



OPTIONS
FAMILY OF SERVICES

Handbook

Vocational Services



This Handbook belongs to: _____

Welcome!

Welcome to OPTIONS' Vocational Services!

We are here to help you:

- Find a job
- Learn what you need to so you can get a job

It is important that you know that:

- You can choose to work with OPTIONS or someone else
- We will not treat you differently because of your race (including protective hairstyles and hair texture), religion (including religious belief, observance, dress or grooming practices), creed, color, sex, sex stereotype, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions (including breastfeeding), age (40 years or over), sexual orientation, gender, gender identification and expression, transgender status, transitioning employees, physical or mental disability, medical condition (including cancer), genetic characteristics, genetic information, family care, reproductive health decision-making, marital status, registered domestic partner status, enrollment in any public assistance program, status as military, or as a veteran or as a qualified disabled veteran, status as an unpaid intern or volunteer, ancestry, citizenship, national origin, protected medical leaves (including a request for or approval of leave under applicable leave of absence laws), domestic violence victim status, political affiliation, reproductive health decision-making, which includes, without limitation, a decision to use or access a particular drug, device, product or medical service for reproductive health, or any other classification protected by law ("Protected Characteristics"). We also won't let anyone else treat you differently because you have any of those Protected Characteristics, or you know or live with someone who they think has any of those Protected Characteristics.

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 skills to help you be successful in getting and keeping a job.

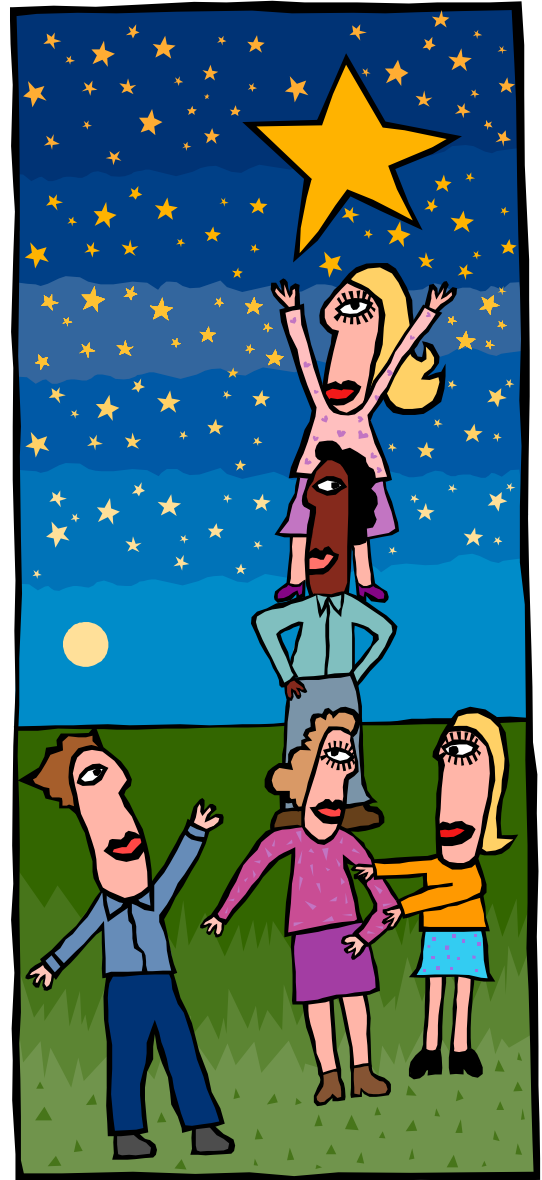
There are lots of different services we offer at Vocational Services. These include **work assessments, preparation classes, job development, and placement programs**. These programs are funded by the California Department of Rehabilitation.



What is an Individual Service Plan?

Each person 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 “ID 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.



What will my staff be like?

All of OPTIONS' Vocational Services staff are well trained. **All staff are required to attend 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.

OPTIONS' staff are here to help and assist you in reaching your goals!



How do I get into OPTIONS' Vocational Services?

