44 Holland Avenue
Albany, NY 12229-0001

NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY. | Office for People With Developmental Disabilities

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Employment Myth Busters

(866) 946-9733 | www.opwdd.ny.gov

At OPWDD, our motto is “putting people first”. We believe that all people, including people with developmental disabilities, are capable of using their talents for community contribution through employment. Mythbusters provides answers to some of the most common questions that people with disabilities have about working and gives you the contact information you may need to connect with local employment resources. We are committed to assisting people with developmental disabilities to achieve their employment goals!

Kerry A. Delaney, Acting Commissioner

The Facts for People with Disabilities Who Want to Work

I want to work, but...

Myth: I’m worried about losing my Social Security disability benefits.

Fact: There are many types of work incentives that can help you test your ability to work and people who can show you how to use them.

Myth: I won’t be eligible for Medicaid if I start working.

Fact: With the Medicaid Buy-In Program for Working People with Disabilities (MBI-WPD) and Social Security’s 1619(b) rule most people can earn more money and still be eligible for Medicaid.

Myth: I don’t have any experience or a resume, so I won’t be able to get a job.

Fact: There are people who can work with you to build your job skills, create your resume, and find the job that’s right for you.

Myth: I’ve heard that working will cause problems for me.

Fact: Work is a great way to earn extra money, meet new friends, and contribute to your community. With the right planning, work can help you reach your goals.

Don’t Worry... Get the Facts!!

We can help you get answers to your questions and YOU can decide if working is right for you!

Do you have questions? We can help!

At the Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) we think work is an important part of a person’s life. Many people with a developmental disability want to work, but are afraid of how working might change their benefits – and there are many myths out there that simply are not true. Get the facts directly from us-you CAN plan for your future and be ready for these changes.

If you want to learn more about how working may be the right choice for you, this brochure is a good place to start. There are phone numbers for people who can answer your questions. We hope you will think about working as a way to earn extra money, share your talents and contribute to your community.

Independent Living Centers (ILCs)

A great place to learn more about working, ILCs are support networks for people with disabilities. They can talk with you about how to use your skills to become more independent through work.

Call 1-877-397-4126
or (518) 427-1060(Voice and TDD)
Or visit: http://www.nysilc.org/directory.htm

New York Makes Work Pay Hot Line

Experts who can answer your questions about work incentives and benefits.

1-888-224-3272
Or visit: www.nymakesworkpay.org

Examples of some commonly used Work Incentives:

MEDICAID BUY-IN PROGRAM for WORKING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES (MBI-WPD) – If you have a qualifying disability and you are between ages 16 to 65, MBI-WPD may help you keep your Medicaid coverage when you return to work or when your income is increased by working more hours.

CONTINUED MEDICAID ELIGIBILITY – 1619(b) – Your Medicaid coverage continues even if the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) cash payment is stopped due to an increase in earnings from work.

TRIAL WORK PERIOD (TWP) - You can keep receiving Social Security disability insurance (SSDI) while testing your ability to work.

SUBSIDIES AND SPECIAL CONDITIONS – The Social Security Administration (SSA) deducts the value of subsidies and special conditions from earned income when deciding if you are working at the Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA) level.

EARNED INCOME EXCLUSION – Part of your earned income is not counted when figuring the SSI payment amount.

IMPAIRMENT- RELATED WORK EXPENSES (IRWE) - Some costs of impairment-related expenses that you need to work may be deducted from earnings when looking at SGA or determining the SSI payment amount. Example: The out of pocket cost of special work tools, like a computer screen reader or a modified typewriter, that helps you do your job.

PLAN FOR ACHIEVING SELF-SUPPORT (PASS) – If you are an SSI recipient with a disability, you can set aside income and/or resources for a SSA approved work goal. Examples: Saving money for tools to start a lawn care business. Saving for tuition to attend training or school that improves your job skills.

Feeling Confused?

Please call us for help and get answers to your questions

The Center for Employment Excellence

NYS OPWDD
44 Holland Avenue
Albany, NY 12229
Phone: 866-946-9733
TTY: 866-933-4889

centerforemploymentexcellence@opwdd.ny.gov

To learn more about OPWDD services contact the Regional Office nearest you:

Region 1, Western NY

Rochester.....585-241-5700
West Seneca 800-487-6310

Region 2, Central NY

Syracuse 315-473-6978

Region 3, Capital District & Hudson Valley

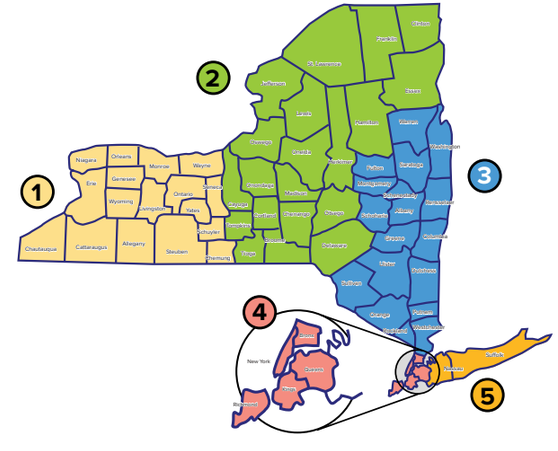
Capital District.....518-388-0431
Poughkeepsie.....845-473-5050
Thiells.....845-947-6100

Region 4, NYC and Metropolitan Area

Brooklyn.....718-642-6000
Bronx.....718-430-0885
Manhattan.....646-766-3222
Queens 718-217-5890
Staten Island.....718-983-5233

Region 5, Long Island

Long Island 631-434-6100



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