



Autism Society
Inland Empire

Life After High School: Vocational Support for Adults on the Autism Spectrum



2024/25

Coachella Valley, Riverside &
San Bernardino Counties



IEAutism.org



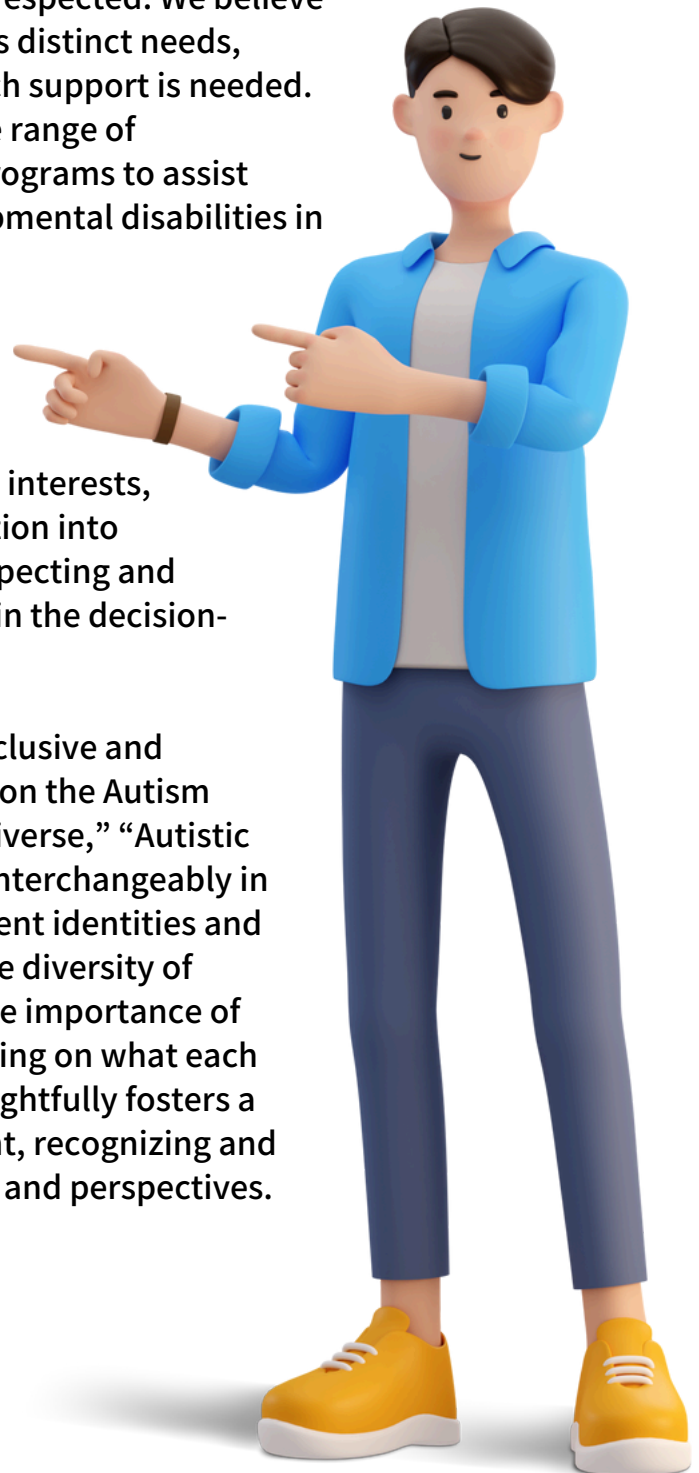
INTRODUCTION

VOCATIONAL TOOLKIT

This guide is meant to be a tool to help empower individuals on the Autism Spectrum, ensuring they have control over their future and their unique needs are always respected. We believe that everyone on the Autism Spectrum has distinct needs, aspirations, and goals no matter how much support is needed. This comprehensive guide includes a wide range of employment-type services and training programs to assist individuals with Autism and other developmental disabilities in finding meaningful employment.

Whether you are a Regional Center client or not, we are here to assist you exploring these diverse opportunities and finding a path that aligns with their strengths and interests, ensuring a fulfilling and supportive transition into adulthood. This guide is committed to respecting and honoring these unique needs and desires in the decision-making process.

