



# **VOCATIONAL SERVICES**

# **WELCOME!!**

Welcome to OPTIONS' Vocational Services. It is our goal to provide you with the help you need to develop your vocational skills and find a job. This handbook will let you know how Vocational Services works. If you still have questions after reading the handbook, please feel free to ask the OPTIONS' Vocational Services staff about them.

You will not be discriminated against because of your race, color, creed, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, age, religion, ancestry or national origin. You are free to choose OPTIONS as your Vocational Services provider and can transfer to another provider for any reason.

## **What is Vocational Services?**

Vocational Services helps adults with disabilities to find and keep paid jobs in the communities where they live. OPTIONS will help you to develop behaviors, attitudes, skills, physical endurance and productivity necessary to be successful in getting and keeping a job. There are several programs in Vocational Services. These include work assessments, preparation classes, job development, and placement programs. These programs are funded by the California Department of Rehabilitation.

Each person served in Vocational Services will have an Individual Service Plan (ISP). The ISP will be put together by a group of people known as the "Interdisciplinary Team," or "I.D. Team" for short. This team will include you, your family or guardians (if desired), OPTIONS' staff, your Department of Rehabilitation Counselor, your doctors (if necessary), and any other people that you may want to be in the group. Your ISP will outline the vocational goals and objectives that you have and how you and your team are going to work together to obtain them.

All of OPTIONS' Vocational Services staff are well trained. All staff are required to attend 7 training courses including behavior management classes, and are certified in First Aid and CPR. Newly hired staff must provide DMV and auto insurance information, pass a background check, and have their fingerprints taken. General OPTIONS' policies and procedures are reviewed during a new employee orientation. Staff then

receive on-the-job training which includes reviewing specific job duties, a review of files, and shadowing trained staff.

## **How do I get into OPTIONS Vocational Services?**

First of all, you must have a desire to work, be at least 18 years old, be considered safe in the community, have an open case with the Department of Rehabilitation, and meet government work eligibility requirements.

Second, if you must ask your Department of Rehabilitation Counselor to refer you for job development and placement. You will need to complete an application at that time. The authorization process will take several weeks, depending on how quickly we can get the necessary records. When the Department of Rehabilitation gives us the "O.K.", we will be authorized to help you find a job. In some cases it may be determined that you need additional training before beginning the development and placement services. These services provide persons with hands-on job training in a structured work environment, prior to them working independently in a community setting.

If a person has a criminal record, OPTIONS will fully cooperate to the extent required by law. Information will be provided to any enforcement agency that is formerly involved assuming there is documentation of such involvement. An example would be the probation department in which case OPTIONS would obtain a copy of the court order regarding probation. Confidential information which is not public record will remain confidential and not be disclosed without the permission of the persons involved.

**THE EMPLOYMENT PREPARATION AND PLACEMENT  
PROCESS**

## **CAREER EXPLORATION WORKSHOP:**

This is a 6 week preparation course taught by OPTIONS' Job Developer. The workshop provides life-long job skills training. Individuals referred are taught how to determine the right type of job match, how to complete an application, and will learn important interview skills. Each person will also be assisted in developing a resume. The dress for this workshop is business casual and punctuality is crucial.

## **JOB DEVELOPMENT:**

Once you have successfully completed the Career Exploration Workshop you will work cooperatively with your Job Developer to find a job that is well suited to your likes and abilities. It is important to understand that your job developer does not find the job for you, but helps you find your own job. What this means is that we will work with you to find job leads and current information about any positions available. You will have to fill out applications and go to interviews for jobs you are interested in. We do not just "give" you a job but you will be fully supported by Vocational Services Staff throughout the entire job seeking process.

The length of time it takes to find a job depends upon what type of job you are interested in and how many jobs are available in your areas of interest. It is important that you get a job that you like. It usually takes a few weeks to find the right job, and in some cases it may even take a few months.

## **JOB PLACEMENT:**

Once you are hired, your Job Developer will submit all necessary paperwork to the Department of Rehabilitation on your behalf. If authorized by your Rehabilitation Counselor, a job coach may temporarily accompany you to the job site. If you have a job coach, this person will help you with all aspects of your new job, including buying work clothes if needed; teaching you how to get to and from work; and understanding the work rules/procedures, scheduling, and routine safety procedures.

