

EMPLOYMENT RISK ASSESSMENT

FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES DURING THE TIME OF COVID-19

This is a risk assessment tool for job seekers and job coaches to use, along with the families and support systems of job seekers. It is designed to assist in the decision-making process for whether to work in or provide supports in essential/open businesses during the time of COVID-19. There is no simple analysis of these risks that would apply to all individuals when it comes to balancing safety with one's desire or need to work. With each potential employment opportunity, there are questions that should be asked of the person and his/her team to determine the best way forward.

For some, the presence of one risk is sufficient to postpone employment at this time. For others, the risks may be mitigated by other factors, making employment a reasonable option. There is no one "one-size-fits-all" method of using or interpreting the information that you obtain in this risk assessment; it is meant to drive thoughtful consideration of each person's circumstances, their comprehension of the risks at play, and their own desire to pursue employment during the COVID-19 pandemic.



POTENTIAL RISK FACTOR

Does the individual have any underlying health conditions? (**please see below for more information on underlying health conditions that are more commonly associated with specific developmental disabilities*)

Does the individual comprehend the risks associated with exposure to COVID-19 and wish to assume those risks in order to continue/begin working in a non-remote capacity?

Is the individual able to maintain social distancing for duration of work shift?

Is the individual able to engage in handwashing requirements?

Is the individual 65 or older?

Is the individual able to wear protective items (gloves, face mask) for duration of shift?

Does the individual live in a group home? (**see below for more information relative to individuals who live in group home settings*)

Does the individual live with family members/parents who are 65 or older?

Does the individual live with family members/parents who have underlying health conditions? (**see below for guidance for people who live with someone considered at-risk for COVID-19 complications*)

Does the individual have adequate and appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)? If masks are homemade, does the individual have the ability to wash them with each use?

Does the employer have policies to ensure safety of all workers, including social distancing requirements, provision of PPE, access to hand sanitizer, etc.?

Are all employees observed following all of the COVID-19 safety measures? (including social distancing, the use of PPE)

Does the employer have procedures for employees to safely report breach of COVID-19 safety protocols?

Is the business regularly and thoroughly cleaned and sanitized?

Are people who feel sick encouraged to stay home?

If appropriate, does the employer utilize plexiglass barriers to protect cashiers, etc. and the store's customers?

Does the individual need take public transportation to and/or from work?

****Does the individual have any underlying health conditions?***

As with all job seekers, one must consider an individual's entire health history as a primary factor in the analysis of employment during the time of COVID-19. Having an intellectual and/or developmental disability alone does not make someone high-risk for COVID-19 complications. However, there are medical conditions that are often seen in higher numbers amongst people with certain disabilities that may make them higher risk. For example, there are many individuals, though not all, who have Down Syndrome that also have underlying health conditions, such as heart disease, respiratory conditions, diabetes, and/or who are immunocompromised. There is also information from the [CDC](#) and the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) that suggest that people with Down Syndrome have experienced greater complications from other major respiratory viruses including H1N1 and RSV.

****Does the individual live in a group home?***

Due to privacy laws, it is not possible for an Employment Specialist to inquire as to the medical or health status of other individuals in the group home. Consequently, one cannot ensure that exposure to COVID-19 would not be life threatening to another member of the home. For a job seeker who resides in a group home, consider conducting virtual assessment and job development, exploring remote vocational possibilities, or consider postponing non-remote job opportunities to ensure safety of all who reside in the home.

****Does the individual live with family members/parents who have underlying health conditions?***

In addition to a health assessment of the job seeker, it is critical to consider where and with whom the individual lives. Many adults with disabilities live with parents or other family members who may be over 65 and/or may have underlying health conditions, putting them at higher risk should they be exposed to COVID-19. Before employment is secured, ensure that all members of the individual's home have been informed of the risks of exposure to COVID-19. If there are concerns about the well-being of anyone in the home, consider conducting virtual assessment and job development, exploring remote vocational possibilities, or post-pone non-remote job opportunities to ensure safety of the family unit.

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