



***The Arc<sup>TM</sup>  
of Cumberland County***

**Supported Employment Services**

**Consumer Handbook**

**Adopted by the Board of Directors  
September 2000**

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## **FORWARD**

Welcome as a new consumer with The Arc of Cumberland County, Supported Employment Services. This manual will help you learn about the services and opportunities that will be available to you from our organization.

You have been accepted into this service because you have been referred by one of the following agencies:

1. New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services
2. New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities
3. New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Our goal is to help you find a job in the community, to assist you in maintaining your work position, and to help you to advance in your career choices. We will assist you in achieving the specific goals that you and your support team decide are best for you.

The Arc of Cumberland County does not discriminate against persons who apply for employment services based on religion, color, ethnic origin, sex, degree of disability, sexual orientation, or age.

## **Agency Mission Statement**

The Arc of Cumberland County assists citizens of southern New Jersey who have disabilities to live normal, productive, and happy lives. We help people achieve their personal goals by providing a wide range of programs, services, and opportunities that improve their quality of life.

## **Program Location**

The Arc of Cumberland County Supported Employment Services administrative office is located at:

The Arc of Cumberland County  
Supported Employment Services  
1680 W. Sherman Avenue  
Vineland, NJ 08360  
Phone (856) 691-9138  
Fax (856) 563-0221  
Office Hours: 9:00 am – 4:30 pm

Most of the services that you receive will occur in your local community or at job sites you have chosen to visit or to work

## **We are CARF Accredited**

The Arc of Cumberland County must be accredited by CARF International every three years in order to maintain its eligibility to provide Supported Employment Services. CARF recognizes health and human service providers as having met standards for quality of service and signals a service provider's commitment to continually improving services, encouraging feedback, and serving the community. We have achieved a full three-year accreditation following each CARF survey beginning in June 2001 and most recently in June 2010.

## **Supported Employment Services Staff Qualifications**

Upon their hire, all of our Employment Specialists receive comprehensive training in the practice of providing employment supports from the Elizabeth Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities as well as general training from the New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities. Thereafter, our staff routinely attends training sessions from a variety of sources both in and out of state in an attempt to expand their service provision skills. Our current ten person staff averages 20 years of experience in providing services to persons with disabilities. Our employment placement rates and customer satisfaction survey results are available in our current Outcome Management Report, which is provided annually to each of our consumers.

## **HIPPA Notice**

The Arc of Cumberland County is a Business Associate of the New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities (NJ DDD), the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, and the New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (NJ DVRS). As such, we may be provided with medical information and personal identification information (social security number) regarding you that is protected by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPPA). This information is known as “protected health information”. The only persons who have access to this information from the Arc of Cumberland County are your employment specialist (also known as a job coach), the Coordinator of Supported Employment at the Arc of Cumberland County, and, if needed, the Executive Director

of the Arc of Cumberland County. We will only share this information with individuals that you have identified to us during your assessment intake interview or whom you authorize at a later date of service. If you are not your own legal guardian, the person who is your legal guardian will be asked to complete this authorization from at the time of your intake. It is understood that we will routinely provide some relevant protected health information on any applications of employment made on your behalf. You will review each application for potential employment prior to it being submitted to a local employer for consideration.

## **Criteria for Acceptance**

Applicants will be accepted on a “first referred, first accepted basis”. The Arc of Cumberland does not use a waiting list for services. Any delay in providing services to the individual will be explained to him or her at the time of the intake assessment. The Executive Director reserves the right to make any final decision on consumer admission to Supported Employment Services.

## **What Services are Provided?**

### **Our Employment Specialists will**

- ★ Assist you in the development of your career goals and in the identification of local employers who offer opportunities for you to achieve these goals.

- ★ Assist you in creating a personal resume or portfolio document, completing all job applications, and conducting practice job interview sessions.

- ★ Schedule job interviews for your employment opportunities and accompany you to them. They will help you practice for the interview experience.
- ★ Identify work transportation options for you.
- ★ Provide intensive training to you at the work site during your first months of employment until you have learned all of the basic work responsibilities.
- ★ Continue to provide you and your employer with long-term assistance in “follow along” supports, which generally involves a weekly contact at the work site for as long as you maintain employment.

## **Related Guidelines**

### **Your Responsibilities**

It is important that you are actively involved in all aspects of your job search. It is expected that you will consider realistic job offers that match your employment goal.

You will be expected to demonstrate respect at all times for your Arc of Cumberland County support staff as well as for your work supervisors and co-workers.