This guide is committed to fostering an inclusive and respectful environment for all individuals on the Autism Spectrum. You will see the terms “neurodiverse,” “Autistic person,” and “person with Autism” used interchangeably in this resource. Different people have different identities and preferences. These terms acknowledge the diversity of neurological conditions and emphasize the importance of person- or identity-first language, depending on what each individual prefers. Using these terms thoughtfully fosters a more inclusive and respectful environment, recognizing and valuing each person’s unique experiences and perspectives.



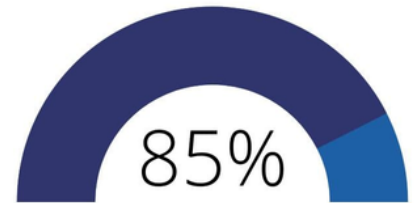


Employment Statistics

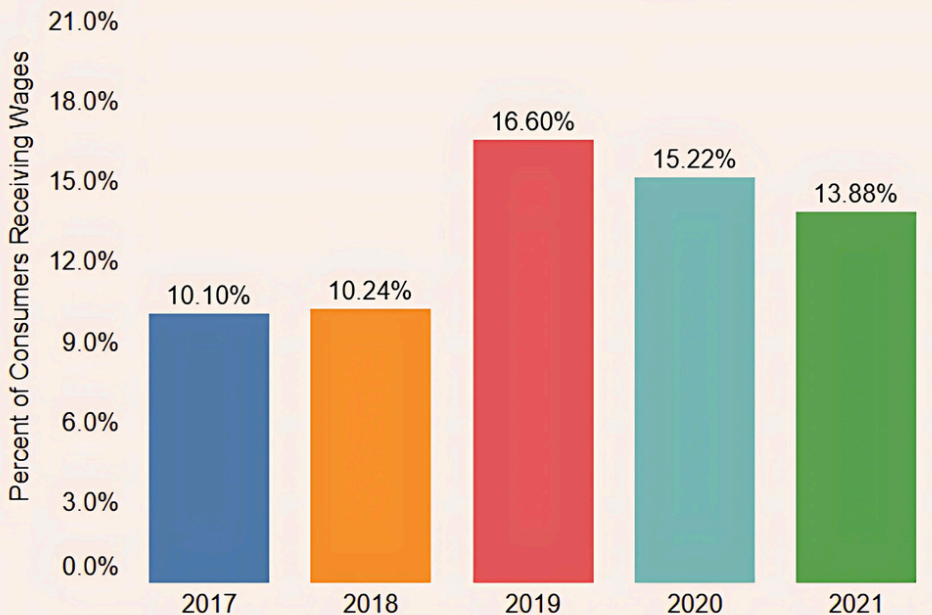
In California, a 2021 Report from the California Department of Developmental Services showed that 14% of working-age adults who were Regional Center clients were employed.

It is estimated that 15% of American adults with Autism who have a college education are employed. (My Disabilityjob.com)

AUTISM
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE



Percentage of Working Age Consumers Receiving Wages in All Regional Centers



39% of adults who are IRC clients had no day services

2018 CA DDS
Public Records Request



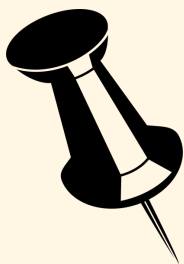
Employment

Finding meaningful employment can be a significant milestone for adults with Autism. However, navigating employment services can be complex. This guide aims to help adults with Autism and/or their parents understand the importance of awareness and obtaining assistance when needed in this process. No matter where your support needs are there are options available for you.

When seeking employment, it's important to consider several key factors to ensure a supportive and successful job search:

1. Identify strengths and interests to find roles that align with your skills and passions.
2. Look for inclusive employers who value diversity and provide accommodations.
3. Prepare for interviews by practicing common questions.
4. Consider sensory needs and the work environment to ensure it is comfortable and conducive to productivity.
5. Encourage continuous feedback to help grow and adapt in your role.

These considerations can help create a positive and empowering employment experience.



CALIFORNIA IS COMMITTED TO BEING AN EMPLOYMENT FIRST STATE, WHICH MEANS IT PUTS A HIGH PRIORITY ON HELPING INDIVIDUALS WITH INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (I/DD) FIND JOBS IN INCLUSIVE SETTINGS. THE GOAL IS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES TO WORK SIDE BY SIDE WITH THOSE WITHOUT DISABILITIES, EARNING FAIR WAGES AND HAVING THE SAME CHANCES FOR GROWTH AND BENEFITS. THIS APPROACH IS KNOWN AS COMPETITIVE INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT (CIE).