In order to receive OPTIONS' Vocational Services, you must meet these requirements:



- 1. You must be 18 years or older**
- 2. Be considered safe in the community**
- 3. Have an open case with the Department of Rehabilitation**
- 4. Meet government work eligibility requirements**

Next, you must ask your Department of Rehabilitation counselor to refer you for job development:

- 1. Be referred by your Department of Rehabilitation counselor for job development**
- 2. Complete an application with Department of Rehabilitation to receive OPTIONS' services**
- 3. An authorization for services is then sent to OPTIONS**

***The authorization process may take several weeks, depending on how quickly we can get the necessary records.*

How do I get into OPTIONS Vocational Services?

When the Department of Rehabilitation gives us the OK we will be authorized to help you find a job. In some cases, the Department of Rehabilitation may feel that you need more training before entering our OPTIONS Vocational program. But that's okay, because you can apply again when you are ready!



What if I have a criminal record?

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.

"Informed Choice" Decision Making

"INFORMED CHOICE" DECISION MAKING

Once you have been made eligible for services, you and your counselor will begin your Vocational Assessment. This process is about gathering information to help you choose your career goal and the services you will need to attain successful employment. You and your counselor will examine your interests, abilities, aptitudes, educational achievements, work history, strengths and weaknesses. You may also be scheduled for vocational testing to look more carefully at these factors.



Informed choice means you have obtained all the information you need through the Vocational Assessment process to make sound decisions about your career path. You and your counselor will work as partners and may have several meetings to discuss the details of your employment plan.

When the process is completed, you should have a thorough understanding of your job options and an awareness of all the services available from which you may choose. You and your DOR counselor will now be ready to finalize and agree on your Individual Plan for Employment (IPE).

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

In 2014, the President of the United States updated the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to stress the importance of education, training, credentials, and skills; of helping people with barriers to employment; of meeting the needs of employers; of increasing the success and economic self-sufficiency of workers; and of aligning workforce development with education and economic development.

What this means:

- Persons working for sub-minimum wage will only be able to do so for a short amount of time in order to gain the skills for a job in the community. These persons will also have annual career counseling and information referrals, unless they have been referred by Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) after July 2016. These persons will have this counseling twice in the first year.
- All persons under the age of 24 cannot be placed at a site with sub-minimum wage UNLESS they have been considered ineligible for DOR services due to unsuccessful placement in a community job. Services like PVSA and Situational Assessments will be used first as well.
- The goal for everyone is Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE), which means that everyone is earning at least minimum wage and working in the community.
- OPTIONS is working with this act to provide the best possible employment opportunities for you!

Employment Preparation & Placement Process

Career Exploration Workshop / Employment Preparation

This is a 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 client will also be assisted in developing a resume. The dress for this workshop is business casual and punctuality is crucial.

Often the information will be taught on a 1:1 basis—just you and the Job Developer. You may learn:

- **Interview Skills**
- **How to Make a Resume**
- **Presentation and Hygiene**
- **Expectations at Work**
- **Social Skills at Work**



Employment Preparation & Placement Process

Situational Assessment- Employment Preparation



If you have an open case with Department of Rehabilitation and you are not sure what kind of job you want or if you are ready to go to work, you might be able to do a Situational Assessment. This is an opportunity to try different jobs and see what you like and do not like about them. OPTIONS' Job Developer will meet with you to find out what kinds of jobs you might want to try and will then talk to different employers to see if they would let you try working there. You can try up to three jobs for usually up to 40 hours of work total. This might be a paid or volunteer job. If the job is paid, you will earn the starting wage that the job usually pays. If it is a volunteer job, you will not be paid. While you are trying out these jobs, a job coach will be there to see what areas you might need to work on and to help you as needed. The Job Coach then writes a report that shares what would be a good step to take next. Then you meet with your DOR counselor to choose the next step.

Personal, Vocational, Social Adjustment

Personal, Vocational, Social Adjustment (PVSA) services are provided to assist a consumer develop or re-establish skills, attitudes, personal characteristics, interpersonal skills, work behaviors, and functional capacities to achieve and maintain positive employment outcomes. This service is authorized to address one or more barriers that are preventing a consumer from successfully completing their DOR Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). Training is time-limited, individualized, and provided in the environment where the identified appropriate behavior is needed or occurs.

The information will be taught on a 1:1 basis—just you and your job coach.

