



## California's Employment First Policy

Was signed into law in October, 2013, by Governor Brown. [www.dds.ca.gov](http://www.dds.ca.gov)

This exciting addition to California state law now means that competitive employment in the community can become a real choice for individuals with developmental disabilities. Being employed at a typical workplace and working together with people in your community has become a possibility that is now supported by state law. Competitive employment is finding a job within the community where you are paid about the same as other people doing the same job and at least minimum wage. It could also be working for yourself in your own small business.

The Lanterman Act states in Section 4869(a)(1) "It is the policy of the state that opportunities for integrated, competitive employment shall be given the highest priority for working age individuals with developmental disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities." This means that the state's "highest priority" is to make "integrated competitive employment" a real choice for people with developmental disabilities.

Regional centers shall provide persons served 16 years or older information about the Employment First Policy. This includes options for integrated competitive employment, and services and supports, including postsecondary education.

Information about the Employment First Policy can be found on the website of the State Council on Developmental Disabilities ([www.s added to the text](http://www.s added to the text)) as well as the Department of Developmental Services ([www.dds.ca.gov](http://www.dds.ca.gov)).

## Thinking About Work?

It can be a lot of work to get a job. But with the right help, people can get a job and be paid well. A person should consider:

- What am I good at?
- What do I like to do?
- What kind of workplace would be best for me?

People usually try out small jobs or volunteer to see what they like.

## How to Find Work

- Ask your Service Coordinator how the regional center can help you prepare for work, find a job, succeed on the job, or start your own business
- Volunteer for different jobs to learn what you like doing
- Talk to friends and family about your goals
- Explore work training programs at adult school or college
- Ask about employment supports at your Planning Team Meetings
- Explore getting employment support from the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR). Your Service Coordinator can help get you started with DOR
- Work with your team at school to create goals around job skills, and volunteer or paid work

## Employment & Your Individual Program Plan (IPP)

When you plan with your service coordinator around employment opportunities, the first option that will be considered is competitive employment. Competitive work is a real choice. Your Service Coordinator can help you find resources in the community to support your employment goals.

## Supported Employment

Adults who want to work may be eligible for Supported Employment services. Supports could include job development, transportation training, and specialized job training.

The decision about whether or not Supported Employment is the right service is made by the planning team. The adult, his or her Service Coordinator, the Department of Rehabilitation and other members of the planning team work together to create an agreement about the supports that might be most helpful. Supported Employment can be provided in individual or group settings, depending upon the needs, interests, talents and skills of the person.

***“Self-employment services provide supports that lead an individual toward earning income directly from one’s own business, trade, or profession, rather than as salary or wages from an employer. They may include small business development, micro-enterprise, or telecommuting.” ~ CARF Manual***

## Self-Employment

Self-employment options include micro-enterprises. These are small business ventures that reflect the unique skills and talents of a person. The IPP planning team often helps support the development of the business. Micro-enterprise loans up to \$1000 are available through TCRC. Let your Service Coordinator know if you would like to explore this option.

## Options Other Than Employment

If employment isn’t right for you, talk to your Service Coordinator about other options.

## Getting Help from Your Family Members

- Talk to your family about the type of work that you might like
- Explore training ideas in the community such as Adult Education or college with their help
- Invite your family members to your IEP & IPP meetings

## For Family Members to Consider

- Talk to your family member who’s seeking a job
- Find out what type of work interests them
- Help prepare them for work or higher education
- Participate in their IEP and IPP meetings

- Partner with the regional center to take an active role in planning
- Consider your contacts in the community as you brainstorm about possible work options including volunteering or micro-enterprise options
- Ask about new programs being developed through Adult Education and Community Colleges

## Is College Right for You?

Tri-Counties Regional Center has been working with local colleges to enhance employment training programs that serve people with developmental disabilities. Talk to your Service Coordinator to find out if a local program can help you reach your education or employment goals.

***With initiative and the right supports and opportunities, people with developmental disabilities can work. They can succeed at a job, earn decent pay, meet people on the job, and be more a part of their community.***

## Department of Rehabilitation

The DOR provides consultation, counseling and vocational rehabilitation, job development, job coaching, working with community partners to assist the people they serve. Learn more about DOR services at [www.dor.ca.gov](http://www.dor.ca.gov) or call:

*San Luis Obispo - (805) 549-3361*

*Santa Barbara - (805) 560-8130*

*Santa Maria - (805) 928-1891*

*Oxnard - (805) 385-2400*

## Mission

TCRC provides **person and family centered** planning, services and supports for individuals with developmental disabilities to maximize **opportunities and choices** for living, working, learning and recreating within their **community**

## San Luis Obispo County

### Atascadero

7305 Morro Rd., Suite 101  
Atascadero, CA 93422

(805) 461-7402 *phone*

(805) 461-9479 *fax*

*Parents Helping Parents FRC*

(805) 461-7415 *phone*

### San Luis Obispo

3450 Broad St., Suite 111  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

(800) 456-4153 *toll free*

(805) 543-2833 *phone*

(805) 543-8725 *fax*

*Parents Helping Parents FRC*

(805) 543-3277 *phone*

## Santa Barbara County

### Santa Barbara

520 East Montecito St.  
Santa Barbara, CA 93103

(800) 322-6994 *toll free*

(805) 962-7881 *phone*

(805) 884-7229 *fax*

*Alpha Resource Center*

(805) 683-2145 *phone*

### Santa Maria

1234 Fairway Dr., Suite A  
Santa Maria, CA 93455

(800) 266-9071 *toll free*

(805) 922-4640 *phone*

(805) 922-4350 *fax*

*Alpha Resource Center*

(805) 347-2775 *phone*

## Ventura County

### Oxnard

2401 E. Gonzales Rd., Ste 100  
Oxnard, CA 93036

(800) 664-3177 *toll free*

(805) 485-3177 *phone*

(805) 988-9521 *fax*

*Rainbow Connection FRC*

(805) 485-9643 *phone*

### Simi Valley

2635 Park Center Dr., Ste A  
Simi Valley, CA 93065

(800) 517-2524 *toll free*

(805) 522-8030 *phone*

(805) 522-8142 *fax*

*Rainbow Connection FRC*

(805) 823-2325 *phone*



**Tri-Counties  
Regional Center**

**Person Centered in All We Do**

*Mission:* TCRC provides person and family centered planning, services and supports for individuals with developmental disabilities to maximize opportunities and choices for living, working, learning and recreating in the community.