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Guide to Supported Employment

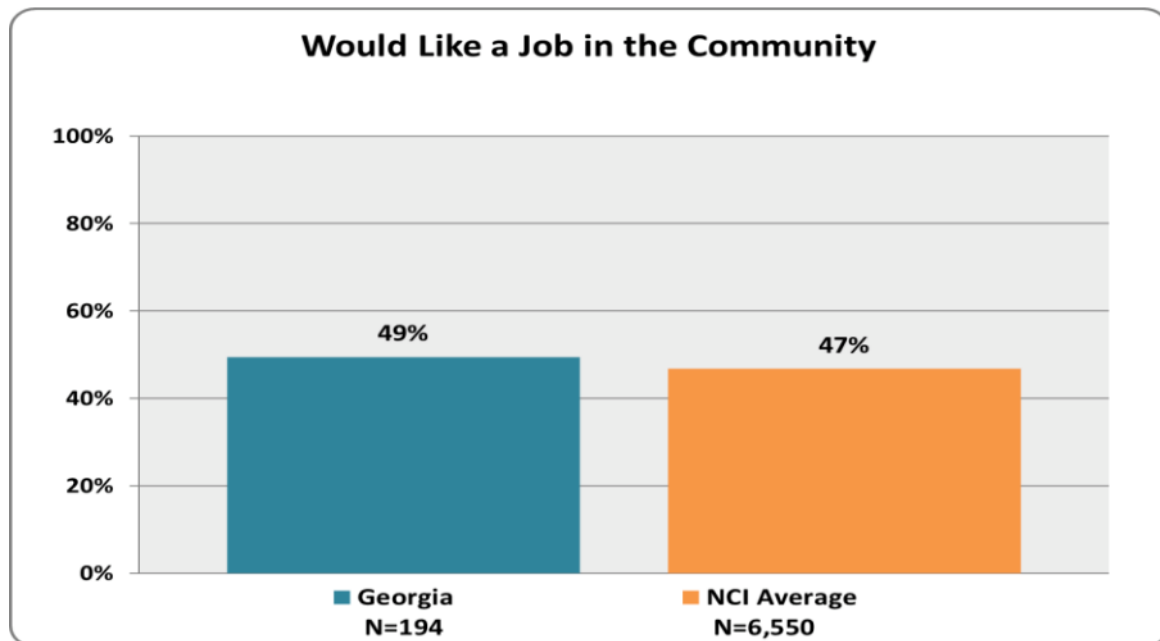
The Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities provides Supported Employment services to assist individuals with disabilities in locating and maintaining meaningful employment in their communities. Supports are designed to capture the individual's strengths, needs, and interests.



Why Employment?

Most adults get a sense of identity and self-worth from employment. Our society values work and expects those of working age to be contributing members of the community. DBHDD is committed to assuring that the opportunity for employment is available to all who wish to participate. Recent National Core Indicators (NCI) indicate that when people in services were asked if they would like a job, 49% said yes.

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Although nearly half of the people surveyed want a job, our data indicate that only 12% of all the people served are in supported employment. This is a concern because we know we can do better. The best performing state is Washington with 86% of the people with IDD served in supported employment.

Partnership with the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA)

GVRA's single mission is to assist people with a range of disabilities to enter or return to the workforce. This mission aligns with the DBHDD's interest in supporting people with IDD in living a life so that their contribution to their communities is manifested. In partnership with the GVRA, job seekers receiving NOW/COMP Waiver services, their Support Coordinator, service provider of choice, and a DD Counselor create a plan for initial supported employment services. GVRA funds the time limited supported employment services for Medicaid waiver participants because pre-employment services which are covered under a program funded under section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are non-covered Medicaid services. After a job seeker is employed and stable on the job, his/her ongoing supports for job maintenance will continue as approved through the NOW/COMP Medicaid waiver with DBHDD.

GVRA Initial Supported Employment Services

GVRA provides funding to service providers for two types of supported employment; Traditional Supported Employment and Customized Supported Employment. GVRA defines the phases of each of these forms of supported employment as listed below:

Phases of Traditional Supported Employment

- 1. Services Identification**
- 2. Job Development/Placement**
- 3. Training and Initiation of Ongoing Supports**
- 4. Stabilization**
- 5. VR Services Completion and Transition to Extended Services**

Phases of Customized Supported Employment

- 1. Plan Meeting Service Identification**
- 2. Discovery Assessment and Profile**
- 3. Job Placement/Development**
- 4. Training and initiation of Ongoing Supports**
- 5. Stabilization**
- 6. VR Services Completion and Transition to Extended Services**

Most NOW/COMP waiver participants will qualify and benefit from Customized Supported Employment as it focuses on identifying a person's strengths, interests and contributions. This information is used to negotiate with an employer for a job that builds on the job seeker's skills and abilities, and at the same time fulfilling an employer's unmet need. This form of employment is specialized and requires that employment specialists who offer this service must have advanced training and certification in Discovery.

Are there people who have benefitted from Customized Supported Employment in Georgia?

Yes, and they live in both rural and urban areas of the state. Read the stories below:



Ryan Carroll works as a Stocking Technician in the Laboratory at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta at Scottish Rite. His duties include: picking up specimens from outlying clinics and delivering them to the Lab, decreasing patient wait times and increasing satisfaction rates amongst families. His contributions have made such an impact that the Departments he services held a "Ryan Carroll Appreciation Day" to recognize him for his work.

Charlie is a farm hand at J and L Farm and Stables in Hephzibah, Georgia. The farm is an organic working farm. Charlie is responsible for the animals, feeding, gathering eggs, watering, and taking them in and out of pasture as needed.



He is also responsible for his garden.

He has been raking the area and getting rid of weeds and debris to get the soil ready for spring planting. Charlie has learned to use/drive the farm equipment.

Charlie also helped get the farm cleaned up after winter for a tour with the Department of Agriculture. He mowed, cleared dead limbs and cleaned out flowerbeds to ready the farm for spring and the tour. Charlie is busy and likes to stay working.



These stories are just a few of the stories of people who when given the opportunity and the right supports have gotten jobs. Their work enhances their lives and helps the employer's bottom line!

Employment is an option for everyone no matter where they live.