

Right to Services Free from Conflict of Interest Policy -- To provide added assurance that situations raising potential conflicts of interests are identified and resolved, annually, Business Connections staff members must review and sign off on updated policies and procedures. Staff members also agree to disclose any potential conflict of interest with regard to service delivery. If you suspect any Conflict of Interest please notify Business Connections Program Director, Valerie Brooke.

Right to Services Free of Abuse, Threats, Exploitation, Humiliation, Assault or Neglect Policy -- Every person has a right to live a life free from the fear of abuse, threats, exploitation, humiliation, assault or neglect. Business Connections acknowledges that it needs to take a stand and actively work to ensure that people with a disability are afforded with quality services that are free from abuse, threat, exploitation, humiliation, assault and neglect. The abuse, threat, exploitation, humiliation, assault, or neglect of people with a disability in any form will not be tolerated in services provided by Business Connections.

At any time if you feel that you experience the aforementioned please let us know. We will take immediate action to assist you.

Please either contact: **Valerie Brooke** Program Director (804) 828-1873 vbroke@vcu.edu or **Rachael Rounds** Program Manager (804) 827-0754 roundsrs@vcu.edu

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES: WAYS TO RESOLVE COMPLAINTS

Step 1: Complaints about our services will be resolved fairly and immediately. Many problems can be fixed by talking to your job coach, but if this does not help, contact the Valerie Brooke, Program Director.

Participants with formal complaints can request an external review, advocate and/or other assistance if desired at any point in the process. Your DARS counselor is a good resource for assistance.

Step 2: Once you make your concern(s) known, then within 48 hours, a meeting will be scheduled to meet with you and the job coach to informally discuss the problem, and an attempt will be made to resolve your concern.

If you are not happy with the outcome, then you may file a formal grievance. You may file a formal grievance in writing using the forms provided below, in person, over the telephone, or by email.

Please contact: **Valerie Brooke, Program Director, at (804) 828-1873 or via email at vbroke@vcu.edu.**

Once you make your concern(s) known, a meeting will be scheduled within 48 hours to meet with you and the job coach to discuss the problem, and again an attempt will be made to resolve your concern.

Step 3: If you are still not happy with the outcome, another meeting will be scheduled within 48 hours for you, the program director, job coach, and your state department of rehabilitative services counselor to meet. At this meeting we will discuss the problem, the attempts made to resolve the matter to date and once again, we will try to resolve your concern. If at this time we cannot come up with a solution to your problem, we will recommend that you change job coaches, or if you desire, try another service provider.

You will receive written notification regarding the actions taken to address the complaint, rights and responsibilities of each party, and the availability of advocacy or other assistance for all formal complaints. Informal complaints will be case noted. At no time will filing a complaint result in retaliation or barriers to services. If you suspect retaliation at any time please contact Valerie Brooke (804) 828-1873 immediately.

Business Connections

of
VCU



Participant Handbook



Virginia Commonwealth University, School of Education and Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution providing access to education and employment without regard to age, race, color, national origin, gender, religion, sexual orientation, veteran's status, political affiliation, or disability. Funding for this activity is provided by the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services Contract #235352. If special accommodations are needed, please contact Valerie Brooke at VOICE (804) 828-1873 or TTY (804) 828-2494.

Our goal at Business Connections of Virginia Commonwealth University is to work closely with you to find and keep a job of your choice in the community. Our services are individualized to meet your preferences and needs. You will work closely with a job coach to reach your goals.

This handbook will show you what you can expect as a participant of our services. It reviews both your role and our role in each step of the process. Also, at the end of this handbook, participants rights, management contact information, and grievance procedures are provided.

The steps to our services are:

- Getting to Know You
- Locating a Job
- Accepting a Job
- Going to Work
- Staying Employed

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

In this step, we want to learn about you and help you arrange or provide the supports you need to be successful in a job of your choice.

YOUR PART:

1. Tell us:
 - What you like to do and why
 - What you do well
 - What others tell you that you are good at
 - What tasks have you done at school, home, or in your community
 - What is most important to you about work
2. Learn more about yourself by:
 - Showing off your skills in different settings
 - Trying new tasks to see if you like them or are good at them
 - Asking others about your abilities
3. Tell us what you think about our services

OUR PART:

1. Listen to you
2. Identify your abilities and support needs
3. Give you ideas about jobs in your area

LOCATING A JOB

Locating a job is the next step. The goal is to help you find a job in your community. Getting started is easy! Just give us some ideas about what you do well and where you want to work, then your job search will begin.

YOUR PART:

1. Talk with us about where you want to work
2. Look for jobs or businesses that interest you
3. Decide if, when and how you will disclose your disability
4. Keep in touch with your job coach on how your job search is going
5. Tell us what you think about our services

OUR PART:

1. Listen to you
2. Identify businesses and job opportunities
3. Assist you with completing applications
4. Meet with employers to discuss your skills and abilities
5. Arrange and prepare you for job

ACCEPTING A JOB

After an interview you may get an offer to start work. Choosing to accept a job will be your decision.

YOUR PART:

1. Decide if this is the right job for you
2. Talk to your job coach about how the job matches your abilities and meets your preferences
3. Work with your job coach to identify the supports you need to succeed in the job
4. Tell us what you think about our services

OUR PART:

1. Listen to you
2. Review the pros and cons of the job with you
3. Help you get more information, if needed
4. Help you negotiate wage, hours, and job duties

GOING TO WORK

Going to work will be exciting and once you are hired we will help you learn what you need to do to be a valued and successful employee.

YOUR PART:

1. Learn how to do your job
2. Get along with others
3. Find out how you are doing on the job
4. Look for ways to improve your performance
5. Tell us what you think about our services

OUR PART:

1. Listen to you
2. Help you and your employer identify supports
3. Provide or arrange on the job support as needed
4. Review your progress with you

STAYING EMPLOYED

Staying employed is up to you. Eventually, your job coach will no longer see you each time you work, but will remain in touch with you for as long as you are employed.

YOUR PART:

1. Talk with your job coach at least once a month
2. Tell your coach how things are going at work
3. Tell us what you think about our services

OUR PART:

1. Listen to you
2. Talk with you at least monthly for as long as you remain employed
3. Ask about how things are going both at work and home
4. Help you problem solve issues or concerns
5. Arrange for additional services, if needed

PARTICIPANT'S RIGHTS

Right to Records Policy -- VCU Business Connections will maintain files including contact information, demographic information and employment related information. All files and information related to you and your employment are kept in locked cabinets and/or within password secured online files. Only our direct service staff will have access to the information.

You have the right to access your records at any time. If you want to review your file, contact the Program Director, Program Manager, or your job coach. We will make arrangements for you to do so within 24 hours.

Right to Privacy Policy -- How to handle disclosure of disability will be discussed between you and your job coach prior to service initiation. At no time will any information related to you be released without your expressed consent.

Right to Return to Services Policy -- You are welcome to leave or come back to us anytime as long as you have a source for funding. We will be happy to assist you with trying to locate funding, if needed. If you want to return for services, contact the Program Director or your local vocational rehabilitative counselor.

Right to Request a Different Job Coach or New Service Provider -- Business Connections will make every effort to provide services to every participant referred and match you to a job coach that will align with your personal preferences and personality. However, Business Connections reserves the right to decline services if staff, in coordination with DARS, identifies that an individual or family member(s) is non-compliant and/or displays behaviors that might be violent, dangerous, threatening, or harassing. You may also initiate the request for a different job coach or new service provider if desired.