



**Office for People With  
Developmental Disabilities**

# **Employment and Vocational Service Options**

CSN Transition Conference  
January 25-27, 2023

# Agenda

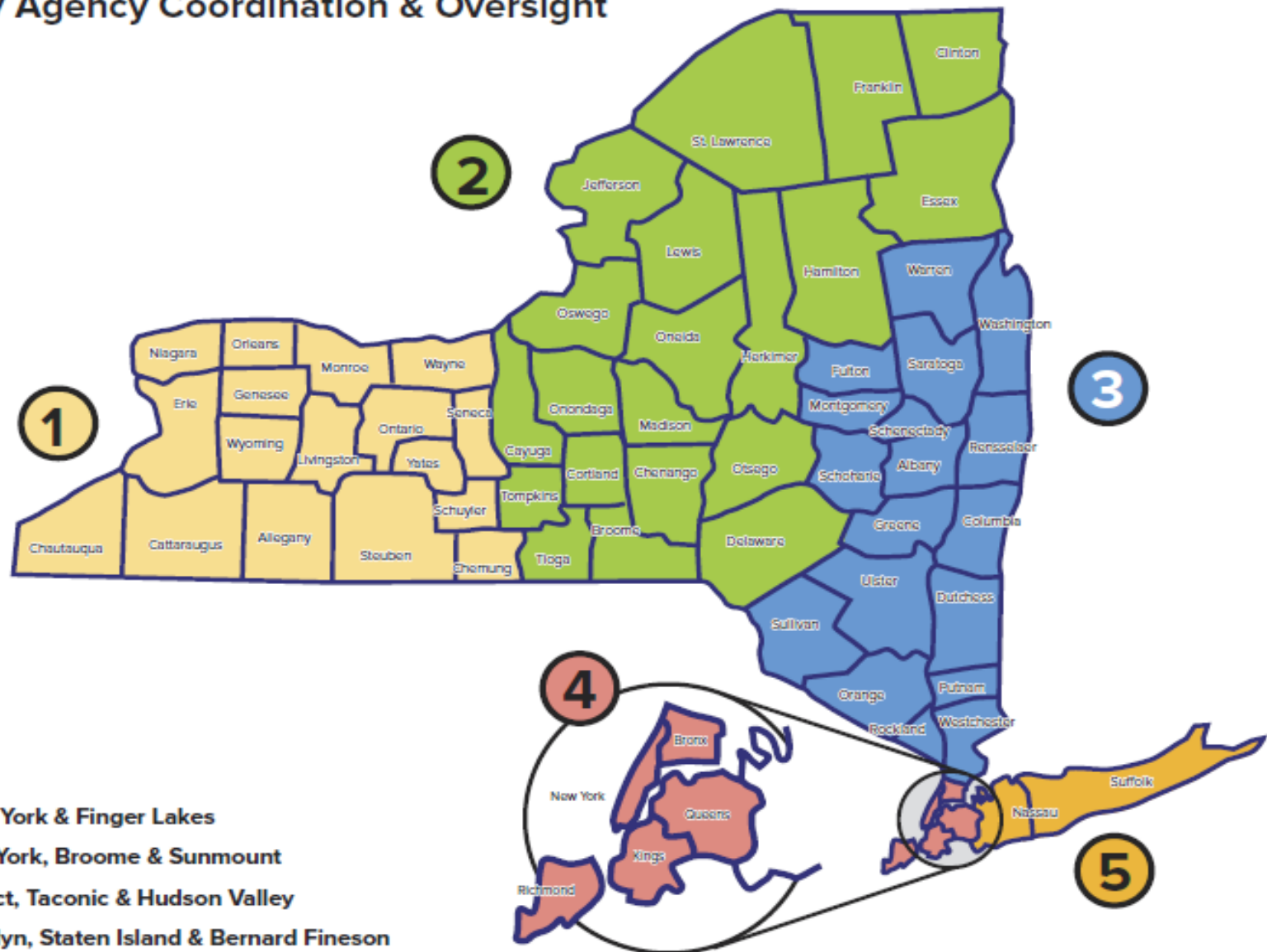
1. OPWDD
2. OPWDD's Front Door Process
3. Care Coordination Organizations (CCO)
4. OPWDD Eligibility
5. Student to Adult Transition
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# The Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)

- The New York State agency that authorizes services for over 125,000 people in NYS who have developmental disabilities.
- Helps people with developmental disabilities live richer lives.
- Services are provided by hundreds of nonprofit agencies across NYS that OPWDD certifies and regulates, and by OPWDD directly.

