



FAQs: Leaving Sheltered Work

Leaving a sheltered workshop is a big decision and you may have lots of questions. Remember that you are not alone and there are services available to help you. This fact sheet answers some of the most common questions people ask about leaving sheltered work for a community job.

Will I lose benefits like Medicaid?

There are many ways to keep benefits and work, including MED Works, Indiana's Medicaid buy-in program. You might also find that your employer provides better benefits than the government. For example, you may not need Supplemental Security Income if you are earning a competitive salary.

Benefits counselors can give you detailed information about how a particular job will affect your government benefits. You can obtain benefits planning through Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VR) or the Indiana Works program.

Equity Through Advocacy

The Protection and Advocacy System for the State of Indiana



Will I be safe in the community?

Try to identify specific safety concerns and discuss them with your job coach or VR counselor. They can help address your worries and consider solutions to help you feel safe. These solutions could include having a cell phone on hand or practicing your commute before you start working.

Will I see my workshop friends again?

You can be friends without working together. Trade phone numbers or email addresses with your friends and keep in touch. You can set up a day to do something fun together when you both are not working. You can also look forward to making more friends at your new job.

What if I don't like change?

You do not have to change or try new things. However, you can also learn, tour different businesses, and try several kinds of jobs before deciding to leave your workshop. Change can be uncomfortable or scary, but it can also be good and help us grow.

What if my job doesn't last or I don't like it?

There are no guarantees that your job will last or that you will like it. People can be let go by an employer for lots of reasons, including that the employee and employer are a



bad fit for each other; the employer has to lay people off due to insufficient revenue; or an employer can go out of business. Therefore, just because a job does not work out does not mean you did something wrong. If you lose your job, you can work with your job coach or VR counselor to find a new one.

Similarly, if you do not like your job, you should let your job coach or VR counselor know. They are there to help you be successful. Be honest about what you do and don't like about work. Maybe a simple change can improve your experience. Or maybe you need to keep trying different jobs until you find a good fit.

Can someone help me look for work?

Yes, if you want their help. A job coach and/or VR counselor can help you find jobs. They can arrange business tours, job shadowing experiences, and trial work to help you find a good fit. They can also review your resume and setting up practice job interviews.

What if my family or friends are unsupportive?

Family and friends may want the best for you, but only you can decide *is* best for you. Whether and where you work should be your decision. Even if you have a guardian, they should listen to your choices. Your job coach or VR



counselor can also help answer questions and allay fears of guardians and family members

My last community job was bad. What if this one is, too?

Most people, including those who do not have disabilities, hold several jobs before finding the right fit. Tell your job coach or VR counselor why the last experience was bad. They can advise you about employment situations to avoid and whether the right supports or services could make a new job go more smoothly.

Questions?

If you have questions about this fact sheet feel free to contact Indiana Disability Rights!

Phone: (317) 722-5555

Toll Free Phone: (800) 622-4845

Website: <https://www.in.gov/idr/for-help-fill-this-out/>

Email: info@IndianaDisabilityRights.org
