

Supported Employment *(for the few who may qualify)*^{2,3}

We all want to provide the most enriching life we can for our loved ones with rare epilepsy, and we do that through different activities such as [Day Programs](#). While we acknowledge that the majority of our loved ones will not qualify for supported employment, we wanted to include information in this guide for those caregivers with loved ones who may qualify.

Employment rights

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal mandate that prohibits discrimination based on disability in the areas of employment, housing, public accommodation, transportation, and telecommunication services. Title I of the ADA states employment practices cannot discriminate against a person with a disability who is qualified for the job. A person with a disability who can complete the essential functions of the job is considered qualified. The law also requires an employer to provide “reasonable accommodations” or modifications to a work environment to guarantee the person can effectively perform their job, such as providing wheelchair accessibility. For more information, please visit www.eeoc.gov.

Vocational/rehabilitation programs, jobs and employment

For some people, participating in a vocational, educational, or other type of activity can be empowering and may provide purpose. Vocational and rehabilitation options for people with disabilities range from positions that provide high levels of assistance to competitive employment without additional accommodations. Experience provided through work, job training or other enrichment activities may add to the quality of life and increase a person's self esteem. Additionally, social interactions with coworkers may enhance a person's integration into the community. Often the challenge is not in performing the job, but in finding the job that best suits an individual's interests, strengths and personality. One of the best places to begin a job search is with your state vocational rehabilitation (VR) agency. State VR agencies coordinate and provide several services for people with disabilities looking for a job. These services may include counseling, skills evaluation, training, job placement, coaching and support. Services provided vary by state, but most agencies will assign a vocational counselor to work with an individual with a disability to identify and locate employment options that best suit their capabilities, needs and interests. State VR agencies work with non-profit organizations and private employers that may provide a wide range of employment options in a variety of settings. You can find your state or local VR agency by checking your state government websites or by visiting the [Job Accommodation Network](#).

Federal employment and support programs

[Ticket to Work](#) is a nationwide initiative that offers Social Security Administration (SSA) disability beneficiaries greater choice in obtaining services they need to help them go to work. To qualify, you must be a SSA disability beneficiary. This program may be able to assist you in finding employment, vocational rehabilitation and other support services from public and private providers.

The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) is a free consulting service of the [U.S. Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy](#) that provides information about job accommodations, the Americans with Disabilities Act and the employability of people with disabilities. JAN is not a job placement service; however, it does provide services that assist people with disabilities to become informed about their educational rights, acquire accommodation options and learn about other government and placement agencies.

Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) hosts a nationwide network of interdisciplinary centers advancing policy and practice for and with individuals with developmental and other disabilities, their families and communities. At least one center per state provides a wide range of community outreach and assistance in the areas of special education, employment and housing programs. All centers are part of universities or medical centers and serve as a link between the university and community. Services provided by each center can vary. For example, some provide more services to adults with disabilities. In some instances, centers may work with the local Developmental Disability Planning Council in providing services and information.

Developmental Disability (DD) Planning Councils are assisted by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and provide information on disability-related organizations in your state. The information offered by each council differs by state. To find the DD council in your state, visit www.nacdd.org.

Supported Employment Resource List

Organization	Description	Website
Job Accommodation Network (JAN)	A source for free, expert, and confidential guidance on job accommodations and disability employment matters.	www.askjan.org
Employer Assistance and Resources Network (EARN)	EARN provides resources for employment seekers and job training for those looking to gain and build skills necessary to succeed in the workforce.	www.askearn.org
abilityJOBS	Works with companies, government and nonprofit agencies to employ people with disabilities.	www.abilityJOBS.com
Equal Opportunity Publications, Inc. (EOP)	EOP is an online publication that publishes career guidance and recruitment magazines for women, members of minority groups and people with disabilities.	www.eop.com
Bender Consulting	Consulting firm that specializes in recruiting and hiring people with disabilities for full-time, competitive employment opportunities.	www.benderconsult.com