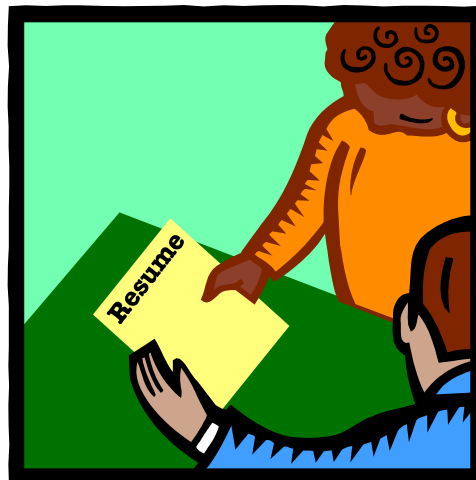
You will learn:

- **Appropriate interaction in the workplace**
- **Grooming and hygiene as related to work**
- **Mobility training in use of public transportation**
- **Work habits and attitudes such as attendance, punctuality, phoning in if ill, returning promptly from breaks and lunch**
- **Personal budgeting, banking, and bill payment**



Job Development

Once you have successfully completed Employment Preparation you will work cooperatively with your Job Developer to find a job that is well suited to your likes and abilities.



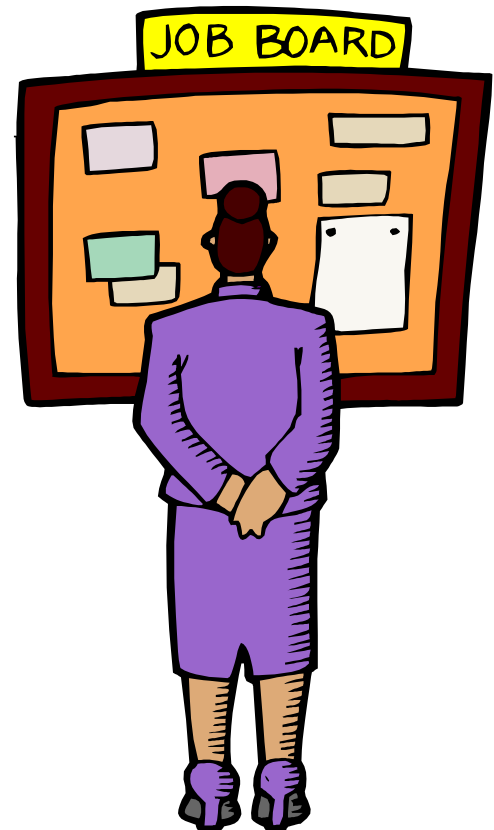
It is important to understand that your job developer does not find the job for you, but helps you find your own job.

What this means is that we will work with you to find your own job. We will work with you to find job leads and current information about any positions available. You will 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 during the whole job seeking process.

Finding a Job

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 sometimes takes a few weeks to find the right job, and in some cases it may even take a few months or longer. You will:

- **Meet with your Job Developer**
- **Look for Job Openings**
- **Call your Job Developer**
- **Apply to Good Job Leads**



Job Placement

Once you are hired, your Job Developer will submit all the necessary paperwork to the Department of Rehabilitation for you. If authorized by your Rehabilitation Counselor, a **Job Coach** may temporarily go with you to your job site. If you have a **Job Coach**, this person will help you with all parts 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.

- **There will be a 90 day follow up with your Job Developer**



Scheduling

The number of hours you are scheduled to work will be determined by your employer and based on your abilities. **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; so, if you are sick and cannot work for any reason, you need to 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.



- **Know your schedule**
- **Know your work policies**

Wages

When placed in a job in the community you will make at least 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 can help you understand these deductions.



Some employers pay weekly, some pay every other week, and others pay twice a month.

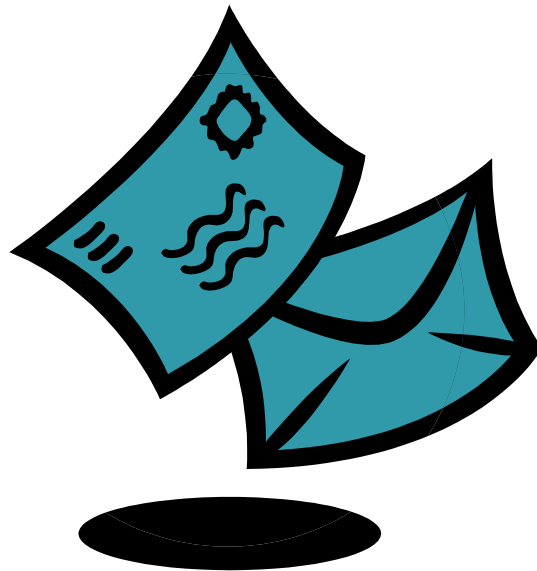
What if I receive SSI?

