#)



This site offers an accessible resume building app where you can find a template that fits your needs and style!

[Employment Rights FAQ](#)

[Your Rights at Work](#)

[Disability Rights NC](#)



These pages provide important information about your rights in the workplace.



**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

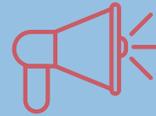


Families living in the Triangle / Triad are fortunate to be in one of the most concentrated regions for disability employment services.

However, we recognize that adult services can be very complex to navigate. Work Together NC is committed to making these services and resources more accessible.

Work Together NC has established a growing database of the services that may be available to help you or your loved one access meaningful work.

## 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!



### Summit Evaluation Survey



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