

Connections:

Tools and Resources for Adult Life

This initiative is sponsored by United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, Inc.



Welcome!

This guide features sections on:

- Employment: Job Training and Employment Options and Supports
- Education: Career and Technical Schools, Colleges and Universities
- Self-Advocacy: Tips, Resources and Connections
- Resource Guide
- Acknowledgments

This Guide is designed to help individuals with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities and their families connect to tools and resources that will help identify the options that are available to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in adult life.

The Guide seeks to connect you to resources that may be important in adult life and explores a range of opportunities in critical areas of: employment, education, community resources, transportation and self-advocacy.

Eddie Hall, a member of the Florida Development Disabilities Council, reflected on his experiences as a young person with a disability starting his career. He urges young people and their families to not be afraid to:

- ❖ Ask questions
- ❖ Talk about your disability
- ❖ Earn a paycheck



Florida's Employment First Initiative

Employment

Employment First

Employment in Florida is defined as integrated employment, including supported employment, customized employment, and self-employment, where an individual is paid by an employer at minimum wage or greater or receives earnings through one's self-employment business, fully integrated in the community workforce, with a goal of maximum self-sufficiency.

What Employment First Means

Employment First means that having a job in the community is the first choice for people with disabilities, including people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD).



For Information and Resources on Florida's Employment First Initiative, go to:

<http://www.employmentfirstfl.org/>

Florida's Employment First Partners

- Florida Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD);
- Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (FDOE, BEESS);
- Florida Department of Education, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (FDOE, DVR);
- Florida Department of Education, Division of Blind Services (FDOE, DBS);
- Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO);
- CareerSource Florida;
- Florida Department of Children and Families, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Office (DCF, SAMH);
- Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, Inc. (FDDC);
- Florida Association of Rehabilitation Facilities, Inc. (FARF)

Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD)

Employment

Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD)

APD works with local communities and private providers to support people who have developmental disabilities and their families in living, learning, and working in their communities.

The agency also works to educate the public on disability issues and focuses attention on employment for people with disabilities.



CONNECTING YOU TO THE COMMUNITY

ELIGIBILITY FOR SERVICES

Who does APD serve?

APD serves more than 50,000 Floridians with developmental disabilities as defined in Florida Statutes, Chapter 393. This includes individuals with:

- Autism
- Cerebral palsy
- Spina bifida
- Intellectual disabilities
- Down syndrome
- Prader-Willi syndrome
- Children age 3-5 who are at a high risk of a developmental disability

APD-Accessing Services and Resources

Employment



How do I apply to receive services from APD?

You can call the regional office in your area.

APD's Regional and Field Office Contacts

- **Northwest Region** - Bay, Calhoun, Escambia, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, Wakulla, Walton, and Washington counties - Fields 1 and 2
Phone: 904-992-2440
- **Northeast Region** - Alachua, Baker, Bradford, Clay, Columbia, Dixie, Duval, Flagler, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Lafayette, Levy, Madison, Nassau, Putnam, St. Johns, Suwannee, Taylor, Union, and Volusia counties - Fields 3, 4, and 12
Phone: 850-488-3763
- **Central Region** - Brevard, Citrus, Hardee, Hernando, Highlands, Lake, Marion, Orange, Osceola, Polk, Seminole, and Sumter counties - Fields 7, 13, 14, and 15
Phone: 407-245-0440
- **Suncoast Region** - Charlotte, Collier, DeSoto, Glades, Hendry, Hillsborough, Lee, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, and Sarasota counties - Suncoast Field 23 and 8
Phone: 800-615-0440
- **Southeast Region** - Broward, Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee, Palm Beach, and St. Lucie counties - Fields 9 and 10
Phone: 561-837-5564
- **Southern Region** - Dade and Monroe counties - Field 11
Phone: 305-349-1478

APD RESOURCE GUIDE:

The Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) Resource Directory is a tool for individuals to learn about the resources and organizations available in their local areas, programs offered throughout the state, and nationwide resources. The goal is that by providing a collection of resources, including a direct link to that specific site, people will be able to easily and efficiently locate any type of service they need.



