

The Supported Employment Program Individual's Handbook

A Handbook for Self Advocates and their Support
Network



"Providing Employment Options for People with Developmental Disabilities."

Looking for a Job?

Are you thinking about getting a job and need help?

The Supported Employment Program (SEP) is a free employment service that may be able to help you.

The purpose of this handbook is to give you more information to help you decide if this service is right for you.

Lots of people have worked with the Supported Employment Program and found good jobs.

You can be one of those people too!



Tell Me More About the Supported Employment Program

The Supported Employment Program was opened in Chilliwack in 1987 by the Chilliwack Society for Community Living (CSCL).

The purpose of the program is to assist individuals with developmental disabilities find competitive employment in the community.

There are currently three staff called "Vocational Counsellors" who work in the Supported Employment program. The staff have many years of experience helping people find work, and are educated and experienced in supporting people with developmental disabilities.

Program staff can help you find a job that will suit your skills and interests, and help you train on the job. They can also be there to help you if your job changes or you want to look for a new job.

STEP 1 – WHAT DO I DO FIRST?

All applications for services from the Chilliwack Society for Community Living go through

**Community Living British Columbia
(CLBC)**

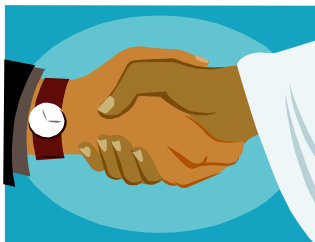


- ❖ To start with you must first telephone CLBC at 1-866-366-5986 or have someone call for you. You should ask to be referred to the

“Supported Employment Program”

- ❖ If the CLBC facilitator finds that you are suitable for the Supported Employment Program, you will be referred to the Chilliwack Society for Community Living.
- ❖ The CSCL’s Screening Committee then makes the decision whether or not you can be referred to the program you asked for. (Sometimes programs are full).
- ❖ The Screening Committee will then forward your name to the staff at the Supported Employment Program.

STEP 2 – THE ORIENTATION MEETING



Once your name has been forwarded to the program, you will receive a letter and a follow up telephone call from a Supported Employment staff. At this time an orientation meeting will be scheduled.

The **“Orientation Meeting”** is a very casual meeting so that we can get to know each other and usually takes about one hour.

We will also take some time to fill out a program questionnaire, which asks you about your present skills and abilities.

If you are nervous or would like some help when you come to the office, please feel free to bring someone with you:

- ❖ your mother or father
- ❖ sister or brother
- ❖ your caregiver or whoever you feel comfortable with.

We want them to be there to help you answer the questions because we want to get to know you.

Before you leave we will set up a time to get together again for the intake meeting.

STEP 3 – THE INTAKE MEETING

At the Intake Meeting we will fill out the “Adult Services admission/intake” package.

We will also ask you to sign a “Consent for Release of Information” form.

Sometimes when we are supporting you with your job goals, we need to get some information about you from other people. These people may be family members, people from other services, or past employers. This form gives us permission to contact these people.



STEP 4 – ACCEPTANCE INTO THE PROGRAM

After meeting with you, program staff will determine if you are ready for the program.

Those who qualify for the program:

- ❖ must be eligible for services as per
- ❖ Community Living BC criteria
- ❖ must be a minimum of 19 years of age
- ❖ must display a desire and willingness to work
- ❖ must have the ability to achieve
- ❖ independence on the job within 6 months
- ❖ must be willing to participate in
- ❖ pre-employment training, workshops and group activities
- ❖ must have any medical conditions/disorders under control (ie. epilepsy, mental illness, behavioral concerns)
- ❖ must have the ability to access
- ❖ transportation independently.

STEP 5 – YOU'RE IN!!! NOW WHAT!!!

You can expect to receive a letter in the mail saying that you have been accepted into the program.

We will call you to come in so that we can complete a contract.



This contract outlines your program goals and responsibilities and explains the services you can expect from us. It also explains that you can be in the program for up to 3 years.

Next we will ask you to complete a "Care Plan". The Care Plan helps us determine your needs and abilities. You will need to bring the following information:

- ❖ An I.D. Card with your name address and phone number
- ❖ Your Social Insurance Number
- ❖ Doctor's name and phone number
- ❖ The name and phone number of somebody we can call in an emergency
- ❖ Any medical information that you think might affect you working. (Whether you take medication or you can't lift heavy things)
- ❖ The name of your Employment Assistance Worker
- ❖ Any information from school, college or workshop that will help us to know what skills you have. Bring your resume if you have one.

Bring as many of these things as you can!

The more you bring, the better we get to know you.

STEP 6 – CAREER PLANNING

After we have spent some time getting to know one another better, a Supported Employment staff will work with you create an "**Employment Plan**".

Areas include in the "**Employment Plan**" are:

- ❖ Your employment history and preferences
- ❖ Your education and training history
- ❖ Your current living arrangements and supports available to you
- ❖ Your level of stamina, mobility and preferred training methods
- ❖ Your transportation needs

- ❖ Your current job search skills
- ❖ Your career decision making and assessment needs
- ❖ Recommended marketing by self and staff

Once your plan has been created, a Supported Employment staff will work with you to meet the goals you have set for yourself.

Job Club

You will also be invited to join our “Job Club”, which meets every second Tuesday at the Society’s office on Mary Street.

