

# **Position Description for the DISABILITY PROGRAM**

## **NAVIGATOR**

### ***BACKGROUND***

The Disability Program Navigator (Navigator) is the focus of a demonstration project jointly sponsored by the Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration (DOL/ETA) and the Social Security Administration, Office of Program Development and Research (SSA/OPDR). The DOL and SSA are jointly funding and training individuals selected as Navigators and will pilot and evaluate the Navigator positions. DOL/ETA encourages applicants for WIG IV grants to consider including Navigator positions in their applications, using this position description below for guidance.

The Navigator will address the needs of people with disabilities seeking training and employment opportunities through the One-Stop Career Center system established under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998. The Navigator will provide expertise and serve as a resource person to the workforce investment system and persons with disabilities, including Social Security Disability Insurance (DI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) disability and blindness beneficiaries. Navigators will have expertise regarding the One-Stop partner programs, services and information and Social Security Administration (SSA) work incentives and other employment support programs, including the Ticket to Work programs and SSA demonstration projects focused on improving employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.

The Navigator will expand consumer choice in addressing the needs of people with disabilities seeking training and employment opportunities through the One-Stop Career

Center system established under WIA. The Navigator position is intended to increase employment and self-sufficiency for persons with disabilities by linking them to employers and by facilitating access to supports and services that will enable the transition to employment.

NOTE: The following duties and responsibilities of the Navigator are advisory and applicants may adjust and expand them to meet the needs of the local workforce investment area.

### DUTIES

Serves as an expert on workforce development issues and policies impacting persons with disabilities who are seeking employment, skill development, job retention assistance, or career advancement through the One-Stop Career Center system (including the use of Individual Training Accounts, which are typically underutilized for people with disabilities). Serves as a resource to the workforce investment community within their service area to ensure the availability of comprehensive knowledge on federal, state, local and private programs that impact the ability of persons with disabilities to enter and remain in the workforce. Facilitates universal access to the One-Stop system for persons with disabilities.

On a “consumer choice” model, the Navigator will, as necessary, work directly with One Stop Career Center customers with disabilities, including SSI and DI beneficiaries, to provide the customer with options and assistance in accessing and navigating the complex provisions under various governmental and non-governmental programs that impact their ability to gain, return to, or retain employment. In dealing with youth, the Navigator will be available and prepared to assist these customers in accessing the

individualized supports (including IDEA mandated special education and related services) needed to successfully transition to adulthood.

#### RECOMMENDED CORE FUNCTIONS OF THE NAVIGATOR POSITION

- Assists people with disabilities to access the wide variety of programs available to support their successful entry or re-entry into the workforce, connecting such individuals to those programs and the benefits, services and/or supports that they provide and following up to assure that each individual is receiving the level of benefits, services and/or supports needed.
- Serves as a resource to the workforce investment staff within the service area to ensure the availability of comprehensive knowledge on federal, state, local and private programs that impact the ability of persons with disabilities to enter and remain in the workforce;
- Trains One-Stop Career Center staff and other staff on activities, services and resources available in the One-Stop system, SSA employment support programs and demonstration projects and other programs;
- Serves as a One-Stop Career Center resource on Social Security work incentives and other employment support programs, including the Ticket to Work Program and the provision of services through Benefits Planning, Assistance and Outreach organizations (BPAOs), the Protection and Advocacy systems (P&As), SSA's employment-related demonstration projects, and State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Agencies;
- Develops linkages and collaborates on an ongoing basis with employers and employer organizations, such as the Chamber of Commerce and the Business

Leadership Network, to promote the hiring of people with disabilities and to facilitate their job placement;

- Trains or makes training available to One-Stop Career Center staff on disability etiquette; facility, communication and program accessibility requirements; Americans with Disability Act (ADA); Section 504 (Part 32) of the Rehabilitation Act (29 CFR part 32) and WIA section 188 (29 CFR part 37) definitions and requirements; assessment tools and their applicability; SSA employment support programs; employer federal and state tax incentives, and other relevant information that may be applicable;
- Facilitates the transition of in or out of school youth with disabilities to secure employment and economic self-sufficiency, including outreach to schools and the design and coordination of customized assistance;
- Conducts outreach to, and coordination with, community service providers working with people with disabilities, local Independent Living Centers and public and private mental health and developmental disability organizations. Fosters linkages between these organizations and programs operating through One-Stop Career Centers, including Social Security employment support programs;
- Serves as a One-Stop Career Center resource on pertinent workforce development issues and policies for jobseekers with disabilities who seek employment, skill development, job retention assistance, or career advancement through the One- Stop Career Center system (including the use of Individual Training Accounts);

- Provides an ongoing assessment of One-Stop Career Center facilities, services, programs and equipment to ensure these are accessible to people with disabilities, including ensuring that informational materials on the Social Security Ticket to Work Program, Plan to Achieve Self Support (PASS) and other programs are available in alternate formats;
- Works with designated Equal Employment Opportunity officer(s), the local Workforce Investment Board and the One-Stop operator to ensure that One-Stop Career Center facilities, services, programs and equipment are accessible to people with disabilities, including ensuring the availability of publications and materials in alternate formats;

Provides information on assistive technologies and/or referral to organizations that can serve as a resource (e.g., State Services for the Blind offices, regional Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers, Job Accommodation Networks, etc.);

- Provides information on complaint procedures established under the nondiscrimination provisions of WIA section 188 as well as those provided in SSA's Ticket to Work Program (i.e., P&As); and
- Facilitates the collection of participant data that may be required to effectively evaluate the Navigator initiative.

#### RELEVANT KNOWLEDGE

The Navigator will be trained on a broad range of Federal, State, local and private work incentives and other employment support programs and services, including One-Stop partner programs and Social Security work incentives and related employment support programs, including the Ticket to Work Program. The Navigator will be expected to

acquire knowledge in the following areas of sufficient depth and detail to effectively impart program and service information to One-Stop customers and staff and to successfully facilitate referrals and improve job opportunities for persons with disabilities.

- Title XVI of the Social Security Act, including the Plan to Achieve Self Support provision and other work incentives as well as Title II of the Social Security Act, with particular attention to work incentives.
- Title XVIII and Title XIX of the Social Security Act, with particular attention to state "buy-in" options with regard to Medicaid.
- The Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999.
- The Workforce Investment Act, with particular attention to adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs.
- The goals, policies and operations of the state and local workforce investment systems and the partner agencies and their programs.
- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and State Title V (Maternal and Child Health) Agency programs.
- Vocational rehabilitation agency services provided through the State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agency.
- Functional assessment tools available through VR, adult literacy programs, and other partner programs in the One-Stop Career Center system.
- Local transportation resources and the availability of alternative transportation modes.
- Housing availability, programs and limitations.

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and welfare-to-work requirements affecting TANF recipients.
- The legal requirements related to accessibility of programs and services for people with disabilities.
- The array of available assistive technologies and resources, including an awareness of local, state, regional and national resources related to assistive technology.
- Basic office computer skills (word processing, presentation, and database programs).
- The ability to communicate orally and in writing.