

HHS Special Projects Unit Vocational Apprenticeship



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Employment First, what is it?

- The philosophy that employment **in the general workforce** should be the first and preferred option for individuals with disabilities receiving assistance from publicly funded systems. Simply put, Employment First means real jobs, real wages, earning minimum wage, or better.
- Not a Recent Concept;
 - *According to the State Employment Leadership Network, the term “Employment First” appears to have been first used by Tennessee in 2003. However, the first Employment First type policy identified dates back to 1990 in Pennsylvania.*



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How is Employment First different?

- Historically, when it came to publicly funded services, employment in the community has been among numerous choices presented to people with disabilities, and in many cases, individuals have been shuttled to facility-based segregated services.
- Under Employment First, assistance to find a job in the community and become a tax-paying citizen, is the preferred choice.



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The Philosophy that Everyone Can Work

Unlike other individuals of working age in our society, where it's presumed they will become employed, people with disabilities have too often had to demonstrate their "readiness" for employment. The philosophy of Employment First assumes that individuals can work until proven otherwise, and employment in the general workforce is the first option pursued.



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HHS Vocational Apprenticeships

HHSC Vocational Apprenticeship to Date

- 2015 Concept introduced
- 2016 Three sites @ SSLC's
- 2018 Redesign and Project Proposals for the Community
- 2019 Two sites – one urban and one rural
- 2020 COVID
- 2022 Five sites
- 2023 Fifteen sites
- 2024 Fifteen sites



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HHS CS-Policy & Strategy Special Projects Unit



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VOCATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM MANUAL



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HHS Vocational Apprenticeship



Retail Apprenticeship (Community Healthcore)



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HHS Vocational Apprenticeship

What is the HHS Vocational Apprenticeship?

- Twelve-month program.
- Two distinct apprenticeships.
- Learn while you earn.
- Classroom with curriculum to support working in an integrated environment.
- On the job learning.
- Opportunity to experience work in an integrated environment.
- Opportunity to gain competitive transferable marketable job skills.
- Graduate prepared for entry into the competitive integrated job market.



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Pastry Apprenticeship (AACOG)



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HHS Vocational Apprenticeship

What Happens at the Jobsite

- Job Site Safety First
- Job Site Mentor Assigned
- Job Description Assigned
- Job Coach Support
- Job Coach Fades ASAP
- Embedded with All the Employees
- 20 Week Apprenticeship
- Job Skills Obtained for Competency
- Independence



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HHS Vocational Apprenticeship

What Happens in the Classroom

- Orientation and Workplace Safety
- Team Building
- Social Skills
- Technology
- Presentation Skills
- Resume Development
- How to look for a Job
- Networking
- Interviewing Skills
- Money Management
- Health and Wellness
- Keeping a Job



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Culinary Apprenticeship (AACOG)



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HHS Vocational Apprenticeship

Day in the Life – A typical Day

It Depends...

- Classroom
- Transportation
- On the Job Training
- Lunches and breaks with coworkers
- On the Job Training
- End of Day Chat (the good and the not so good)



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IT Apprenticeship (AACOG)

HHS Vocational Apprenticeship

Who's Who – It's a Village!

- Apprentices
- Classroom Instructor
- Job coach
- Employer Host
- Employer Host Liaison and Mentor
- HHS Project Management
- LIDDA Program Staff



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Child Daycare and Kitchen Aide Apprenticeship
(Community Healthcore)

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Let's Talk Results

- Number of sites in Texas to date
- Number of Apprenticeships
- Number of Employer Host sites
- Diversity of Apprenticeships
- Number of apprentices hired after program



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What's the future of the Apprenticeship?

- The Pursuit of Funding
 - Grant applications for continuation of Apprenticeship projects:
 - Funding incentives encourage employers.
 - A try before you buy strategy.
 - Assists a provider organization launch the project.
- Can the Apprenticeship project survive without funding?
 - Grant Funded to date
 - Sustainability Models are being explored



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Sustainability

- Any provider organization that has a funded Apprenticeship Project needs to look to the future without funding
- Funding was nice, now what?
- Constantly be thinking ahead from a funded project on how to continue / sustain forward motion
- Lessons learned from others and a provider's own practices are critical



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The Ultimate Dream

1. A sufficiently funded Apprenticeship Project to initiate launch
2. Commitment to a project for real results with an eye on the future.
3. After grant funding wraps up - continue the apprenticeship principle of practice as part of a robust overall employment services support model
4. Diversity of apprenticeships around the state with opportunities for those served who are interested in competitive integrated employment.



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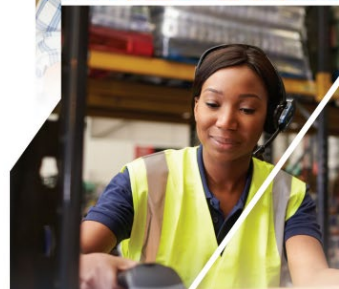
PARTICIPANT BENEFITS

- Paid work experience.
- Job skills that make them more likely to be hired in the future.
- Increased independence, confidence and self-esteem.
- On-site instruction, support and accommodations in line with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Small group learning.
- Practice interviews, feedback and assessment of skills with program and host employer staff.
- Supported occupational work environment.
- Critical job readiness skills ("soft skills" like teamwork, leadership, etc.) taught in a classroom environment.

APPRENTICESHIP EXAMPLES

- Administrative assistant and clerical
- Maintenance technician
- Materials warehouse
- Medical clerical
- Custodial/housekeeping
- Horse barn/stable
- Culinary
- Information technology
- Trades apprentice (carpentry, plumbing, masonry, etc.)
- Retail clerk
- Animal care

For more information or to request an application, email se.questions@hpsc.state.tx.us.



Connecting people to work.

HHS VOCATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM



2420075 - HHS - June 2023



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The future is bright!



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