

**Q**  
**QUEENS**  
**COLLEGE**  
DINING SERVICES

# Employment Services

**Danny,**  
A Queens College Employee

**Q**  
**QUEENS**  
**COLLEGE**  
DINING SERVICES





**Donald J.,  
A Modell's Employee**

## HeartShare Employment Services

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### Pathway to Employment

Pathway to Employment is a supplemental service, in which you work 1:1 with a Vocational Specialist (VS), in a Discovery process, to determine what kind of job you might like, what tasks you would perform, and what environment you would like to work in. The Vocational Specialist interviews you, your advocate/family, preferred staff people, friends – anyone who knows you really well, and is dedicated to assisting you to obtain gainful employment. Based on what is learned during the interview process, the VS will go out and show you a minimum of three different kinds of jobs, and job sites, so that you can see for yourself what is really involved in working there, and make an informed decision as to its viability. You will be able to visit, ask questions of existing staff, and get a small amount of hands-on experience to see if this is a potential fit. In addition to visiting various jobs, during Discovery, the VS will watch you engage in tasks that you are skilled at, at home, and at current volunteer sites, as part of an ongoing assessment process.

### Community Pre-Vocational Services

Once the Discovery process is completed, the VS will work with our trained Development team to create a Work Try-out. The Work Try-out gives you a chance to try out the job, on a volunteer basis, for a time limited period of no more than 3 months, at the place where you think you would like to work. It is similar to trying on a pair of pants or a shirt. If it doesn't fit, we put it back, discuss what changes are needed, and work to begin a Work Try-out somewhere else. Prior to beginning the Work Try-out, a written agreement is negotiated with the employer, detailing the tasks that you will be engaged in your work schedule, and expectations. As part of that agreement, if the Work Try-out goes well, the employer has agreed that they will hire you sometime within the 3-month volunteer period. Throughout the entirety of the Work Try-out, you are supported by a 1:1 job coach, who also acts as a HeartShare liaison to the business. Each party- you, the business, and on rare occasions, HeartShare, can end the Work Try-out at any point if it is not going well. Ongoing assessment and training is done throughout the Try-out.



## Supported Employment

As mentioned previously, during the Work Try-out, if things are going well, the employer has agreed to put you on payroll. During the 2-month meeting with the employer, a formal letter of hire is requested, indicating the date you will be hired. Once the letter is obtained, it is recommended that you be enrolled in Supported Employment so that you can continue to receive needed job coaching supports for as long as is necessary.

## Frequently Asked Questions

- **Do I need to be travel trained to participate in Employment Services?**
  - No, however, there is no yellow school bus that will come and pick you up. You will have to travel to and from the job site using some form of public transportation, up to, and including Access-A-Ride. We are happy to travel train you to and from the job site should it be required. At no time will you be left alone to travel until it is safe to do so.
- **How will the obtaining of a job affect my benefits?**
  - There are no cut and dry answers to this question, as each individual's benefits package is unique. What we can say is that your Medicaid will not be threatened, as there are various programs which allow someone to work and maintain Medicaid status. In terms of SSI, Section 8 Housing, NYCHA Housing, Food Stamps (SNAP), etc., a member of our team will work with you, and your MSC will explain the impact of the job on your benefits. We work hard with you to make sure that obtaining a job will only have a positive impact financially.
- **Who is eligible for these services and how do I enroll?**
  - To receive the above mentioned services, you must be at least 21 years old, have had your OPWDD eligibility formally determined, have a Medicaid Service Coordinator (MSC), and be enrolled in the Medicaid Waiver. Your MSC will need to send us a complete referral packet, including a current psychological evaluation, psychosocial evaluation, medical, current LCED (Level of Care), and Individualized Service Plan (ISP). Once we receive these documents, they will be reviewed and an Intake scheduled with our Director of Employment Services.



**Erick R.,  
A Movieworld Employee**





**Nicholas,**  
A Cleaning With Meaning  
Employee

Based on that Intake, a determination will be made by you, and HeartShare. If enrollment is the next step, we will work with your MSC to obtain the necessary documents to complete this process.

- **Can I still be in a Department of Education school and get Employment Services?**
  - Unfortunately, the general answer is “no”. For all of the above listed programs, you must have finished school, and completed your course of study. The receipt of an IEP diploma counts. If you are still in school, there are a wide range of ACCES-VR programs that you can take advantage of. For someone is who very close to being work ready, OPWDD’s Employment Training Program (ETP) may also be a possibility.
- **Can I still attend a Day Program while enrolled in Employment Services?**
  - The short answer is yes. Pathway to Employment is a supplemental program, covering only a few hours per week. We will work with you to find a time to meet which works for everyone. For some people this means leaving the day program a little early, with the VS accompanying them home. For others, it means coming in late or missing a day. During the Work Try-out, you will be missing 1 -2 days a week of Program, as the trial shift occurs during weekday business hours. Once you are on payroll, a schedule will be worked out that is tailored to you specifically.
- **What kinds of jobs do you have available for me?**
  - All jobs are specifically tailored to meet your likes, preferred environment, and preferred tasks, so everything is on the table. We work with the employer to adapt the job to you, rather than asking people to adapt to the job. That said, we have people working in a very wide range of places, including retail establishments like Modell’s and Marshall’s, Applebees restaurants, Queens College, movie theaters, as well as many, many other places.

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