Pathways

There are several pathways available for individuals with Autism after high school, each offering unique opportunities for personal and professional growth:

1. Employment-

- This can look like someone who has their own business with or without supports, group employment, or competitive integrated employment (CIE) where individuals work alongside those without disabilities at fair wages with or without support.

2. Vocational Training-

- Programs designed to develop specific job skills and prepare individuals for the workforce.

3. Day Services for Vocational Skills-

- These services focus on building job-related skills through structured activities and training.

4. Day Services for Social and Independent Skills-

- Programs aimed at enhancing social interactions and daily living skills, promoting greater independence.

5. Volunteering-

- Opportunities to gain experience, build skills, and contribute to the community in a meaningful way.

6. College or University:

- Pursuing higher education to gain advanced knowledge and qualifications in a chosen field.

7. Gap Year:

- Taking time to explore interests, travel, volunteer, or plan for future educational or career goals.

Each pathway offers different benefits and can be tailored to meet the individual needs and preferences of the person with Autism. It's important to explore these options and choose the one that aligns best with their strengths and aspirations.



Which Agencies Can Help

Finding employment can be challenging for adults with Autism, but several agencies and organizations are dedicated to providing support and resources.

**Regional
Centers**

**Universities or
Colleges**

**Department of
Rehabilitation**

**Vocational
Schools**

**Workforce
Development
Boards**

**Nonprofit
Organizations**



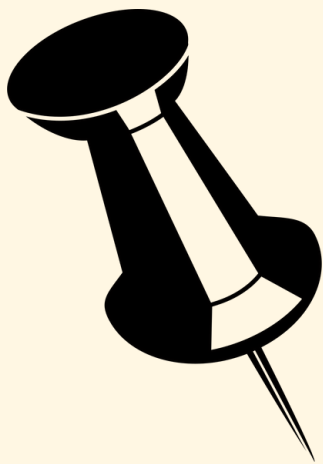
The Department of Rehabilitation

For adults with low to moderate support needs who are not Regional Center clients you may choose to apply directly to the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) for employment services. If you are a Regional Center, your caseworker can send a referral directly to a DOR office. Depending on the office, there is a three—to nine-month wait for intake.

DOR assists Californians with disabilities in obtaining and maintaining employment and maximizing their ability to live independently. Through its network of vendors, the DOR can offer services like career counseling, job training, and job placement support.

DOR contracts with agencies to provide these services. Some agencies include Easterseals Southern California, Social Vocational Services, EXCEED, OPARC, Desert ARC, Integrated Resource Institute (IRI), Anthesis, Fontana Resources at Work (FRW), and VIP. Not all organizations operate in all areas, and not all offices offer the same support or programs. Because of this, applicants can apply at any of the local offices to ensure they receive the resources they need.

You must apply and be found eligible for services. Applicants are required to undergo an orientation. Some offices require applicants to do it in a large group, but an accommodation request can be made for the orientation to be done one-on-one.



WHEN ASKED WHAT KIND OF JOB YOU WANT, DON'T SAY YOU WILL TAKE "ANYTHING," YOU WILL BE OFFERED "ANYTHING".

YOU NEED TO CONSIDER WHAT TYPE OF ENVIRONMENT WILL WORK-

- **CAN YOU WORK OUTSIDE WHEN IT IS OVER 100 DEGREES OR IN A BUILDING THAT HAS NO AIR CONDITIONING?**
- **ARE YOU OK WITH JANITORIAL WORK?**
- **CAN YOU WORK QUICKLY?**
- **DO YOU WANT TO WORK PART-TIME OR FULL-TIME?**



The Department of Rehabilitation

SOME PROGRAMS OF INTEREST AVAILABLE THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION:

Limited Examination and Appointment Program (LEAP)

State Internship Program (SIP)

<https://www.dor.ca.gov/Home/LeapHire>

DOR offers Adult Work Experience (AWE), but it only offers 100 hours. This tool can help people get work experience, try a job, and build their resume or application. An open case with DOR is needed to work with DOR on the AWE because a person wants to enter the workforce.

Temecula DOR is currently running a pilot approach: the behavioral health (BH) treatment team works with the client in collaboration with the DOR team, the contract vocational team, and often the family with one goal: BH management and employment. Individual Placement and Support (IPS) is an evidence-based model of services that includes rapid engagement, meaning they meet with employers within the first 30 days. IPS is an employment service that helps more people with mental illness obtain employment than any other type of vocational program.





