Job Development and Placement for People Living with Mental Health and/or Physical Challenges for Homeless Veterans’ Reintegration Program (HVRP)

Community of Practice (CoP)
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Working with Veterans with Physical and/or Mental Health Challenges
Overview: Keys to Employment Success

(1 of 2)

➢ Remember: It “takes a village” to help veterans with physical and/or mental health challenges gain and retain employment.

➢ Connecting veterans with the employment-focused supports they need is crucial.

➢ Partnering with and learning from the local U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and other organizations that provide supportive employment, vocational rehabilitation, job accommodation, and other employment-focused services helps with HVRP case management and job development.

➢ Understanding how work affects VA Disability and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits.

Sources:
- How Work Affects Social Security Benefits
- VA - Vocational Readiness and Employment Services
Overview: Keys to Employment Success (2 of 2)

➢ Understanding that job development can happen concurrently with the other services a veteran is receiving

➢ Advocate within your agency and with community partners that all veterans have a right to seek and get employment, regardless of their physical or mental health challenges

➢ Job retention support is structured and on-going
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
Are you familiar with the ADA?

Please answer the poll on your screen
Ada

- Federal civil rights law passed in 1990
- Enables people living with disabilities to fully participate in all major life activities without discrimination
- Ensures people living with disabilities have the same opportunities to pursue their life goals as everyone else
- Requires employers, state and local governments, public and private transportation, public-serving businesses, and telecommunication companies to make reasonable accommodations

Source: The Americans with Disabilities Act
ADA Workplace Accommodations

To get workplace accommodations and ADA protection, a person must meet one or more of these criteria:

➢ Have a physical or mental health challenge that substantially limits the opportunity to work, be promoted, etc.
➢ Has a history of living with a disability, even if it is currently in remission
➢ Is seen by others as living with a disability (mental health or physical)
➢ Self-disclose the need for accommodation at any time pre- or post-hire

Resource for Veterans: ADA Guide for Veterans
ADA Employer Requirements

➢ Employers with more than fifteen employees must make reasonable accommodations.

➢ A reasonable accommodation is any change made to the job role or work environment that ensures that people living with a disability can perform all essential job functions.

➢ If the worker’s disability is “hidden,” the employer can request medical documentation to determine if accommodation is needed.

➢ The accommodation must not create undue hardship for the employer.

Sources: [Reasonable accommodations for disabilities](#)
[Veterans and the ADA: A guide for employers](#)
How are you ensuring you and your team are well-informed about the ADA?
Have you followed the ADA as part of your job development and placement process?
Job Development Strategies
Job Development Strategies for the Veteran

➢ Inform and educate about ADA rights
➢ Determine if their physical and/or mental health challenge would impact their success in a job
➢ Discuss possible accommodations needed for job success
➢ Empower veterans to ask for the accommodation(s) needed
➢ Emphasize work skills, not diagnosis
➢ Provide ongoing post-placement support
How do you empower veterans to self-disclose or ask for accommodations?
Job Development Strategies: Connecting with Employers

➢ Cold call employers who are hiring, have a large presence in the community, and/or are open about hiring veterans
➢ Leverage existing contacts to connect with new employers
➢ Ask to visit the employer for informational purposes
➢ Ask about what jobs are available or will be in the future
➢ Describe HVRP as a no-cost service that has an untapped labor pool
➢ Inform employers about the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)
➢ Ask about how they provide reasonable accommodations
➢ Provide follow-up services and support

Source: Work Opportunity Tax Credit
What are some challenges you have experienced developing jobs for people with physical and/or mental health challenges?
What are some best practices or strategies you have used to develop jobs for people with physical and/or mental health challenges?
Resources

- How work affects social security benefits
- VA - Vocational Readiness and Employment Services
- The Americans with Disabilities Act
- ADA Guide for Veterans
- Reasonable accommodations for disabilities
- Veterans and the ADA: A guide for employers
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit
- Job Accommodation Network
Questions?
Thank you!

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