# 5 Developmental Disabilities Regional Offices

## Voluntary Agency Coordination & Oversight



- ① – Western New York & Finger Lakes
- ② – Central New York, Broome & Sunmount
- ③ – Capital District, Taconic & Hudson Valley
- ④ – Metro, Brooklyn, Staten Island & Bernard Fineson
- ⑤ – Long Island

# The OPWDD Front Door

- The Front Door is a person-centered process that connects people to services.
- A team of staff at the Developmental Disabilities Regional Offices (DDRROs) guides people through the process to access the supports and services they need.

# Steps in the Front Door Process

**Initial OPWDD Contact**



**OPWDD Eligibility**



**Identify Needs, Goals and Preferences**



**Plan for Services**



**Access Services**

# Care Coordination Organizations (CCO)

- Assist people with the OPWDD eligibility and Medicaid application processes.
- Inform people about the supports and services available to meet their needs and the agencies in their community that provide these options.
- Provide the assistance needed to access supports and services.
- Assist with any changes needed to a person's services.



# The OPWDD Eligibility Review Process

The process by which OPWDD determines if you have a qualifying developmental disability to receive OPWDD supports and services

- May involve more than one step to ensure:
  - Every person receives a fair review.
  - All applicants can submit additional information, request re-evaluation, appeal a determination and request a fair hearing.
- If you have specific eligibility questions, please contact your DDRO.



# OPWDD's Developmental Disability Eligibility Requirements

- A condition that occurs anytime from birth until the age of 22, including:
  - Intellectual Disability
  - Cerebral Palsy
  - Epilepsy
  - Neurological Impairment
  - Autism Spectrum Disorder
  - Familial Dysautonomia
  - Prader-Willi Syndrome
- Is expected to be permanent
- Affects your ability to function in society



# Required Documents for Eligibility

Your DDRO will need the following information to determine if you are eligible for OPWDD services:

- A Transmittal Form for Determination of Developmental Disability
- A full psychological report
- A social/developmental history or psychosocial report
- A medical specialty report
- Supporting documentation showing that you became disabled **before** age 22
- An assessment of adaptive skills
- A diagnostic report (an evaluation that supports how the diagnosis was made)



# Transition to Adult Services

- Once OPWDD eligibility is established, supports and services are available to students of all ages.
- These supports and services are designed to help students build skills and increase their independence at home, in school and in their community.
- Connecting with OPWDD helps students successfully transition from high school to adult life, including:
  - Getting a job,
  - Continuing their education, and
  - Taking part in other meaningful activities such as volunteering, developing work-related skills and engaging in social and recreational opportunities.



# OPWDD Employment, Vocational and Day Services

## Employment and Vocational Services

- Supported Employment (SEMP)  
    including Employment Training Program (ETP)
- Community-Based Prevocational (CBPV)
- Site-Based Prevocational (SBPV)
- Pathway to Employment (PTE)

## Meaningful Community Activities

- Day Habilitation (DH)
- Community Habilitation (CH)



# Employment and Vocational Services

OPWDD designed employment-related services based on best practices to:

- Increase discovery and person-centered career planning
- Improve job matching
- Increase career development
- Improve employment-related interpersonal skills
- Increase vocational skills and experiences
- Increase public benefits and financial planning
- Provide flexible and customized job coaching supports





## What is Discovery?

- Person-centered career planning
- Learning about a person (current activities, past experiences, interests, social skills, learning style, history, family culture, etc.)
- Learning about a person's community work experiences (unpaid or paid)
- Learning about their work-related skills
- Doing career development/exploration activities
- Making a Discovery/Employment Plan to develop next steps and job match criteria (if job development is recommended)