Workforce Development Board

America's Job Center of California

Michi (Michelle) Story, MBA-Disability Workforce Development Specialist

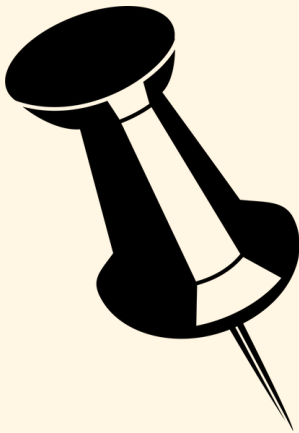
Office: 909-382-0442; Mobile: 909-601-5422

500 Inland Center Drive #508 San Bernardino, CA 92408

michelle.story@wdd.sbcounty.gov

<https://workforce.sbcounty.gov/>

The Disability Workforce Development Specialist can assist with Personal Enrichment & Advancement in Career Planning, Individual Employment Training, Staff-Assisted Placement Services, Individual Employment Services, On-The-Job and Vocational Training, and Personal Coaching/Mentoring.



YOU DO NOT HAVE TO BE A CLIENT OF DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION NOR INLAND REGIONAL CENTER TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS GRANT PROGRAM.

BUT, YOU DO NEED TO BE A RESIDENT OF SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY.



Vocational Training Programs

NON REGIONAL CENTER PROGRAMS

You do not have to be a client of the Department of Rehabilitation or Inland Regional Center for these programs. Most require a fee to participate.

Dani-Mation (Digital Arts and Animation)

<https://danimationentertainment.com/>

DaniMation Entertainment is a cloud-based Autism talent development company that produces original and contract Animation, Illustration, and Graphic Arts. Founded by Dani Bowman at age 14, the company has produced nine animated shorts, a PSA, and a music video premiering at San Diego Comic-Con. Bowman also travels nationwide, teaching animation to teens and young adults with Autism at summer camps, and has worked with over a thousand neurodiverse young adults. DaniMation Entertainment is developing a set of digital and online classes and learning. They offer free weekly, paid group, and 1:1 classes.

Exceptional Minds (Digital Arts and Animation)

www.exceptional-minds.org

Sherman Oaks, CA

(818) 387-8811

A nonprofit academy and studio dedicated to helping adults with Autism by providing specialized training and career opportunities in digital arts and animation. Their comprehensive program includes a three-year full-time course, individual classes priced at \$1,500 each, and a professional studio where graduates can work on high-profile projects for major studios like Disney, Marvel, and Netflix. With hands-on experience, job training, and career placement support, Exceptional Minds empowers individuals with Autism to thrive in their careers.



Vocational Training Programs

NON REGIONAL CENTER PROGRAMS

Spero Vineyards Viticulture Vocational Training Program

(Viticulture is the science and practice of cultivating and harvesting grapes, primarily for wine production)

Temecula

<http://www.sperovineyards.org>

The Spero Vineyards Viticulture Vocational Training program is associated with San Jacinto College and provides opportunities for young adults with developmental disabilities. Spero is a unique public-private partnership between project organizers Mark & Eva Woodsmall and the City of Temecula Global Citizens Initiative. Students receive instruction in the history of the winemaking business. Students can earn a customer service certification and a food handler's license.

Technical Employment Training, Inc. (TET)

San Bernardino

(909) 382-4141

<http://technicalemploy.org/>

Open to anyone—tuition is required. Provides manufacturing trades education and hands-on skills training. TET provides in-house job development and placement assistance to help students obtain permanent employment within the manufacturing trades industry.

Uniquely Abled - CNC Machinist Program

San Bernardino Valley College

San Bernardino

www.valleycollege.edu/news/2022/february/uniquelyabled.php

Program Contract: Robert Cole (909) 725-7569 RCole@goodwillsocal.org

The program is designed to build upon the talents and skills of adults with disabilities who are interested in computers and technology and want to enter the manufacturing industry. Many adults with Autism have had success with this program.



Regional Center Services

The California Department of Developmental Services (DDS) oversees the coordination and delivery of services for Californians with developmental disabilities through a statewide network of 21 community-based, non-profit agencies known as regional centers.

