

What is supported employment?

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Supported Employment is an approach to vocational rehabilitation that assists clients (and members of their families) in finding and keeping a job that pays a competitive wage, capitalizes on personal strengths, and provides the support necessary to be successful in the workplace. Examples of specific services include, but are not limited to: finding a job, keeping a job, connection to resources, an updated résumé, on-site job coaching, and improving interview skills.

How does supported employment help?

Empirical research has shown that employment is very often an important ingredient in a young person's journey through recovery. Supported Employment can lead to:

- building self esteem
- moving to independence and self-reliance
- learning to manage finances
- development of coping skills
- improved social skills
- acquiring a work history
- a broadening of interests
- identifying a career

Who is eligible for supported employment?

No one is excluded from participating in Supported Employment and all clients are considered ready to work, regardless of their symptoms, work history, or other problems, such as substance abuse or involvement with the legal system.

What is an employment specialist?

The Employment Specialist is a trained clinician providing Supported Employment and participates fully in the PIER clinical treatment team meetings, collaborating with other mental health clinicians to provide integrated, wrap-around services. A central goal for the Employment Specialist is to assist clients in meeting their vocational goals and connecting them to community goods and services through employment. The Employment Specialist also serves as a resource to both clients and employers on the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Maine State Child Labor Law.

Frequently asked questions

If I work, will I lose my SSI/SSDI benefits?

The Employment Specialist can arrange an appointment with a Community Work Integration Counselor (CWIC) who will explain how to work and hold onto your benefits.

Do I have to be at a certain level of recovery in order to work?

No, every client is considered ready to work.

How often do we meet?

Usually once a week for an hour, however the Employment Specialist and client work together to create a work plan that best suits the client's schedule and needs.