### **Work schedules**

You will develop an employment goal based on your skills with the help of your job coach. Work schedules are based on the



type of job you want, the needs of your employer, and available transportation.

## **Transportation**

It is expected that you will be able to get to and from work using your own car, a bus, a taxi, a ride from family or friends, or car-pooling. Your job coach will assist you with learning to travel to and from your job if needed and will accompany you on public transportation vehicles as part of your travel training needs.

## **Employer Policies**

Your employer will have rules for such issues as attendance, sick time, vacation time, holidays, dress code, and lunch breaks. Your employment specialist will assist you in learning these rules so that you can follow them without their assistance.

## **Benefits**

Your employer may provide benefits that could include medical insurance, sick time, vacation time, and other personal benefits. Depending on whether you work full time or part-time, your benefits will vary.

## **Wages**

Your employer will pay you wages that have been established for the position for which you have been hired. Your salary cannot be lower than the current guidelines for the State of New Jersey minimum wage.

## **Safety**

Your employer will have specific rules regarding safety in the work place. The employer will review these with you. Your employer specialist will also explain these safety rules to you and assist you to learn safe work practices.

## **Personal Health**

You are expected to maintain yourself in good health at all times at the workplace. You are also expected to self-medicate as needed while at the workplace. Your Arc of Cumberland County Employment Specialist will assist you in identifying an accommodation for your medication needs as needed.

## **The Individual Service Plan**

Together you, your employment specialist, and other important people in your life will develop a plan that will serve as the map that will help you find the kind of job that you want and also help you to keep this job. This is called an Individual Service Plan. The plan will list information about the kind of work you are interested in, your present skills and strengths, and the type of help you need to find a job. It will also list the specific steps that will be taken to help you reach your career goal.

## **Job Coaching**

This term is used to describe the services that you will receive by your Arc of Cumberland County employment specialist after you have obtained employment. The type of job coaching support you may need is reviewed with you and your employer at the time that you accept your work position. It may include:

1. Travel training in the use of public transportation.

2. Direct training on the job to help your work tasks.
3. Providing you with indirect assistance in managing your work responsibilities (providing written task lists, developing study guides for work procedures, obtaining specific work modifications, etc.)
4. Meeting with you, your work supervisors, and co-workers on a routine basis at the job site to discuss your work related issues.

## **Follow Along Services**

As you become more comfortable in your job, the employment specialist will “fade” from the job site and spend less time with you there. In most cases, you will continue to have visits from your employment specialist about once per week. They can spend more time with you if you need it to learn new work tasks or if you get a promotion or change to a new job.

## **Job Accommodations & Assistive Technology**

If your job requires work site modifications or you need any assistive devices to perform your job, your employment specialist will work with you and your employer to obtain any necessary changes. If you need help that the Arc of Cumberland County cannot provide, we will contact an outside agency that can provide the services that you need at no charge to you.

## **Support Services**

Your Arc of Cumberland County employment specialist can help you find services in the community that you might need that we cannot directly provide. Some examples of these services are:

1. Referral for recreational services in your community
2. Referral for self-advocacy services.
3. Referral for legal services.
4. Referral for transportation services such as ACCESS LINK

## **Know Your Rights**

If you think your employee rights are being violated at your work place, your Arc of Cumberland employment specialist can help you find out what action can be taken and advise you on the legal assistance that is available to you. ***The Arc of Cumberland County cannot provide you with direct legal assistance.***

You can be your own best advocate! Ask your job coach about joining a self-advocacy group.

## **Grievance Procedure**

A grievance is a formal complaint or disagreement regarding a staff decision, incident, policy and/or practice related to the supported employment services that you receive. You have the right to a formal grievance procedure if you cannot informally solve a problem you have with any Arc of Cumberland County Supported Employment Services employee. ***This does not apply to any concerns that you may have with your employer.*** Your eligibility to continue to receive services from the Arc of Cumberland County and the quality of these services will not be

affected if you file a grievance with our agency that involves one of our supported employment staff members.

Upon request, your job coach will verbally instruct you on the mechanics of the grievance procedure and how to obtain advocacy assistance if necessary. You are entitled to the participation of your chosen advocate in all steps of the grievance procedure.

## **Grievance Filing/Grievance Advancement**

A grievance may be started by speaking with your job coach or by writing to the Director of Employment Services. For the grievance to be considered filed, written notification must be delivered or mailed to the Director at the Arc of Cumberland County, 1680 W. Sherman Ave. Vineland, N J 08360. To move a grievance to a higher level, also contact the Director in the manner described above.

