

## Sample IPS Supported Employment and Education Specialist Job Description

**Overall Function:** Carries out the services of the IPS Supported Employment program by assisting clients to obtain and maintain employment that is consistent with their vocational goals. Provides support for schooling and technical training for career advancement.

**Responsibilities:**

Engages clients and establishes trusting, collaborative relationships directed toward the goal of competitive employment in community job settings with other workers who do not necessarily have disabilities.

Assists clients in obtaining individualized information about how entitlements (e.g., SSI, Medicaid, etc.) will be affected by employment so clients can make decisions about employment opportunities. Refers clients to benefits counseling, as needed. Helps clients report earnings, as needed.

Assesses clients' vocational skills and preferences on ongoing basis utilizing background information and work experiences. With the client's permission, provides information and support to family members. Discusses client's preference for disclosure of mental health status to employers.

Helps clients learn about different jobs/careers by assisting with meetings with workers/managers to ask about positions that interest clients, meetings with academic advisors, observing workers (one day or less in duration), and job fairs to speak with employers about different types of jobs.

Conducts job development and job search activities directed toward positions that are individualized to the interests and uniqueness of the people on his/her caseload, following the principles and procedures of IPS supported employment.

Conducts an average of six employer contacts per week. Employer contacts are designed to learn about the needs of the business, describe supports offered by the program, and describe client strengths that are relevant to the position.

Provides individualized follow-along supports to assist clients in maintaining employment. Writes job support plans with clients and incorporates input from family members (with client permission) and the mental health team. Adjusts plan according to clients' needs and preferences.

Provides education and support to employers as agreed upon by clients. May negotiate job accommodations and follow-along contact by the IPS specialist with the employer.

Provides outreach services as necessary to clients when they appear to disengage from the service. Uses a variety of methods to provide outreach.

Provides timely interventions. Returns phone calls and reacts to situations in a timely manner. For example, returns client phone calls within 24 hours. Goes to see employers about job loss or job problems within 24 hours. Follows up on job leads within 48 hours. Meets with clients within one week prior to job starts and within three days after job starts.

Participates in weekly meetings with mental health treatment team and communicates individually with team members between meetings in order to coordinate and integrate vocational services with mental health treatment.

Participates in face-to-face meetings with state Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) counselors at least once a month to coordinate services for clients. Collaborates with individual counselors between meetings to assist clients.

Responsible for a minimum of \_\_\_\_\_ number or job starts per year or maintaining at least\_% employment on caseload.

Develops an individual employment and/or education plan with clients. Incorporates input from mental health team and family members, with client permission.

Spends 65% or more of scheduled work hours in the community, for example, meets clients at their homes, workplaces, coffee shops, libraries, One-Stop offices, state VR office, family homes, helps clients follow up on job applications, and goes with clients to visit local GED programs and colleges.

Attends high school meetings with teachers, such as Individual Education Program (IEP), 504 Plan, and Transition Plan meetings, to discuss how students learn best and ways that the IPS specialist can support the student's education.

Assists clients in learning about different education and vocational training programs related to client interests and academic aptitudes. Focuses on mainstream education and certificate training programs only.

Provides supports with financial aid including the annual Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), understanding loan obligations, applying for scholarships, obtaining tools, equipment and computers.

Offers supports prior to the beginning of education programs including accompanying new students on campus/school tours, buying books or supplies, applying for services with the Office of Disability Services, signing up for seminars on effective study skills, discussing where to study between classes, etc.

Offers help managing school schedule including due dates for assignments, reserving time to study for exams, and keeping track of class drop dates.

Collaborates with counselors at the Office for Disability Services, professors/instructors, and counselors at the Financial Aid Office, as needed.

**Qualifications:** Education and experience equivalent to undergraduate degree in mental health, social services, or business. Experience working with people with severe mental illness, experience providing employment services, and knowledge of the work world are preferred.

Ability to work as an effective team member is essential.