This is an employment support group with about 10 members who are also looking for work just like you.



Pre-Employment Training

If you’ve had little work experience or need to brush up on your job search skills you may be interested in taking a set of pre-employment workshops.

Topics that may be covered include:

- ❖ Career Decision Making
- ❖ Interest/Values/Skills Assessments
- ❖ Goal Setting
- ❖ Developing a Resume
- ❖ Job Search Strategies
- ❖ Interview Skills
- ❖ Dressing for Success
- ❖ Communication Skills
- ❖ Being a Quality Worker
- ❖ Assertiveness
- ❖ Anger Management
- ❖ Rights and Responsibilities
- ❖ Community Connections
- ❖ Workplace Safety

Resource Room

The Supported Employment Program Resource Room is located in the Society's Mary St office and is available to program participants Monday- Friday from 8:30am to 3:30pm.

Available for use:

- ❖ Computer with Internet access
- ❖ Job search resources (books & videos)
- ❖ Listings of local job opportunities
- ❖ Listings and pamphlets of community resources



STEP 7 - JOB SEARCH

Looking for and finding the right job may take some time.

You may be required to drop off resumes, fill out applications and phone potential employers about possible job openings.

Supported Employment staff can assist you with these things.

At some point a job will come up that may be right for you.

We will want you to discuss the job with your family or friends and think about the changes that working will bring.

Please feel free to speak with us about how your earnings will affect your disability benefits. We can also help you to arrange transportation to your job.

The Interview

If you decide you are interested in the job, you will probably be asked to go to an interview with the employer.

We can help by suggesting what you should wear and what you should bring with you.



If you don't get the first job you apply for do not be discouraged. Many of us apply many places before we get a job.

STEP 8 – CONGRATULATIONS YOU GOT THE JOB!!



The first step in starting a new job is planning how you are going to get there.

We will work out a plan with you and your family or friends.



The first few days on a job are very hard. Don't worry! Our staff will stay with you on the job to help you learn the job, make new friends and feel comfortable.

We will stay until your employer is happy and you are able to do the job independently.

Growing Pains and Moving Up.....

Lots of times, when you have been working somewhere for a while, jobs change, a new boss can come in or you have to learn something new.



If you still don't agree, have someone help you to fill out a complaint form.

The Supported Employment Program staff will come back and help you if you feel you need extra support.

Changing Jobs

Some times you may feel like you want a change. That's OK too. We can help you find a new job just like before.

Call and we will set up a meeting to discuss other employment options.

Please remember that it will take time as we have lots of people looking for their first job.

Even if you just want to talk to someone about your job or things at work, please call.



I'm Not Sure if I'm Ready For a Job Right Now... Can You Help Me?

BEING A VOLUNTEER! ! !

Not everybody is ready to jump into a paying job right away.

We can offer to help people to be volunteers.

Volunteering can be lots of fun without some of the pressure that working for money can bring.

It can also let you experience all the exciting things about having a job without feeling all the pressure.

Our staff can provide you with the same support if you would like to volunteer.

Satisfaction

Each year we will ask you to complete a "Satisfaction Survey".

This survey asks participants, their families and employers about their experience with the Supported Employment Program.



Accessibility

We want to make sure you can do the things you want to do, get the places you need to be, and understand the information you get.

Every year we send out surveys asking questions about accessibility problems you might be having.

If You Have A Concern or Disagreement:

- ❖ Talk to an SEP staff
- ❖ Talk to the Program Manager
- ❖ Talk to your family or friends
- ❖ Talk to a CLBC Facilitator

If you still don't agree, have someone help you fill out a complaint form.

Exiting the Program

When you no longer need or want assistance from the Supported Employment Program, a program staff will contact you and ask to attend an "Exit Interview".

Staff will write down the thoughts and suggestions you share about how we can improve our services.

Individual's Resources

BC Transit Bus Pass	Discounted annual bus passes phone: 1-800-665-2656
HandyDART	Specially equipped transit for disabled who cannot use regular buses. 604-795-5121
Ministry of Employment And Income Assistance	Chilliwack: 604-703-6900 or www.mhr.gov.bc.ca
Community Living British Columbia (CLBC)	Community Living Services 604-702-5795 or 1-866-366-5986 www.communitylivingbc.ca
BC Employment Standards	Provincial Standards that apply to most workplaces www.labour.gov.bc.ca/esb
Work Safe BC	Workplace health and Safety www.worksafebc.com
Human Resources and Skills Development Canada	Tools for the workplace and community www.hrsdc.gc.ca

Summary

We put this book together to answer some questions that you might have about our program.

We hope that it is helpful to you in deciding whether or not you would like to be employed or be a volunteer.

If you would like more information about our program just call:
(604) 393-3209
(604) 792-7726

The CSCL's Supported Employment will provide individuals with developmental disabilities the opportunity to perform real work in regular job settings for real wages.

This will be achieved by providing all facets of pre-employment training including job search strategies, interview skills, resume preparation and life skills as they relate to the work place.

Support staff will assist individuals to decide upon employment goals, will develop and implement marketing plans, provide on-site job coaching, follow-up and monitoring.

Supported employment will enhance the quality of lives of individuals by promoting independence, productivity and self esteem.