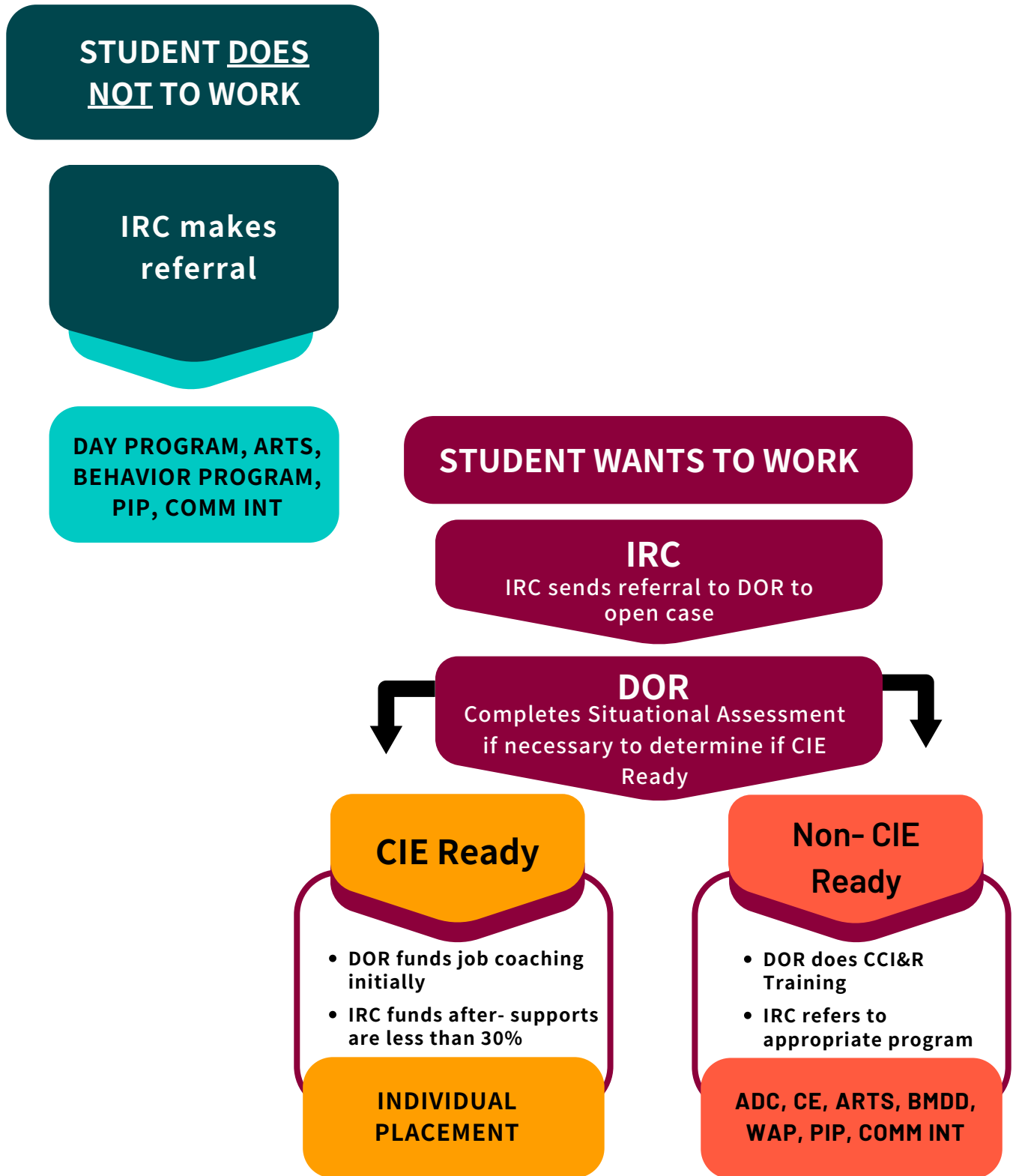
To Be Eligible for Services

- Live in Riverside or San Bernardino County.
- Have a diagnoses of Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Intellectual Disability, Epilepsy, or a condition closely related to, or that require treatment similar to, that required for an intellectual disability.
- This condition must originate prior to age 18 and be expected to continue indefinitely
- Be a substantial disability, meaning the person experiences significant limitations in three or more of the following areas: self-care, language, learning, mobility, self-direction, capacity for independent living, economic self-sufficiency
- The law states that learning disabilities, or disabilities that are solely psychiatric or physical in nature, are not included in the definition of developmental disabilities.





