

# Getting to Work! After High School

## Should I Work if I Can?

**YES!** Work isn't just about making money. People with disabilities who work are also more likely to have more friends, a more active social life, and feel better about themselves.<sup>1</sup> Working can help you have a better life! So, if you can, you should Get to Work!



## How Can I Get to Work?

### Getting to Work with the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation

The Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation or BVR is the Nevada agency that helps people with disabilities get what they need to work. Its job is to help people get ready to work, find jobs, succeed in their jobs, and advance in their careers.<sup>2</sup>

If you want to work with BVR, you have to apply for their services. The fastest way is to apply online is at: [https://detr.nv.gov/Page/Rehabilitation\\_Division](https://detr.nv.gov/Page/Rehabilitation_Division). If you don't have access to a computer or smart phone, you can call BVR to ask for an appointment. If you're in Southern Nevada, call BVR at (702) 486-5230. If you're in Northern Nevada, call BVR at (775) 687-6860.

BVR will help you if you are eligible for their services. You'll be eligible for BVR if:

- You have a disability
- You want to work
- Your disability makes it hard for you to work
- BVR can help you work.<sup>3</sup>

Most people with disabilities will be eligible! For example, if you receive Social Security benefits like SSI or SSDI, you are presumed eligible!<sup>4</sup> Also, you don't have to prove you can work – if BVR doesn't think you can work they have to prove you can't and give you a chance to work first.<sup>5</sup> BVR wants to see everyone who wants to work in a job, and will help you find that job. When you're eligible for BVR, you'll work with a counselor to identify an employment goal – the job you want to get with BVR's help. That's a job that matches your skills and interests: what you can do (or learn to do), what you want to do, and has a good labor market so you will be able to get a job. So it's not just any job, it's your job!

Once you and BVR agree on your employment goal, you'll work with your counselor to identify the services you need to get that job. These can include:

- Counseling: to help you figure what kind of job you want and what you need to get it.
- Job development and job coaching to help you achieve and succeed at your job.
- Medical and mental health services, coordinated with your insurance so you can stay healthy and address any medically related employment barriers
- Paying for school and training to help you learn the skills you need for your job.
- Transportation to help you get to your job and back.
- Assistive technology like adaptive computer software or other technology you might need for your job.<sup>6</sup>

BVR only has to provide services that are directly related to reaching your employment outcome. For example, if you don't need a college degree to get the job you want, BVR won't have to pay for you to go to college. But, if you need something to reach your employment outcome, BVR should provide it or pay for you to get it!



### Getting to Work with Centers for Independent Living

Centers for Independent Living or CILs help people with disabilities learn skills and get what they need to live as independently as they can. CILs can provide counseling, personal assistance, help finding health care or housing, and other services you need to work and live in your community.<sup>7</sup> One of the best things about working with a CIL is that most of their employees are people with disabilities. So, you can learn from people who went through “the system” themselves!

You can find your local CIL at:

<https://www.ilru.org/projects/cil-net/cil-center-and-association-directory-results/NV>

## Will I Lose my Benefits if I Work?

Many people with disabilities are afraid to work because they think that earning money will cause them to lose the benefits they need – like Social Security (SSI or SSDI), Medicaid or SNAP (Food Stamps).<sup>8</sup> If you're worried about losing benefits, we recommend that you talk to the Community Work Incentive Coordinator (CWIC), who may be able to help.

In Nevada, the CWIC is Julie Taylor. Please contact:  
Julie Taylor, CWIC  
Ability Connection Colorado  
411 Lakewood Circle, Suite B129  
Colorado Springs, CO 80910  
(719) 597-0068 office  
(719) 250-0686 cell  
Website: [www.AbilityConnectionColorado.org](http://www.AbilityConnectionColorado.org)

Community Work Incentive Coordinators can also tell you about ways you can open and use an ABLE Account so you can earn more money and keep your benefits.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Boardman, J. (2003). Work, employment and psychiatric disability. *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment*, 9(5), 327-334 (summarizing studies).

<sup>2</sup> 34 C.F.R. § 361.48(a)(2)

<sup>3</sup> 34 C.F.R. §361.42(a)(1)

<sup>4</sup> 34 C.F.R. §361.42(a)(3)

<sup>5</sup> 34 C.F.R. §361.42(e)

<sup>6</sup> 34 C.F.R § 361.48

<sup>7</sup> See, <https://acl.gov/ils-programs>

<sup>8</sup> Morris, Michael, Christopher Rodriguez, and Peter Blanck. "ABLE accounts: A down payment on freedom." *Inclusion* 4.1 (2016): 21-29.

<sup>9</sup> Martinis, J. & Harris, J. (2019). ABLE accounts and supported decision-making: Building a pathway to independence, inclusion and a “decent quality of life.” National Resource Center for Supported Decision-Making. <http://supporteddecisionmaking.org/node/475>