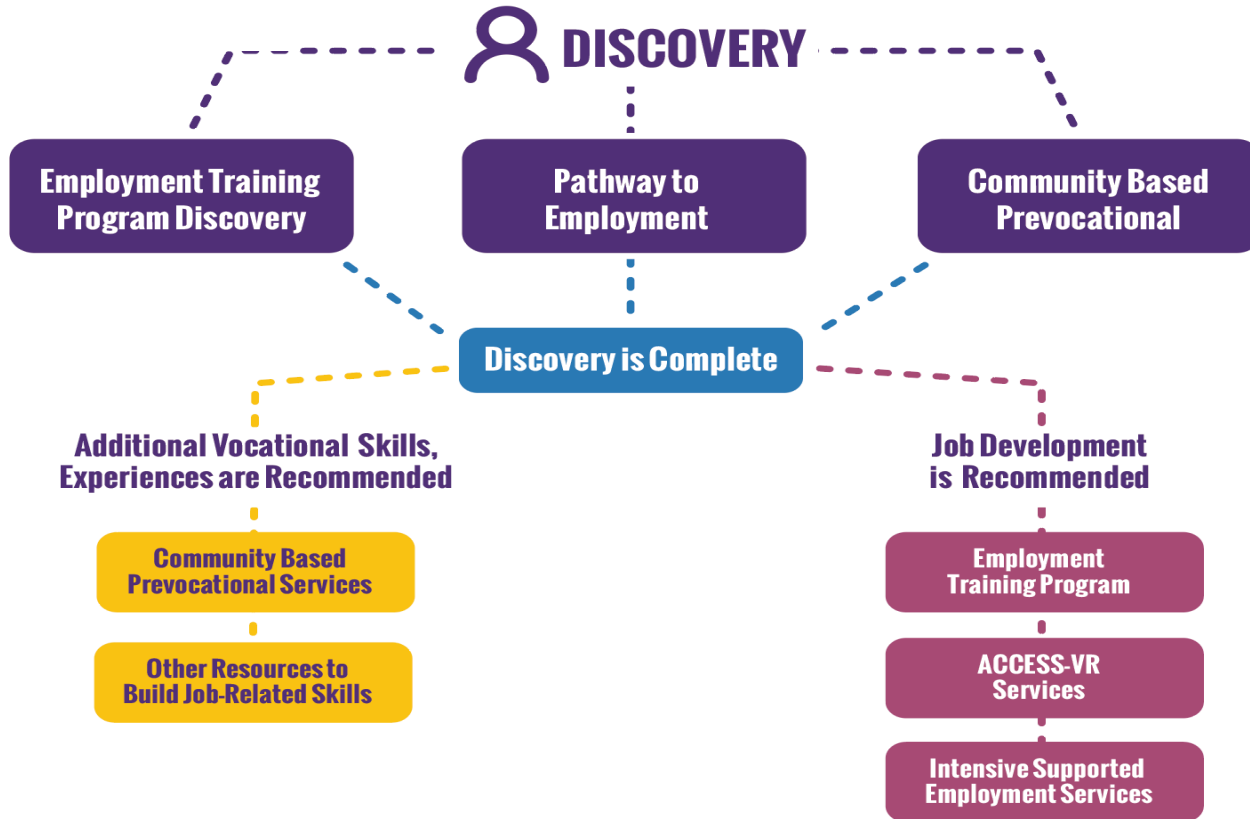


## Why Discovery?

- Employment success and retention
- Improved coaching supports and strategies
- Stronger job development and placement
- Learning about their work-related skills
- Get to know the person



# Beyond Discovery?



# Community-Based Prevocational Services

## Waiver Service

Provides work-related skill training to prepare people for employment or meaningful activities.

Includes Discovery, community-based work experiences, volunteer opportunities, training to use available transportation options and career planning.

Skill development is reviewed annually to determine when the person is prepared to move to an employment service.

Unpaid volunteer opportunities.  
If paid, must be subminimum wage according to DOL requirements.



# What happens in Community-Based Prevocational Services?

- A combination of individual and group activities
- Opportunities to develop general, non-job task specific skills (e.g. time management, following directions, stress management, communicating effectively, the ability to attend to tasks, etc.)
- Understanding and adhering to generally accepted workplace policies
- Learning to travel to and from work independently
- Assessing the person's work interests and skills
- Opportunities to develop safety awareness and skills



# Pathway to Employment Services

## Waiver Service

A career planning service designed to help people identify vocational skills, interests and strengths.

Time-limited service.

Service is typically provided within 278 hours or 1 year.

Includes person-centered planning, Discovery, community-based vocational experiences, job readiness training and career planning.

Includes a Career, Vocational and Transition Plan which includes the next steps for achieving employment.



# What happens in Pathway to Employment?

- Learning about the person's history, community experiences, interests, skills and preferences for the purpose of assessment and career planning
- Participation in at least 3 different community-based vocational experiences
- Development of social skills, job retention strategies and other workplace skills that prepare a person for competitive integrated employment
- Opportunities to develop safety awareness and skills



# Employment Training Program (ETP)

## Waiver & State Funded

Paid internships in businesses that lead to competitive, integrated employment if the person's performance meets business standards.

Internships vary in length. People receive job supports from SEMP.

Includes Discovery, targeted job development and placement in a time-limited internship that is overseen by an ETP Supervisor.

Wages paid by OPWDD during the internship and assumed by the business if the person is hired.

OPWDD partners with schools to offer ETP traineeships for students in high school.



# What happens in ETP?

- Internships are developed based on the person's interests, abilities and Discovery findings to assure a good match.
- Wages are paid by NYS while the intern is learning the job.
- The ETP Supervisor, Worksite Supervisor, Job Coach and other SEMP staff work together to support the internship.
- Interns attend regularly scheduled job readiness classes to enhance their work skills.
- If hired, the person continues to receive ongoing supports as needed from a SEMP agency.



# Supported Employment (SEMP)

## Waiver Service

Provides job coaching, job development and support on a job.

On-going supports and services are provided as needed.

The outcome is community-based, competitive, integrated employment.