Transition Services Roadmap for IRC Consumers





Day Programs for IRC Consumers

Common IRC Day Program Options

ADULT DAY PROGRAM

- 5 days/week, work on independent living skills, social skills.
- Goals are set through Person-Centered Planning Process.
- IRC funds transportation if necessary.

VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS

- Includes digital arts/media and game design programs.
- Emphasis on employment outcome.
- Develops social and vocational skills.

BEHAVIOR PROGRAMS

- Assist consumers with a wide variety of behaviors.
- Implement behavior intervention strategies.
- Also work on social and vocational skills.

COMMUNITY INTEGRATED PROGRAMS

- Work on community skills such as transportation, finances, & employment.
- Can include Paid Internship Program.
- Can be used with other programs.

WORK ACTIVITY PROGRAMS

- Sheltered warehouse environment.
- 5 days/week.
- Sub-minimum wage/Piece rate

GROUP EMPLOYMENT

- Groups of 3.
- Mostly warehouse, landscape, & janitorial positions.
- Can be minimum or sub minimum wage.

CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT

- Programs works with student and circle of support to discover strengths, interests & passions.
- The ultimate goal is placing the individual in a job that they will enjoy and be successful in for the long term with natural supports.

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

- Job coach provides assistance to ensure success.
- Minimum Wage positions or Paid Internship.
- Program helps develop employment opportunities.



Vocational Training Programs

REGIONAL CENTER CLIENTS

Vocational Programs provide training and opportunities in specific areas to help adults on the Autism Spectrum or with developmental disabilities explore their passion as potential career paths. These programs are available free to non-Regional Center clients. The following is a list of known vocational programs:

Game Gen (Video Game Development)

1-833-426-3436

<https://www.gamegen.com/>

Inland Regional Center vendor. Game Gen provides vocational job training, academic support, and product development in computer science. Our mission is to create a productive community that provides an educational pathway for individuals to achieve meaningful lives by becoming game developers, exploring employment, and lifelong friendships. Offers virtual classes. Inland Regional Center vendor - PJ5253 (094).

Impact Arts (Arts)

Redlands

<http://www.in-roads.net/impact-arts/>

Inland Regional Center vendor. Impact Arts is an innovative art development and exploration program that provides a new path for adults with developmental disabilities to explore and engage in employment opportunities in art and learn skills to increase independence and success in our community. Information for your Inland Regional Center Representative: Vendor Number PJ5106

JDS Studios- Creative Academy (Video production)

Temecula

(951) 296-6715

<https://jdscreativeacademy.org/>

Inland Regional Center vendor. This full-service video production training course includes producing a weekly news broadcast and interacting with the community.



Vocational Training Programs

REGIONAL CENTER CLIENTS

Media Lab (Video Production)

32836 Wolf Store Rd, Temecula CA, 92592

(951) 404-0593

www.themedialab.school

Inland Regional Center clients only. Offers training in Film and Cinema, Broadcast TV – sitcoms, game shows, newscasting, Camera, lights, audio, Editing, Set, prop, and art design, Stop-motion animation, Acting, script writing, and storytelling, YouTube and voice-over work, Teamwork, collaboration, and so much more! Offers in-person and online learning. The Media Lab will help you develop a demo reel and resume, which you can use to apply for jobs. Students interested in seeking paid employment will be referred to their IRC Service Coordinator for potential referral to the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR).

Options for All (Film & Media Studio)

San Bernardino

(909)475-9503

<https://optionsforall.org/film-media-studios>

Inland Regional Center vendored program. In-depth film production, project management, marketing, graphic design, advertising, and sales. Each session will develop and build upon the creative and practical skills of interested filmmakers who have a developmental disability, with the goal for them to become employed, independent, and well-rounded individuals. The program is held for four semesters at 20 weeks, 25 hours a week. Everyone will receive instruction on directing, producing, cinematography, and art. The program combines classroom-style teaching with hands-on experience to combine theoretical and practical education. The program approaches learning from the perspective that the material is best internalized when applied directly in the classroom, on the set, and in live productions.

Upland Studio Arts of the Tierra Del Sol Foundation

2nd Avenue Arts Program

134 N. 2nd Avenue, Upland

(909) 758-7317

www.tierradelsol.org/tierras-upland-art-center-first-street-gallery/

Inland Regional Center vendor.