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 SSI 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 effect your job has on SSI benefits before you start working. **Sometimes you can reduce the effect your job has on SSI benefits through a "PASS" plan.**



(Check out the next page for more info about PASS!)

PASS

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.

PASS Summary:

- **PASS allows you to save money for specific things like transportation to and from work**
- **The money you save through PASS will be deducted from your job earnings that is counted against your SSI benefits**



Understanding Diversity

OPTIONS works to understand the diverse needs of each individual person by encouraging knowledge, sensitivity and development of skills to get along with people who may be different than you. There is a great diversity of people based on culture, religious or spiritual beliefs, sexual orientation, age, socio-economic status and language. It is important to recognize the many ways in which people are alike and respecting the differences between us. Each of us has unique talents, skills and opinions, based on our different experiences. We ask that you treat those you interact with, with respect and dignity no matter how different they may be from you.



Things to Remember

Continue to wash your hands!

- **How to wash hands:**

Lather with soap and warm water for about 20 seconds (how long it takes to sing happy birthday)



- **When to wash hands:**

Before and after: eating, leaving the house, using the bathroom, blowing your nose or touching your face at all, touching an animal, and whenever you feel necessary.

If soap and water are not available, you can use hand sanitizer. Make sure you have some just in case!

Staff are there to help you...

- Practice good hygiene
- Receive vaccines
- Get more information about vaccines
- Wash your hands
- Be safe if you are sick



Vaccines

- Vaccines (shots) are one of the tools we have to fight the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The vaccines are safe for you to receive and help protect you and your peers.

What if you feel sick?

- It is important that you always tell staff if you feel sick.
- You may need to isolate in your room to prevent your peers from also getting sick.
- At times staff may ask you to wear a mask to protect yourself or others when there are a lot of people sick. We ask that you do your best to cooperate with staff to keep everybody healthy.

Your Rights

YOUR 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 have a job through OPTIONS' Vocational Services, you will be paid at least minimum wage for your work.
5. You have the 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:

**Vocational Services Supervisor
1201 Palm Street
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
805 440 9551**

You may also contact your Department of Rehabilitation Counselor or Regional Center Service Coordinator (if applicable):

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Your 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 goals 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 the Vocational Services staff.
7. You are asked to give us 30 days notice if you want to discontinue services.
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 for 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.

What if I have a concern or problem?

If you have an issue or concern you can:

A) Speak to your Job Coach about the concern and see if they can help.

B) You can also speak to your supervisor to resolve the problem. If your supervisor is not able to help you within 1 week then:

C) You can speak to the department supervisor. If the department supervisor is not able to help you within 1 week then:

D) You can speak to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). If the CEO is not able to help within 1 week you can then:

E) Write a formal letter to the CEO. They must respond back to you within 20 business days of getting your letter, and will include an outlined plan to solve your concern. If the matter is still not resolved then:

F) Write a formal letter to the OPTIONS Board Members. This letter must have all the actions taken to try and resolve the concern. The Board Members may meet to discuss your concern within 10 days of receiving your letter. If Members decide not to take any action, they will send you back a letter saying why within 20 days. The board's action on particular concerns/issues will be final.

G) If you still need help then contact the appropriate State Agency case worker. The CEO or Program Director can provide to you the name, address and telephone number of that case worker. If the issue is still not resolved then:

H) You can contact the Developmental Disabilities Area Board IX (805) 682-8374 to get help. They may be able to help if no resolution has been given. If they cannot provide help then:

What if I have a concern or problem?

Continued...

- I) You can contact the specific State of California agency which might best address your specific concern / issue.
- J) The CEO will keep a log of all issues and complaints, including notes on steps made to a resolution.
- K) You can ask for a person to represent you and help you to make a resolution to your problem.
- L) There will never be retaliation for you raising a concern.

***For a complete list of this procedure please see **OPTIONS** Grievance Procedure.**

Acknowledgement

I Acknowledge....

I have received a copy of the OPTIONS Handbook and had it explained to me by OPTIONS staff.

Signature of Person Served

Date

Signature of Parent or Guardian (if applicable)

Date

Signature of OPTIONS Designated Staff Person

Date