



Does he work?
Who is his boss? Who are his co-workers?

Does she have a job coach?

Does he volunteer?

Employment

People with Down syndrome have the skills to pursue meaningful careers and play an important role in their own economic success and overall happiness. It is important to know your sibling's strengths, weaknesses, level of support needed, dreams and goals when setting out to find an employment opportunity. Often, volunteering is a way to not only gain job training, but also to help your brother or sister feel competent and comfortable in the workplace setting. Employers who hire individuals with disabilities benefit from above average employee retention, attendance and productivity.

Supported Employment

- outside support (job coach or employment specialist) accompanies a person to work to ensure his or her performance goals are being met
- natural supports (guidance, prompts or general help from peers or supervisors) that boost confidence and success

Sheltered Employment

- provides employment to people with disabilities in a setting where only people with disabilities work
- often criticized for paying subminimum wages and segregating persons with disabilities from other workers

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

- state-run program that provides supportive services to assist eligible individuals with disabilities to get and keep jobs compatible with their skills and abilities
- most VR services are free for eligible applicants
- VR services are time limited

How will working affect Social Security disability benefits?

If your sibling receives SSI or SSDI benefits and starts working or returns to work, he/she must report any income earned to the Social Security Administration (SSA). However, this does not mean that the amount of their benefits will be affected or that they will stop receiving disability benefits. Visit www.ssa.gov to learn about trial work periods and more.

Discrimination in the workplace

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) makes it unlawful to discriminate against a qualified individual with a disability with regards to employment procedures and practices, hiring, firing, job training and advancement. If you believe that your sibling has been discriminated against at work because of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, age (40 or older), disability or genetic information, you can file a Charge of Discrimination. Just remember there is a time limit (180 days) in which to file the claim. Call 1-800-669-4000 or visit <http://www.eeoc.gov/employees/howtofile.cfm> .

Additional employment resources

The US Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) develops and influences policies and practices that increase the number and quality of employment opportunities for people with disabilities. <http://www.dol.gov/odep/>

The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) is the leading source of free, expert, and confidential guidance on workplace accommodations and disability employment issues as a service of ODEP. www.askjan.org

Employment History

Current Employer _____

Supervisor _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Job Coach _____ Supported through waiver? Y N

Phone _____ Email _____

Transportation _____ Phone _____

Work days/hours _____

Responsibilities:

What does he/she love about the job?

What does he/she have challenges with?

Any co-workers that are friends too?

Any co-workers that are unfriendly?

Employment History

Previous Employer _____

Supervisor _____ Phone _____

Responsibilities:

Any other Employers in the past three years?