

The Connect to Work Center



CONNECTICUT BENEFIT OFFSET PROJECT EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS INFORMATION

About the Connect to Work Project:

Do you have a disability?

Are you working or planning to return to work in the near future?

Are you worried about how work will affect your benefits?

Would you like to make more money in a job?

The Connect to Work Center Can Help You!

The Connect to Work Centers provide individualized benefits planning and counseling for people on public benefits. Their job is to help you understand how work will affect your benefits. The Center's Benefits Specialists can be reached by calling **1-800-773-4636, 1-860-424-4839 (TTY) or go to connecttowork.dss@po.state.ct.us**

Vocational Rehabilitation Programs

There are several public vocational rehabilitation programs in Connecticut. They assist individuals with physical and mental disabilities to prepare for, obtain and maintain employment. Most vocational rehabilitation services are free. Consumers may be asked to share in the cost of some services.

- **The Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS)** serves people with physical and mental disabilities. (For individuals who are legally blind please go to the following resource). Call 1-800-537-2549 for more info.

- **The Board of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB)** serves individuals who are legally blind. Additional services like mobility training, travel instruction and training in activities of daily living are provided so individuals can achieve self advocacy. Call 1-800-842-4510 for more information.
- **The Native American Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation Program** serves Native Americans. Call them at 1-866- 399-112.
- **The Veterans Vocational Rehabilitation Services Division** serves people who are veterans You can reach them by calling 1-800-827-1000\

Additional Vocational Assistance

Benefits Counseling for those on SSDI and/or SSI benefits – The Connect to Work Center, a program of the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, Dept. of Social Services, provides accurate information on the impact work has on Social Security and other benefits. Individuals will gain the knowledge needed to make informed choices on how earnings affect their overall financial picture. Community Work Incentive Coordinators are available throughout the state. Call them at 1-800-773-4636

Child Care assistance may be possible. **2-1-1 INFOLINE** is the statewide information, referral and crisis intervention service. Extensive information is available on child care resources and availability.

Through the **Connecticut Works One Stop Centers** job seekers can learn skills needed to conduct their own job search. The Centers can unite job seekers with potential employers through access to a wide variety of job and career information and services.

The **Commission on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired** provide interpreting services, job counseling and placement, personal and family counseling, information, and referral services and advocate for people who are deaf and hearing impaired. Call them at 1-800-708-6796 or TTY1- 1-860-313-1115.

Community Action Agencies assist people with low income to receive assistance with job training, education, childcare, individual development accounts and a variety of other supports. They also run

the Retired Senior Volunteer Program, in which seniors are paid a stipend while doing on the job training.

The **Good News Garage** may be able to provide moderately priced cars for individuals with low incomes to purchase. Screening is done to determine if the car is a necessity for commuting to work or other reasons 1-860-218-2970.

Housing and rent based work incentives may be possible if you are in Section 8 or some similar programs. You may be eligible for a freeze on your rent for one year even if you have earnings.

Independent Living Centers are part of a statewide network of community-based, consumer-controlled centers for independent living which, in turn, assist persons with disabilities to live more independently. Call 1--800-537-2549 for more information.

Individual Development Accounts are matched savings accounts designed to help low-income individuals and families to save for things such as education, job training, home ownership, and small business start up. Lease deposits on primary residences are on a limited basis. Vehicle purchases for obtaining or maintaining employment... Call 211 INFOLINE or 860-263-6794 for more information.

The **Medicaid P program for People with Disabilities who are Employed** assists working people meeting Social Security's illiquidity standards and, may be eligible for this Medicaid coverage. You can have an income of up to \$75,000 per year and assets of \$10,000 and IRAs, 401K's are not counted toward asset limit) and be on Medicaid. They do not need to be on Social Security Disabilities

The **Personal Care Assistance** Waiver -provides funding for personal assistance under the Medicaid program which is administered by the State of Connecticut Department of Social Service. Contact your local Department of Social Services office:

Rewardinwork.org has a web site where both those wanting to hire personal assistants and those wanting to work as personal assistants can register so that people have easy access to the information

The Rideshare Company provides information on carpooling so that people who want to have riders and those who want to be passengers can work out their own arrangements 1- 800-842-2150

The **State Office of Protection and Advocacy** provides information on disability rights and services, advocates for people with disabilities who have been discriminated against or are having difficulty securing relevant supports and services Call them at 1-800-842-7303

Personal Assistance Services may be available to you. Services provide assistance for people to live in the community who otherwise might need to enter an institution to have their activity of daily living needs met.

The Senior Community Service Employment Program and the **Job Training Partnership Act** provide training and work for low-income seniors. Call them at 1--800-443-9946.

School Based Employment Placement Offices - Many colleges and post-secondary schools will provide job search assistance to both current and former graduates of their programs. Contact your school's Placement Office.

Senior Jobs - The Senior Center within your town may have a Job Bank or be able to give you information.

Transportation assistance may be available using Social Security work incentives or other potential resources for transportation that you need in order to work. For public transportation information call your local Transit District. For more information go to www.ctrides.com

The **Tax Incentives for Low Income Earners** may help you be eligible for a tax refund under the Earned Income Tax Credit PROGRAM (even if you don't earn enough to pay Federal Income) Tax; some other IRS Tax programs people with disabilities may want to use include: Child or Dependent Care Tax Credit, Impairment Related Work Expenses; Medical Expenditures. Free tax preparation for low and moderate-income individuals/families at VITA sites throughout the state. Call 800-829-1040 (IRS) or go to 211 INFOLINE.

Long Term Employment Supports for Maintaining Employment

The **Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services** is available to people aged 18 and older that have incomes below Federal Poverty Level. Individuals need to have a psychiatric disability and/or an addiction disorder. Support is offered through residential, employment, social rehabilitation, and case management services.1--800-446-7348

The **Department of Mental Retardation** provides statewide services for people with developmental disabilities..Services provided by private provider agencies under contract with DMR include long term job supports, residential, day programs, early intervention, family support, and respite and case management.

The **Social Security Tax Incentives** is available for self funding for intermediate and long term job supports.

The **Ticket to Work Program** from Social Security may be available to you through an employment network that has an agreement with the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services. Discuss this possibility with your BRS counselor.