

Glossary of Terms

Accommodation

A modification or adjustment to a job, the work environment, or the way things are usually done during the hiring process, according to the American's with Disabilities Act. Reasonable accommodations are not "special treatment" and often benefit all employees.

Competitive, integrated employment

A job located in the community with at least minimum wage where the employee with a disability interacts with other people (co-workers, customers, or vendors) who do not have disabilities during the performance of their duties to the same extent as their co-workers.

Customized employment

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 describes customized employment as "competitive integrated employment for an individual with a significant disability that is based on the strengths, needs and interests of the individual with the significant disability." It also states that it should be "designed to meet the specific abilities of the individual with a significant disability and the business needs of the employer."

Employment First

A set of principles that many public systems, agencies, and states have committed to that assert that employment in the general workforce is the first and preferred outcome in the provision of publicly funded services for all working age citizens with disabilities, regardless of level of disability.

Employment Service Organizations (ESO)

Sometimes also referred to as a community rehabilitation provider (CRP), an ESO is an approved vendor organization that provides community-based employment services to individuals with disabilities.

Evidence-based

When a specific intervention or practice is described as "evidence-based," it means that several independent studies have each found it to lead to improved outcome measures in a particular area. When available, practitioners should rely on evidence-based practices since they are scientifically proven to work.

Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD)

Refers to several different types of disability that affect cognition or the way people process information. Autism, intellectual disability, and other neurodevelopmental disabilities all fall under the general umbrella of IDD.

Project SEARCH + ASD Supports

An evidence-based internship model embedded in community businesses that has been shown by research to lead to competitive, integrated employment for youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Internships last for a student's entire last year of high school and consist of a total of 900 hours (720 in integrated workplaces and 180 in the classroom).



Self-determination

The freedom to live as one chooses, or to act or decide without consulting another or others. Self-determination is made up of many skills such as choice making, decision making, problem solving, goal setting & attainment, self-regulation, self-instruction, self-advocacy, internal locus of control, self-efficacy, self-awareness and self-knowledge.

Segregated work settings

Also referred to as sheltered workshops, these vocational settings typically pay less than minimum wage, separate individuals with disabilities from nondisabled peers and co-workers, and lack meaningful integration into the community. Studies have shown that these "vocational training" settings do not lead to competitive, integrated employment for participants.

Supported employment

An employment model designed for individuals with significant disabilities which provides intensive job supports in order to employ individuals in integrated community businesses, earning minimum wage or better, and working side-by-side with co-workers, customers, and vendors without disabilities.

Transition

The time period before a high school student graduates where the focus shifts to preparing youth to engage in life after graduation, including in the area of work. Federal legislation requires that special education include planning and services related to employment for youth with disabilities by age 16 at the latest.

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

Agencies in each state designed to support individuals with disabilities to gain and maintain employment through funding and services, which include things like gaining skills, interviewing, choosing a career, job development or placement, on the job training, and getting accommodations.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Federal legislation passed in 2014 designed to increase high-quality employment for Americans, including those with disabilities. WIOA emphasizes the goal of all vocational rehabilitation is to promote competitive, integrated employment for people with disabilities and put an end to segregation, non-work, and sub-minimum wage.