



How Employers Can Support Students with Disabilities Through Work-Based Learning

In Partnership with Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

Here's the Big Picture

Your business can host a student with a disability for a 45-hour, paid work-based learning experience (WBLE)—and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) covers the cost of wages, support staff, and planning.

This short-term opportunity helps a student gain real-world job skills—while you get support from trained professionals, access to new talent, and a chance to make a lasting impact in your community.

What's in It for Your Business?

Partnering with VR isn't just a good thing to do—it's a smart business decision. Here's why:

- Wages are covered by VR
 - You don't pay the student—VR pays for 45 hours of on-the-job learning.
- No hiring commitment
 - You're not expected to offer a job afterward. It's about giving a student a chance to explore and grow.
- Free job coaching support
 - A job coach or trainer is there to help the student learn tasks, follow routines, and build confidence—at no cost to you.
- Improved team morale and workplace inclusion
 - Studies show that inclusive workplaces have better teamwork, higher retention, and more engaged employees.
- Positive community reputation
 - Show your customers and community that you care about creating opportunities for all.
- Future tax incentives
 - If you ever decide to hire a person with a disability, programs like the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) could offer real financial savings.

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What's Your Role as the Employer?

You just need to:

- Provide a welcoming, supportive environment
- Offer basic supervision and structure
- Assign tasks that are helpful to your business and appropriate for learning
- Give simple feedback—just like you would for any new team member

You're not expected to modify your entire workplace—just create space for a student to grow.

What the Job Coach Does (and Doesn't Do)

- The job coach helps the student learn and stay on track
- They're there to support, not replace you or your team
- They help break down tasks, build routines, and solve challenges
- You can always reach out to the coach or VR counselor with questions

Tips for Working with Young Adults & People with Disabilities

- Keep instructions simple and show how to do the task
- Be patient and positive—encouragement goes a long way
- Use checklists or written steps when you can
- Expect a learning curve—it's part of the process
- Respect different ways of communicating (speaking, devices, gestures)

Why It Matters

This is an opportunity to:

- Give back without added cost
- Strengthen your team culture
- Support the next generation of workers
- Show your customers your business stands for something bigger

Interested or Want to Learn More?

Reach out to your local Vocational Rehabilitation office or community provider. We'll walk you through the easy setup process.

Let's work together to build a more inclusive workforce—one student, one business at a time.