This guide can be found at:

<http://resourcedirectory.apd.myflorida.com/resourcedirectory/>

APD - Services, Programs and Projects

Employment



Even though there is a waiting list for APD services, it is important to register for services for several reasons:

- New funds are allocated based on the number of individuals eligible for services who are on the waiting list.
- Some services like EEP are open only to eligible individuals who are on the waiting list.

What services does APD provide?

APD provides:

- Supported employment services
- Employment Enhancement Project (EEP) Project is time-limited
- Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Waiver through iBudget Florida
- Supported living services
- Consumer Directed Care Plus (CDC+)
- Placement in an Intermediate Care Facility (ICF) for individuals with developmental disabilities
- Individual and Family Supports (IFS) funding for non-waiver customer expenses

APD's Employment Enhancement Project (EEP)

This is a time-limited program that is currently funded until June 2016. It is designed to help people transition from school to competitive employment in their community.

Basic Criteria:

- Job-Seekers must be 18 years of age or over. If in high school, they must be in their last year.
- The highest priority will be for people leaving school to begin working in competitive employment in their communities.
- Job-Seekers *must* be on the APD Waiting List. Participation in the EEP will not affect an individual's Waiting List status. This project is specific to employment.
- Job-seekers must not have an active case with Vocational Rehabilitation. If they do, they are not eligible for EEP funded services.
- The funds will be allotted on an individual basis, with an average of \$2500.00 per person.



For more information about APD, go to:
<http://apd.myflorida.com/about/faqs.htm>

Employment



KEY TIP:

If you have records from schools, doctors, psychologists, etc. it is helpful to take those records with you to your VR appointment.



For more information, go to:
www.rehabworks.org

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is another important resource for people with disabilities seeking employment. If you need job training, education, health services and accommodations, VR may be able to help.

VR offers a great variety of services designed to meet individual needs. Making an appointment with a local VR office is the best way to find out what services VR offers that may meet your needs. In addition to traditional placement and job training services, VR offers additional employment options for individuals with disabilities including those with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Examples of VR Services:

- Supported Employment
- Self-Employment
- Supported Self-Employment
- Job-Site Assessment and Accommodations
- Job Placement
- Job Coaching
- On-the-Job Training
- Discovery
- Career Counseling and Guidance
- Training and Education After High School
- Degree programs at Colleges and Universities
- Career and Technical programs
- Medical and Psychological Assessment
- Vocational Evaluation and Planning
- Assistive Technology and Devices

VR ELIGIBILITY

You may be eligible for VR services if your goal is to become employed and:

- You have a Physical, Mental Health, Intellectual, Developmental or other disability that interferes with your ability to become employed, and
- You need VR's help to prepare for, find or keep a job.

A Counselor will assist you with an application and will help you find out if you qualify for services and what those services might be.

VR Employment Services

Employment



Please Note: If you receive Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for your disability, you are presumed eligible for VR services, if you plan to become employed.

Supported Employment is a unique employment service for individuals with the most significant disabilities who require ongoing services to succeed in competitive employment. Services and supports are designed to support the individual.

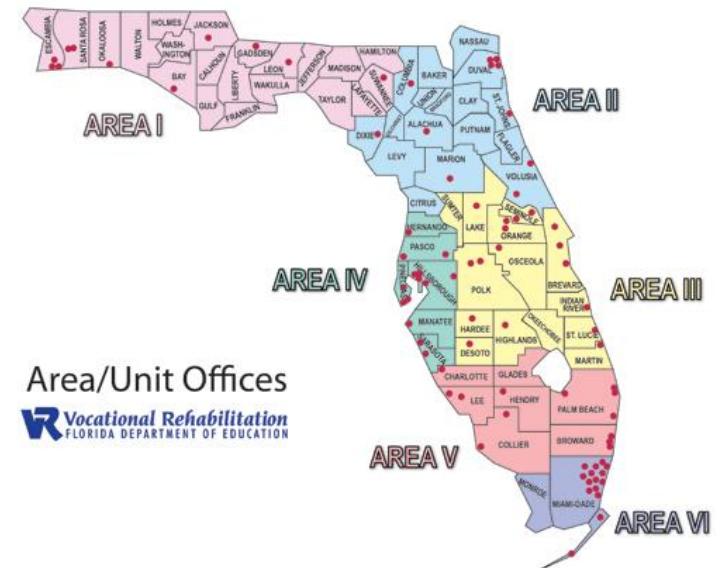
Self-Employment services are available to individuals who wish to start their own business. VR provides supports through this process to help make these dreams come true. Self-Employment is a customized strategy that works well for individuals who have the skills, desires, and interests to pursue self-employment.