*New! Inland Regional Center Employment Services

SPECIALIZED EMPLOYMENT PREPARATION PROGRAMS

AMD Care Services – GRIT Program

www.amdcareservices.com

(714) 395-4544

Inland Regional Center vendor. Provides Community Integration Training, Tailored Day Service (TDS), and Paid Internship Programs. Provides opportunities for adults who want to increase their independence via employment, employment preparation, post-secondary education, vocational training, volunteer work, internships, and daily life skills.

Autism Society Inland Empire

Future Pathways

www.leautism.org

An Inland Regional Center vendor, this new training program is an intensive 13-week program that takes place Mon – Fri 1-3 pm. This training program aims to help adults identify a pathway – whether it be employment, a paid internship, vocational programs, or college. Vocational Specialist will explore careers, build on soft and hard skills, create a person-centered career plan, create customized resumes, identify possible supports, and assist clients in searching and applying for jobs if that is part of the plan. For clients needing additional support, we will partner with the Integrated Resource Institute for additional support after the training program.

California Autism Network (CAN)

Offices in Riverside and Murietta

<https://californiaAutismnetwork.com/>

As an Inland Regional Center vendor, California Autism Network (CAN) offers comprehensive training and assistance to develop self-advocacy, communication, and executive function skills. Through career discovery, CAN assesses skills and interests to build a foundation for training and support, helping clients pursue their interests in daily life, education, or careers. Intensive training in work readiness and interview skills, resume and application assistance, and work experience opportunities ensure clients are well-prepared for the workforce. Additionally, CAN supports post-secondary goals by connecting students with campus support systems, tools, accommodations, and essential skills for thriving in college, focusing on self-management and self-advocacy



*New! Inland Regional Center Employment Services

SPECIALIZED EMPLOYMENT PREPARATION PROGRAMS

Community Outreach Resource Development Center (CORD)

Selfdetermination305@gmail.com

(213) 804-3182

3600 Lime St. Suite 107- Building 2, Riverside, CA 92051

The Community Integration program is designed as a vocational and social skills training program to recognize, develop, and build necessary skills for the individuals we support. We encourage them to participate in their community at the level they choose. They grow at their own pace, aligning with their desires and abilities, while working toward their goals. The program includes Vocational Training, Self-Advocacy, Social skills development, Educational or job exploration, Community Safety, Emergency preparedness, and Mobility Training.

Integrated Resources Institute (IRI)

17291 Irvine Blvd., Ste 210, Tustin, CA 92780

www.irioc.org

(949) 232-1172

IRI has facilitated over 20,000 job placements for individuals with significant disabilities in the US and Australia. Through their Tailor Day Service (TDS) vended by Inland Regional Center, IRI focuses on creating tailored employment opportunities that meet the unique needs of both employees and employers. IRI accepts all applicants who seek assistance to live and work in integrated community settings.



Resources for Everyone

BENEFITS PLANNING

Benefits planning can be important for adults with Autism because it helps them manage their finances and access necessary services. It can guide them through complex systems like Social Security and Medi-Cal and help them understand how earning money from a job might affect their benefits.

Disability Benefits 101 – California

<https://ca.db101.org/>

Many people with disabilities fear that if they go to work, they'll lose needed health care and other disability benefits. Disability Benefits 101 (DB101) helps people with disabilities and service providers understand the connections between work and benefits. DB101 will help you make informed choices and show you how to make work part of your plan.

WORKPLACE ACCOMMODATIONS

Job accommodation for people with Autism can help create an inclusive and supportive work environment. These accommodations can include flexible work schedules, modified communication methods, sensory-friendly workspaces, and clear, structured tasks. By implementing these adjustments, employers can help individuals with Autism leverage their unique strengths and contribute effectively to the workplace, fostering productivity and job satisfaction.

Job Accommodation Network

(800)526-7234

<https://askjan.org/>

The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) is the leading source of free, expert, and confidential guidance on workplace accommodations and disability employment issues.



Resources for Everyone

CLASSES

Be Your Best Academy

beyourbest.academy

A fee-based learning platform that offers training on independent skills and work skills for neurodivergent individuals. They have short courses, topic refreshers, micro-credentials and workshops. Australia's leading neurodiversity school, led by a 100% neurodivergent team.

Genius Armoury

<https://geniusarmoury.com/genius-armoury-for-neurodivergents/>

Genius Armoury offers free courses to help introduce people to cybersecurity, exploring some of the fundamentals of coding, threats and exploits, networking and more. Available to anyone and free to complete, modules in the full course take around 30-90 minutes to complete. Details on each module can be found under the 'Learning' tab.

