



**STATE OF WASHINGTON**  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES**  
**Developmental Disabilities Administration**  
PO Box 45310, Olympia, WA 98504-5310

**Employment Services Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

**What are Employment services?**

Employment services are individualized services that provide individuals with opportunities to explore employment options and participate in activities that support you to obtain/maintain paid community employment. It is provided by qualified providers contracted in Washington Counties.

**Who is eligible for Employment services?**

Employment services are available to individuals 21 years and older who are: on the Basic Plus, Core, or Community Protection Home and Community Based Service Waivers or individuals on Roads to Community Living. Individuals in Skilled Nursing Facilities with a Preadmission Screening and Residential Review (PASRR) may also receive this service.

**What can I expect from my Employment service?**

Your Employment service provider will meet with you, and through a process of discovery and individualized planning, identify your interests to develop an Employment plan with strategies to access your local community to obtain/maintain paid employment. The activities will be integrated and provide opportunities to contribute and develop relationships with people in your community who are not paid staff.

**How do I choose an employment provider?**

You have the right to choose your own provider and a list of contracted providers in each County is available for you to review and interview. When working with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) it is recommended you choose a provider that is also contracted to provide employment services through DDA. You have the ability to change providers at any time.

**Why does the Developmental Disabilities Administration require that individuals access Employment services before other Day Services?**

Washington State is an Employment First state that has adopted a Working Age Adult policy (DDA Policy 4.11) for individuals age 21 to 62. Employment is the most effective way we know to achieve the benefits outlined in [Developmental Disabilities Administration Guiding Values](#), provide a pathway out of poverty and increase choice and inclusion. All individuals, regardless of support needs or disability, are given the opportunity to explore inclusive community options with paid employment as the priority outcome. The first nine months of employment services helps the individual understand community options and how to become a part of their local community.

**Is there an expectation of how long it will take me to obtain paid employment?**

No, there is no time limit on how long you can be in Employment services without obtaining paid employment. However, it is expected that your provider develop an individualized employment plan. The provider will regularly communicate with you about progress and activities. Your progress will be evaluated every six months to ensure you are moving forward on your pathway to your employment goal.

**What if I don't know what kind of job I want?**

Your Employment provider is trained to help you identify areas of interest through a process of discovery where you are provided various opportunities in the community to see what you most enjoy or show interest in. In addition, they will seek input from those who know you best.

**What activities are available to help me on my pathway to paid employment?**

Employment service activities will vary depending on what you need. The activities are individualized based on **your** interests, integrated with other individuals without disabilities in the community, and accessible by public transit or a reasonable commute from your home. The following activities are commonly used to assist individuals on their pathway to paid employment:

1. Vocational exploration and discovery to discover preferences, skills and abilities.
2. Community-Based Assessments or volunteer opportunities to obtain experience to put on a resume.

\* For a detail list see the following link: [Employment Activities, strategies, outcomes measures](#)

**What if I want additional work hours or a different job?**

Your employment plan has your desired employment goal identified in terms of work hours and type of job. Your plan will have strategies identified to achieve that goal. You need to communicate with your employment provider whenever you want a change in your employment goal whether it is additional work hours or a different job.

**What if I don't want to participate in Employment services?**

DDA also offers Community Access which is available to individuals 62 years and older and individuals who have participated in nine months of Employment services and choose Community Access services instead of continuing in Employment services. An Exception to Rule can be requested through your DDA case manager if you have not or do not want to participate in 9 months of employment services.

**Can School to Work programs or other employment preparation count toward the 9 months?**

No, the nine months of employment services must be funded by DDA.

**Can I have Community Access and Employment services at the same time?**

No, but if you choose Community Access after nine months of employment, you can choose to go back to Employment services at any time.

**How many hours of support will I receive in Employment?**

Your monthly Employment service hours are determined by your annual assessment completed by your case manager from the Developmental Disabilities Administration. Monthly service hours range from 1-12, but additional hours may be approved once you become employed or while actively involved in job development.

**Will I always have a staff person with me in Employment services?**

You will always have appropriate supports to participate safely in employment activities; however, your employment support staff may not always be present if there is not a need for support or you have developed natural supports in your work setting. The ideal outcome of the service is that you develop relationships with co-workers and/or your employer to help support you.

**What other services are available to help me obtain employment?**

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) provides short-term services to assist individuals with disabilities to obtain jobs. DVR offers career counseling, assessment options, job development, and on-the-job training. DVR works in partnership with DDA to support Employment services.