If the grievance involves the job coach, the grievance should be submitted directly in writing to the Director of Employment Services who will hear the grievance at Level 1 as described below. Contact the Director at the Arc of Cumberland offices. If the grievance involves the Director, the Executive Director will hear the grievance at Level 2 as described below. Contact the Executive Director at the Arc of Cumberland offices.

It is your responsibility, either personally or through an advocate, to request filing or advancement of a grievance. It is the responsibility of the program director and/or Executive Director to arrange for implementation of the steps of the grievance within the given time frames.

### **Level One: Contact the Director of Employment Services**

Within five (5) working days of receiving the grievance, the Director of Employment Services will review the grievance and arrange for a meeting with you and your advocate, if requested. A decision will be made regarding the consumer request made in the grievance. This decision will be communicated to you and put in writing no later than five days after the meeting. If you are not satisfied with the Director's decision, you may request an appeal to the Executive Director.

## **Level Two: Appeal to the Executive Director**

Within ten (10) working days of a request for advancement of the grievance beyond level one, the Executive Director will review the grievance and schedule a meeting with you and your advocate, if requested. The decision of the Executive Director will be communicated to you and put in writing no later than five days after the meeting. If you are not satisfied with the Executive Director's decision, you may request an appeal to the Arc Board of Director's.

## **Level Three: Appeal to Board of Directors**

At the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors, the elected officers will meet in private session to review the grievance and make a decision about it. This decision will be communicated to you and put in writing no later than five days after the meeting. The decision of the Board of Directors officers will be considered final.

## **External Review**

If you are not satisfied with the results of the appeal to the Board of Directors, you may contact the state agency that has a monitoring or funding role over the Arc of Cumberland County Supported Employment program. At their discretion, they may

make recommendations to the Board of Directors regarding your grievance.

## **Discharge from Supported Employment Services**

You may be discharged from, or leave, the Arc of Cumberland County Supported Employment services if you or your guardian ask for discharge. If you ask to leave these services, staff will speak with you about the advantages and disadvantages of leaving, and inform you about other services and supports.

The Director of Employment Services may recommend to your funding agency counselor that you be discharged from supported employment services because you have not met your responsibilities or because it is believed that you require additional services before you can be a successful supported employment services consumer. If the Arc of Cumberland County intends to discharge you from its Supported Employment Services, you will be told in advance and may appeal the decision through the grievance process.

## **Transfer**

You may ask for a transfer to another agency providing similar services. It is your responsibility to request this transfer you're your funding agency counselor.

## **Job Loss**

If you lose your job, Arc of Cumberland Supported Employment staff may still be available to provide continued services to you. Usually, Arc of Cumberland Supported

Employment Services staff will work with you to find another job. You may be required to request new pre-placement services from your funding agency counselor.

## **Re-Entry**

If you want to re-enter supported employment services after leaving them, you may request your return from your funding agency counselor.

## **Employment with the Arc of Cumberland**

If you wish to apply for a job opening within The Arc of Cumberland you will follow the same steps as other job applicants. You should inform your Employment Specialist of your interest in a position at the Arc of Cumberland and he or she will assist you in preparing and processing your job application. If you are offered a job as an employee of the Arc of Cumberland, you will still be eligible to receive supported employment services while in this job.

## **Rights of Persons Served**

The Arc of Cumberland County believes that persons with disabilities have the same legal, personal, and civil rights under the applicable federal and state laws as any other citizen. These rights should never be limited, restricted, or abridged solely on the basis of diagnosis without due process.



Individuals with disabilities are entitled to the same services and protection as other citizens, and should be allowed to fully exercise their citizenship rights and live as independently as possible.

To this end, all consumers of the Arc of Cumberland Supported Employment Services, shall be entitled to the following rights and privileges as part of their participation in this service:

1. To work at competitive employment with competitive wages.
2. To request their release from Arc of Cumberland Supported Employment Services or to transfer to another program offered by another agency at any point in the participation in supported employment services.
3. To share in developing career goals that encompasses individual skills, experiences, and interest.
4. To have all records about them kept private and confidential unless they or their guardian choose to release information
5. To receive information that will assist them with other than work issues in the form of resource materials and/or referrals for other types of services.
6. To receive consistent and professional service from our staff in meeting the consumer's goal of employment attainment and maintenance.
7. To receive assistance in service issues that may require an advocate or legal representation.

8. To be free from abuse, humiliation, neglect and financial or other exploitation.
9. To submit a formal grievance if they disagree with decisions being made regarding their employment needs by Arc of Cumberland County staff.
10. Further, there will be no direct or indirect retaliation towards any consumer or stakeholder who files a grievance against the Arc of Cumberland County or any of its staff members.