Workpower

<https://learn.kidpower.org/course/workpower>

Free online videos are developed with and presented by people with disabilities and show how to use and practice social-emotional safety skills to prevent and solve common problems with coworkers, supervisors, customers, and potential employers.



Resources for Everyone

SO CAL JOB BOARDS & PLACEMENT SERVICES

These organizations maintain a list of businesses interested in hiring and may offer hiring events for individuals with developmental disabilities.

Inland Regional Center

inlandrc.org/consumer-employment/

Maintains a list of organizations interested in hiring and hiring events for individuals with developmental disabilities

ClearWeave Careers

323- 405-0354

<https://clearweavejobs.com/>

Has connected individuals with businesses for employment across the United States. Based in Valley Village, CA (Los Angeles), and are especially helpful in L.A. County and the NYC Metro region. Help with finding employment. It also supports companies with their Neurodivergent employment / Neurodiversity efforts with recruiting and retention. Specializes in Film / TV Production, Creative Design, & Tech (coding and I.T.). Accepts self-determination via regional centers.

Zavikon

<https://www.zavikon.net/>

Zavikon is an online employment and consulting firm whose mission is to place neurodivergent individuals and those with disabilities in career-oriented, meaningful jobs. All services are offered virtually and for individuals ready to work now. They provide recruitment, workplace readiness, job accommodation, advocacy, and education and guidance to employers to ensure a successful relationship. Placements are made in a supported manner to ensure success for both employees and employers. Currently, the Department of Developmental Services funding is available to work with regional center clients at no cost. Contact them for more information.



Resources for Everyone

JOB BOARDS & PLACEMENT SERVICES - NATIONAL

CAI Neurodiverse Solutions

www.cai.io/neurodiverse-solutions/join-the-team

CAI Neurodiverse Solutions builds innovative business solutions that create rewarding careers for the neurodiverse community.

Hire Autism

www.hireAutism.org/job-seeker

Hire Autism is a free program led and run by the Organization for Autism Research (OAR). With an active jobs board and by offering resources for employers and job seekers alike, Hire Autism aims to expand opportunities for autistic individuals and serve as a continuing resource for them in their workplaces.

Inclusively

inclusively.com/job-seekers

Inclusively is the technology-centered professional network and employment platform. Their modern recruitment process connects job seekers with disabilities, mental health conditions, and chronic illnesses to inclusive employers committed to providing needed workplace accommodations.

Integrate

www.integrateadvisors.org/current-openings/

Founded in 2010, our decades of corporate experience drive our mission to help organizations identify, recruit, and retain professionals on the Autism spectrum.

Mentra

www.mentra.com

Mentra is a neurodivergent-friendly talent platform that intelligently matches neurodiverse individuals with employers who value their strengths. It puts recruiters before candidates rather than forcing them to navigate the challenging job process.



Resources for Everyone

JOB BOARDS & PLACEMENT SERVICES - NATIONAL

Neurodiversity in the Workplace

<https://nitw.org/job-seekers/>

Recognizing the bias against neurodivergent job seekers and the immense talent that often goes untapped, we partner with inclusive employers like Dell Technologies, Bank of America, and SAP to launch neurodiversity hiring programs. Join their neurodivergent talent pool, and you'll hear from us about job opportunities within one of our hiring programs that match your skills and interests.

Neurodiversify

www.neurodiversify.ai/jobseekers/

A platform that connects neurodivergent candidates with inclusive employers. Our intuitive solution streamlines hiring, nurtures diversity, and empowers every individual's hidden potential.

SimplifyHire

www.simplifyhire.com/job-seekers/

Create your profile on SimplifyHire to access top contingent work opportunities. Showcase your skills and experience to potential employers and take control of your contingent work journey today.

The Precisionists Inc (TPI)

<https://theprecisionists.com/careers/>

We have a variety of full-time job opportunities across the US in exciting and expanding regions. Complete a statement of members form, and a talent acquisition team member will contact you to explore possibilities.

Untapped

untappedwaypoint.com

Untapped's WayPoint portal is a dynamic meeting ground for neurodivergent individuals seeking employment and skill enhancement and for visionary organizations committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace.

Questions? Contact us.

www.IEAutism.org

info@IEAutism.org

951.220.6922



**Autism
Society**
Inland Empire



IEAutism.org

Your local Autism connection