

NC Vocational Rehab ~ Helping the Disabled Who Want to Work Achieve Career Success!



David Hiller, Unit Manager, NC Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

By Jeanna Baxter White

As an employer, you will be happy to know that there is an untapped labor force among people with disabilities here in the state – people who make outstanding employees and are job-ready. According to the Institute for Corporate Productivity (ICP), hiring people with disabilities can:

- Improve productivity and reduce turnover by almost 50%
- Include employees who have equal to or better overall job performance ratings than fellow workers

Many of these candidates are well prepared, have earned certifications and have post-secondary education. In fact, the [North Carolina Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services \(NCDVRS\)](#):

- Has over 4,000 applicants who are pre-qualified and “job-ready” from month to month
- Places thousands of people each year in healthcare, hospitality, and personal services jobs
- Provides over 1,500 employees to the transportation, manufacturing and construction sector each year
- Fills an additional 500 positions in the business, professional and financial services areas as well

Recruiting and Placement Services for Employers at No Charge

To recruit and employ these talented people, you can rely on NC DVRS which offers recruitment and job placement services to employers at no charge.

“We want businesses to see us as a partner in helping them achieve their staffing needs,” said Dave Hiller, manager of the Lexington unit of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, which serves Davidson, Davie, and Randolph Counties, as well as high school students in Yadkin County.

He listed the programs that are available to assist employers in hiring individuals with disabilities.

- Tax credits for hiring individuals with disabilities
- Tax credit for modifying the workplace such as installing a ramp or automatic doors or widening aisles to accommodate wheelchairs
- Federal bonding program which provides no-cost fidelity bonds for hard-to-place job applicants who face barriers to employment.
- Agency-paid internship program. The employer then has the option to hire the candidate who is now trained for that specific position.

- Agency-paid On the Job Training (OJT) program

“We want to make our services available to as many people with disabilities as possible, and businesses and employers are crucial to our success.”

NC DVRS Impacting Lives, Creating Success Stories

Hiller gave an example of the benefit NC DVRS offers to both employers and consumers. “We had a client who was working for a manufacturing company in Mocksville, but her limitations were causing her to have difficulty with some of her tasks. Our vocational evaluator and counselor completed a job site analysis of the tasks and the client’s ability to perform them. They then made recommendations to both the client and the employer so that the tasks could be accomplished more efficiently. Both parties embraced the suggestions and the employee was able to continue employment. Our experts were able to assist both the employer and the client, and the situation is now a success.”

“We have specialized training to serve people with disabilities,” he added. “We are experienced in serving people with learning disabilities, developmental disabilities, and physical disabilities such as cardiac or pulmonary issues, diabetes, and amputations. And we also understand the local labor market, who the businesses are, and general workforce trends.”

Hiller explained that in addition to supporting businesses, his office also works directly with individuals with disabilities, beginning with high school students, who need assistance to retain, obtain or maintain competitive employment.

Getting Help for The Disabled Begins Here

The process usually begins with a referral from a doctor, mental health professional, high school, community college, or another agency like the Department of Social Services or NCWorks. Consumers may also contact NC DVRS directly themselves.

If an individual meets the criteria for assistance (has a disability and would like to go to work), a case manager will help them develop job goals and then plans services to help meet those goals. This can include helping with access to community resources, counseling, job coaching, job leads, interview skills, resume assistance. Depending upon income, candidates may also receive financial assistance with training and transportation.

“We are all parts of a big pie. The more we work together the more the community as a whole will benefit. Our local businesses have their staffing needs met and our clients are able to achieve their goals.”

North Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation is located at 375 Hospital Street, Suite 100 in Mocksville and can be reached at 336-751-0558.

For more information, you may also visit the following websites:

- [North Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation](#)
- [Job Accommodation Network](#)
- [North Carolina Business Leadership Network](#)
- [Everybody Works NC](#)