## **THINGS TO KNOW ONCE YOU HAVE A JOB**

### **SCHEDULING:**

The number of hours you are scheduled to work will be determined by your employer. You will be responsible for knowing your work schedule and arriving to work on time. You will also be responsible for communicating with your employer about any changes you may have in your schedule, such as calling to let your employer know if you cannot work or requesting time off. Your employer depends on you to do your job; therefore, if you are sick and cannot work for any reason, you must call your employer as soon as you know you cannot go to work. Your employer will decide which holidays you will be able to take off with pay. You will get the same holidays as anyone else who works with you for the same company.

### **WAGES:**

When placed in a job in the community you will make at least the minimum wage. When you get your paycheck, there will be deductions for state and federal taxes. All people who are employed have these deductions on their paychecks. Some of these taxes pay for your Vocational Services. The OPTIONS' Vocational Services staff will help you understand these deductions. Some employers pay weekly, some pay every other week, and others pay twice a month.

If you receive Social Security Insurance (SSI) your earnings will affect the monthly amount that you receive. A general rule is that for every two dollars you earn, your benefits will be reduced by one dollar. So, even though working may reduce your SSI benefits, you are going to make more money if you work. An OPTIONS' staff person will talk to you about your SSI benefits before you start working. Sometimes you can reduce the affect your job has on SSI benefits before you start working. Sometimes you can reduce the affect your job has on SSI benefits through a "PASS" plan.

A PASS plan allows you to save money for specific things like transportation to and from work. The money you save will be deducted from the amount of your job earnings that is counted against your SSI benefits. The PASS plan must be approved by Social Security and the Department of Rehabilitation.

## YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following is a list of your rights and responsibilities while you participate in this program:

### **RIGHTS:**

1. You have a right to learn things that will help you do your best at your job; things like how to get to work; how to solve problems; and how to get along with your co-workers.
2. Your ID Team will put together an Individual Service Plan or "ISP" for you. The ISP explains the behaviors, adaptive living skills, and vocational goals that you will be working on while in Vocational Services. You will be an important member of your own ID Team.
3. You may request an ID Team meeting at any time.
4. When you get a job through OPTIONS' Vocational Services, you will be paid at least minimum wage for your work.
5. You have a right to have people treat you with respect and care.
6. OPTIONS' staff will treat you the same as everyone else.
7. You have a right to look at your records at any time. You are encouraged to have OPTIONS' staff present to help explain the contents to you.
8. You have a right to request reasonable accommodations at work. Your Vocational Services' staff will assist you with this.
9. If you do not like what we do, you have a right to talk to the following people about it:

Vocational Services Manager  
OPTIONS  
P.O. Box 877  
Morro Bay, CA 93443  
(805) 772-6066 or  
(805) 238-0599

TBI Manager  
OPTIONS  
P.O. Box 877  
Morro Bay, CA 93443  
(805) 772-6066

You may also want to talk to your Department of Rehabilitation Counselor:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_

**RESPONSIBILITIES:**

1. You are with us because the people at OPTIONS believe they can help you. If we cannot help you, we will assist you in finding someone who can.
2. You cannot remain in the program if you do not work on the objectives that are written in your Individual Service Plan (ISP).
3. When you are not doing what we think you can do to help yourself, we will request an ID Team meeting to talk about this issue.
4. OPTIONS can only provide the services that have been authorized by the Department of Rehabilitation.
5. You are responsible for following the policies and procedures of your employer.
6. We ask that you give us information that will help us to help you. You are responsible for being honest in your communication with Vocational Services' staff.
7. You are required to give us thirty days notice if you want to leave the program.
8. If you want services that are not provided by OPTIONS' Vocational Services program, you must pay for these yourself or find someone who will pay for them.
9. Allow your co-workers to have time and space to themselves.
10. Respect your co-workers and your co-workers' personal property. Do not use things that belong to them without their permission.
11. Cooperate with OPTIONS' Vocational Services' staff and show them respect - they are trying to help you.