Supported Self-Employment is also offered as a service option for individuals with the most significant disabilities. It is very similar to Self-employment but has additional support services provided on a longer term basis.

Discovery Services are offered through VR for people who need assistance in discovering what their unique gifts, strengths, and capabilities are. Discovery is a Customized Employment Option.

Florida VR Offices

VR has offices across the state. You may call 1-800-451-4327 and ask for an office near you. You may also check on line by using the following link: http://rehabworks.org/office_directory.shtml A map will show up and if you click on the area you live in, a page of offices with phone numbers is available for your review.



CareerSource Florida

Employment

The State of Florida has a network of *CareerSource Centers*. These centers are funded by the U.S. Department of Labor.

CareerSource Centers often have specific services for individuals with disabilities. These services could include access to:

- A Disability Navigator to help guide you through the system,
- Special funding under the Disability Employment Initiative to provide targeted services for individuals with disabilities, and
- Specialized training may be available.



The CareerSource Center in your area offers the following types of services. Learn more about these services by going to:

[www. Employermarketplace.com/jobseekers/](http://www.Employermarketplace.com/jobseekers/)

Employment



Career Services

Research specific occupations, choose a new career or analyze your skills to find an occupation that best suits you.

Education Services

Find a suitable training or educational program, as well as information on training providers and schools.

Community Services and Benefits

Find community services for which you are eligible, such as health, welfare, and nutrition and financial assistance programs.

Youth Services

Find information about finding a job, exploring different careers, and alternative post-high school paths for youth.

Job Seeker Services

Find assistance in looking for or getting placed in a new job and learn how to develop effective resumes and cover letters.

Labor Market Services

Access information about labor market trends, statistics, economic and demographic data.

Disability Services

Find information about services in your area that benefit people with disabilities, including employment, health, and financial resources.

More Resources

Find more information about statistics, college and university career centers, state and local partners.



For these CareerSource Resources go to the Florida Employer Marketplace at:

<https://www.employflorida.com/vosnet/Default.aspx>

The Florida Consortium on Postsecondary Education and Intellectual Disabilities

Education & Training

Looking for a College Experience

There are now 14 universities in Florida that offer on-campus experiences to individuals with intellectual disabilities who may not be eligible for traditional credited courses. These programs are supported by local school systems, service providers and the university through federal grants. These programs range from 1-4 years. Six programs are specific to the county where the university is located. The programs at University of North Florida and University of South Florida have on-campus housing.



For more information, check out the matrix on the Florida Consortium on Post-Secondary Education's Transition and Post-Secondary Program for Students with Intellectual Disabilities.
<http://fltpsid.info/Postsecondary.php>

Program Name	Postsecondary Institution	Ages Served	Student Housing
Project Panther LIFE	Florida International University	18-21	No
Project ACCESS	Florida Keys Community College	18-22	No
VERTICAL Program	Florida State College at Jacksonville	18-25+	No
Employment Institute	Indian River State College	18-22	No
Project ACCEPT	Miami Dade College InterAmerican	18-21	No
Project REAL	Pensacola State College	22-29	No
Polk County School District Transition Program	Polk State College	18-22	No
Project SAINT	Santa Fe College	18-30	No
EAGLE Connections	Tallahassee Community College	19-30	No
The Arc Jacksonville On Campus Transition	University of North Florida	18+	Yes
The Learning Academy at USF	University of South Florida	18-25	Yes
Successful Transition After Graduation For Exceptional Students (STAGES)	University of South Florida	18-22	No
Project 10 STING RAY	University of South Florida St. Petersburg	18-22	No
Polk County School District Transition Program	Warner University	18-22	No

Education & Training

Going to College?