Employee is paid by business at minimum wage or higher.



# What happens in SEMP?

- Job development
- Job coaching, training and planning within the work environment
- Improve communication skills with supervisors, co-workers and customers
- Develop job retention strategies
- Develop natural supports
- Negotiate with employers
- Benefits planning
- Career advancement strategies
- Foster independence on the job



# ACCES-VR Employment Services

(Adult Continuing Career and Education Services – Vocational Rehabilitation)

- ACCES-VR funds initial job development and job coaching for persons who can get and learn a job within a shorter time span. People who need more time for job development and intensive job coaching are referred to ETP.
- ACCES-VR services are time-limited. People who are OPWDD eligible and gain jobs through ACCES-VR must transition to OPWDD SEMP services for job coaching supports, as needed.



# Benefits of OPWDD Supports and Services

- Address barriers to employment
- Build social and community relationships outside of work
- Build stamina and healthy habits
- Develop transportation skills
- Build independence and safety skills
- Gain experience in new career paths
- Career planning and prepare for next job



# Day Habilitation

## Waiver Service

Provide supports that enhance social development, daily living skills and independence in the community.

Services are delivered in a variety of community settings.

Can prepare people to gain or retain employment through skill building, volunteer experiences and building relationships in the community.

Does not provide wages or services on the job.



# What happens in Day Habilitation?

- Development of communication and social skills
- Training and assistance to develop safety skills
- Development of self-advocacy skills
- Opportunities to build relationships and explore your community
- Training and assistance with personal care
- Development of money management skills
- Learning how to use public transportation
- Exploration of potential career paths through volunteering



# Community Habilitation

## Waiver Service

Provide supports that enhance social development, daily living skills and independence in the community.

Services may not be delivered in sites certified by OPWDD.

Can prepare people to gain or retain employment through skill building, volunteer experiences and building relationships in the community.

Can help people develop the skills needed to obtain or maintain their own apartment.



# What happens in Community Habilitation?

- Development of communication and social skills
- Training and assistance to develop safety skills
- Development of self-advocacy skills
- Opportunities to build relationships and explore your community
- Participation in leisure activities of interest
- Development of money management skills
- Learning how to use public transportation
- Exploration of potential career paths through volunteering



# Contacts

## Local School Transition Coordinator Region 3 (Capital District, Taconic and Hudson Valley)

Christopher Knight

(845) 947-6035

[Christopher.M.Knight@opwdd.ny.gov](mailto:Christopher.M.Knight@opwdd.ny.gov)

## Front Door

### **Capital/Taconic - (518) 388-0398**

Counties served: Albany, Columbia, Dutchess, Fulton, Greene, Montgomery, Putnam, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Schoharie, Ulster, Warren, Washington

### **Hudson Valley – (845) 947-6390**

Counties served: Orange, Rockland, Sullivan, Westchester

## Central Office Employment and Meaningful Community Activities Unit

[employment.vocational.services@opwdd.ny.gov](mailto:employment.vocational.services@opwdd.ny.gov)



Office for People With  
Developmental Disabilities

# Presenters

## **Kristine M. Snyder, LMSW**

Statewide Coordinator of Employment and Vocational Services  
Employment and Meaningful Community Activities

## **NYS Office for People With Developmental Disabilities**

620 Westfall Rd. Rochester, NY 14620

Office: (585) 241-5852 | Cell: (585) 825-9973

[Kristine.Snyder@opwdd.ny.gov](mailto:Kristine.Snyder@opwdd.ny.gov)

[www.opwdd.ny.gov](http://www.opwdd.ny.gov)

## **Bryan L. Bischoff**

Assistant Statewide Coordinator of Employment and Vocational Services  
Employment and Meaningful Community Activities

## **NYS Office for People With Developmental Disabilities**

11 Wilbur Rd., Thiells, NY 10984

Office: (845) 947-6021

[Bryan.L.Bischoff@opwdd.ny.gov](mailto:Bryan.L.Bischoff@opwdd.ny.gov)

[www.opwdd.ny.gov](http://www.opwdd.ny.gov)



**Office for People With  
Developmental Disabilities**

# Resources

- [Office for People With Developmental Disabilities | Office for People With Developmental Disabilities \(ny.gov\)](#)
- [Front Door | Office for People With Developmental Disabilities \(ny.gov\)](#)
- [Care Management | Office for People With Developmental Disabilities \(ny.gov\)](#)
- [Eligibility | Office for People With Developmental Disabilities \(ny.gov\)](#)
- [School Transition for Students with Developmental Disabilities | Office for People With Developmental Disabilities \(ny.gov\)](#)
- [Employment Services | Office for People With Developmental Disabilities \(ny.gov\)](#)
- [Types of Services | Office for People With Developmental Disabilities \(ny.gov\)](#)

