

*Monthly tips and resources featured in **What's Next?** are created for young adults, their families, and supporters who are exploring options for life after high school in Indiana.*

## Defining Employment Options

Issue No. 19, March 9, 2022

Life after high school requires a young adult, their families, and supporters to apply what they've learned and decided about a career pathway. Ideally, students exit high school with clear ideas about their work preferences, support needs, desired work conditions, and long-term employment goals. Finding the right job can be challenging, but young adults, families, and other supporters don't have to figure it out by themselves! There are options.



Community rehabilitation providers (CRP) and Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) work together to support job seekers with disabilities, including help negotiating a job with an employer—a process commonly referred to as job development. The result is often either **supported employment** or **customized employment**. Both approaches enable employees with disabilities to contribute their abilities, ideas, and talents to the workforce while participating in an integrated, competitive workplace setting with co-workers.

Customized and supported employment enable employers to tap into the skills of workers who might not otherwise find work through traditional means (i.e., a job search with an open application process). Both approaches ensure a job seeker secures the supports they need to maintain the valued role of employee.

### Supported Employment

According to federal law, supported employment occurs in an integrated community setting and compensates with at least the prevailing minimum wage. Supported employment is for people whose disability has led to an interrupted or intermittent work history.

VR authorizes a chosen CRP to provide these services to an individual. It is important the job seeker and their family, if appropriate, select a CRP that meets their needs and preferences. Supported employment in Indiana typically begins with a process called Discovery.

Because of the nature and significance of their disability, the person often benefits from ongoing support and extended services to secure and maintain employment. A CRP will craft an individual

support plan for the job seeker, and these plans can include transportation assistance, creation of a safe space to take a needed break or de-stress, or job task training.

## Supported Employment Examples

- Part-time work at an insurance firm with weekly check-ins from the CRP
- Full-time work at a day care while receiving bus training and home visits from the CRP

## Customized Employment

Customized employment is an arrangement between a worker with a disability and their employer. It considers both the needs of the business and what an employee has to offer. The business must benefit from the negotiation—customized employment is not a one-way relationship.

Customized outcomes can result in wage employment, supported self-employment, establishment of a business within a business, or establishment of a micro business (a business employing 1-5 workers).

## Customized Employment Examples

- A value-added car detailing position at a car collision repair center
- A data entry position within a loan processing center
- A mini muffin service at the local coffee shop
- A specialized popcorn product, with supports from the CRP or waiver

## Resources

- [Federal Code 34 CFR part 361: Supported and Customized Employment](#)
- [Office of Disability Employment Policy: Customized Employment](#)
- [What is Customized Employment: Marc Gold & Associates](#)
- [National Disability Institute: Discovery and Customized Employment](#)

*What's Next? is a project of the Center on Community Living and Careers and the Indiana Department of Education.*

*For more information about the content of What's Next? emails, contact us at [whatnext@indiana.edu](mailto:whatnext@indiana.edu).*

*Want to subscribe to What's Next? by email? Send an email to [whatnext@indiana.edu](mailto:whatnext@indiana.edu) with "Subscribe to What's Next?" in the subject line. Tell us your first name, last name, and email address, and we'll get you signed up.*

*Your information will always be kept private!*