- ✓ Training for some professional careers require a minimum of four years of college.
- ✓ Some professions require 6-8 years of education after high school.

For information about colleges in your area go to:



<http://www.fldoe.org/schools/higher-ed/fl-college-system/colleges/index.stml>

Is a Trade or Technical Career For You?

Florida provides career, technical and adult education through local school districts. You can complete education courses where you can:

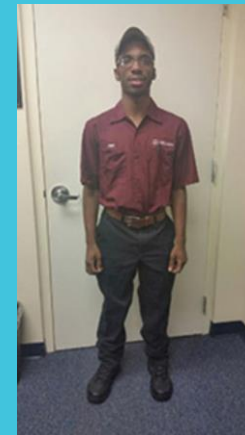
- ✓ learn a trade,
- ✓ earn a certificate in that trade, program, and
- ✓ learn about businesses that need qualified employees with these skills.

For more information about career and technical education go to:



<http://www.fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/index.stml>

Education and Employment Success Story



Josh Duncan

Josh Duncan was a dual enrollment student in the Duval County Public School system and went to Florida State College Jacksonville with the help of the VERTICAL Program, which provides support to students with unique abilities through the Project Achieve program from the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council.

Josh had to work very hard but he persevered and gave it his all and that hard work is paying off. "I knew I could do it, but it was tough", explains Josh.

Today, Josh is thrilled to be employed at Jiffy Lube and is looking forward to a life-long career in the automotive service industry. This student is just one example of what can be achieved through working together to overcome obstacles and help students succeed.

Tips and Connections

Self-Advocacy

What Is Self-Advocacy?



Self-Advocacy is about independent groups of people with disabilities working together for justice by helping each other take charge of their lives and fight discrimination (Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered). Self-Advocacy refers to individuals advocating for themselves versus having someone else speak for them; and in the larger context describes a grassroots civil rights movement where individuals participate on their own and within Self-Advocate run organizations or associations in a variety of activities designed to influence public policy and practice as it relates to equal opportunity.

People involved in the Self-Advocacy movement help each other to advocate for things like power-sharing and system change. As a movement, we work on broad goals, like closing all the institutions in the country, but we don't forget the individual person with a disability who has problems in his or her own life. We support each other as much as we can, and because of this we have learned many lessons about listening and speaking up. (Kennedy, M.,1996)



You can contact FL SAND at:
<http://flsand.org/about-fl-sand/>

FL SAND

FL SAND is the Florida Self-Advocacy Network and was officially formed in 2011. FL SAND is an independent Self-Advocacy movement that has come together to form a statewide network.

FL SAND is a statewide association led by Self-Advocates who are united and active in speaking up for themselves, promoting rights, advocating for system change and creating community inclusion and awareness of its members.

Disability Rights and Issue Resolutions

Self-Advocacy

Florida Disability Rights

Sometimes, a self-advocate needs more information and support to insure they get what they need from organizations. In Florida, the Disability Rights Center is the place to call. Disability Rights Florida offers the following services at no cost to the individual:

- Information and referrals
- Self-advocacy support
- Technical assistance
- Investigations into complaints of abuse, neglect and rights violations
- Dispute resolution support
- Negotiation and mediation support
- Advocacy services



You can contact them at:

www.Disabilityrightsflorida.org

Issue Resolutions

Issues with Social Security disability determination or appeal information

Call the Social Security Administration at 1.800.772.1213.

Issues with Americans with Disabilities Act or complaints

Call the Commission on Human Relations at 1.800.342.8170. You can also call the ADA Hotline at 1.800.514.0301.

Issues with Landlords?

If this is an issue with HUD Housing and Urban Development housing, contact the fair housing line at 1.800.440.8091. If you have an issue with your landlord, contact the Legal Services office in your county for advice.

Resource Guide

Agency	Resource, Services and Supports	State	Local	Link
Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD)	APD provides services to people with DD in the areas of living, learning and working.	X	X	http://apd.myflorida.com/about/faqs.htm 1-800-866-APD-CARES/1-866-273-2773
	APD's ibudget Waiver program for Florida Medicaid			http://apd.myflorida.com/ibudget/ 1-800-866-273-2773
	Directory of Resources for individuals with Developmental Disabilities in Florida			http://resourcedirectory.apd.myflorida.com/resourcedirectory/ 1-800-866-273-2773
CareerSource Florida	Provides job counseling, training and placement assistance	X	X	http://careersourceflorida.com/regional-team/ 850-921-1119 TTY- State of Florida 711
Centers for Independent Living	These programs provide assistance in all aspects of independent living, employment may be included	X	X	http://floridacils.org/LocateYourLocalCIL.html 850-575-6004 Toll Free 1-866-575-6004 Lost FLDR

Resource Guide

Agency	Resource, Services and Supports	State	Local	Link
Disability Rights Florida	Information and referral, self-advocacy support, complaint investigation/resolution, advocacy	X	X	www.disabilityrightsflorida.org
				850-488-9071 or Toll Free 1-800-342-0823 or TDD 1-800-246-4127
Downs Syndrome Association of Central Florida	Resources on education, health and employment for individuals with Downs Syndrome			http://floridacils.org/LocateYourLocalCIL.html
				407-478-5621
Florida Alliance for Assistive Technology (FAAST)	Provides assistive technology to eligible individuals with disability	X	X	http://www.faast.org
				850-487-3278 Toll Free 1-888-788-9216 TTY 877-506-2725
Florida Consortium on Post-Secondary Education and Intellectual Disabilities	Educational and training programs on 14 campuses	X	X	www.fltpsid.info/
				727-873-4660
Florida Department of Education	College and University Systems	X	X	http://www.fldoe.org/school/higher-ed/
				850-235-0466

Resource Guide

Agency	Resource, Services and Supports	State	Local	Link
Florida Department of Education	State University System Services to SWD	X	X	http://www.flbog.edu/forstudents/ati/disabilities.php
				850-235-0466
Florida Department of Education	Career and Technical Training, Colleges and Universities	X	X	http://www.fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu
				850-245-9052
Florida Department of Education	Career Exploration	X	X	https://www.floridashines.org/find-a-career/explore-careers
				850-922-6044
Florida Division of Blind Services	Blind Services Transition	X	X	http://dbs.myflorida.com/Transition%20Services/index.html
				850-245-0300 Toll Free 1-800-342-1826

Resource Guide

Agency	Resource, Services and Supports	State	Local	Link
Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, Inc. (FDDC)	Advocacy, Resources and Publications, Gov. Employment First Initiative	X		http://www.fddc.org/
				www.floridabenefits.org
		X		http://www.fyitransition.org/
				850-488-4180
Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD)	Commission and its local boards provide transportation services to individuals with disabilities including para-transit	X	X	http://www.dot.state.fl.us/ctd/contacts/plannersbycounty.htm
				850-410-5700
				TD Helpline 1-800-983-2435
Social Security's Ticket to Work	National program that pays local providers to help SSI/DI client get jobs and keep them	X	X	www.choosework.net
				866-968-7843

Resource Guide

Agency	Resource, Services and Supports	State	Local	Link
The Able Trust	Advocacy through Florida Youth Leadership Forum and skills training through High School/High Tech Programs	X		http://www.abletrust.org/ 850-224-4493
Vocational Rehabilitation	Provides services to individuals with disabilities include: assessment, education, training and accommodation	X	X	http://www.rehabworks.org/office_directory.shtml 1-800-451-4327
Work Incentives Planning and Assistance	Benefits Planning for Social Security Beneficiaries and Recipient		X	www.ssa.gov/work/WIPA.html 1-866-968-7842 Voice 1-866-823-2967 TTY

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Florida
Developmental
Disabilities
Council, Inc.

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