Funded by the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council.
Welcome!

This guide will help you start your adult life. Are you looking for a job or making plans to live on your own? This guide can help!

Who is This Guide For?

People with intellectual/developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families

What is This Guide For?

The Connections Guide will help you with many parts of adult life, including:

- Employment
- Education
- Self-Advocacy
- Community
- Transportation
- Housing
“Employment First” means that having an:

- Integrated job
- In the community
- That pays at least minimum wage
- Or is paid through self-employment

Should be the first choice for people with I/DD.

To learn more, go to: employmentfirstfl.org
The Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD)

APD helps people with I/DD and their families to live, learn, and work in their communities. The agency also teaches the public about employment for people with disabilities.

APD Can Help People with These Disabilities

- Intellectual disabilities
- Autism
- Spina bifida cystica or myelomeningocele
- Cerebral palsy
- Prader-Willi syndrome
- Down syndrome
- Phelan-McDermid syndrome

APD also helps children aged 3-5 who are at risk for a developmental disability.
Find help and programs in your area.

resourcedirectory.apd.myflorida.com/resourcedirectory

Call the Number for Your County

- Bay, Calhoun, Escambia, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, Wakulla, Walton, or Washington
  850-487-1992

  904-992-2433

- Brevard, Citrus, Hardee, Hernando, Highlands, Lake, Marion, Orange, Osceola, Polk, Seminole, or Sumter
  407-245-0440

- Charlotte, Collier, DeSoto, Glades, Hendry, Hillsborough, Lee, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, or Sarasota
  800-615-8720

- Broward, Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee, Palm Beach, or St. Lucie
  844-766-7520

- Dade or Monroe
  305-349-1478
Contact APD for Help With:

Supported employment and supported living

Employment Enhancement Project

Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services Waiver through iBudget Florida

Consumer Directed Care Plus

Individual and Family Supports funding for non-waiver customer expenses

To learn more: apd.myflorida.com/about/faqs.htm
Helping People Find Good Jobs

Examples of VR Services:

- Vocational Evaluation and Planning
- Career Guidance
- Job Coaching
- Job Placement
- On-the-Job Training
- Training and Education After High School
- Job Site Accommodations
- Supported and Customized Employment
- Assistive Technology and Devices
- Medical and Psychological Assessment
- Time-Limited or Psychological Treatment

To find out what services VR can offer you, make an appointment with a local VR office. If you have records from schools, doctors, or jobs, bring the records with you to your VR appointment.
To find a VR office:
800-451-4327 or RehabWorks.org/office_directory.shtml

On the website, click on your area to find a VR office.

**FLORIDA VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (VR)**

**VR Offices**

**FLORIDA VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (VR)**

**VR Helps With:**

General Employment Services

Supported Employment Services

Pre-Employment Transition Services

Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Deaf/Blind Services

Florida’s Ticket to Work Program

**Employment**

If you receive Social Security Disability Insurance or Supplemental Security Income for your disability, you can probably get VR services.
CareerSource Florida has Career Centers across the state.

These Career Centers are paid for by the U.S. Department of Labor.

CareerSource Centers offer services including:

- A Disability Navigator to help guide you through the system.
- Money to provide special services for people with disabilities.
- Special training.
- Support for employers who hire people with disabilities.

The CareerSource Florida network partner in your area has many services to help you connect to a rewarding career. Visit abilitieswork.employflorida.com to get started.
CAREERSOURCE FLORIDA: SOLUTIONS THAT WORK FOR YOU

Employment

Career Services
How to find a job that suits you.

Education Services
Training programs and schools.

Community Services and Benefits
Health, welfare, nutrition and money.

Youth Services
Jobs and other paths beyond high school.

Job Seeker Services
Finding a new job and how to develop a good resume and cover letter.

Labor Market Services
Trends in the labor market.

Disability Services
Employment, health, and money services.

More Resources
Statistics, college career centers, state and local partners.

For help connecting with career and training opportunities, please visit abilitieswork.employflorida.com
Supported Living provides people with individualized help to choose where and how they want to live in homes of their own.

A supported living coach or support coordinator, using in-home supports and community resources, can help people live on their own and be a part of the community.

Options include apartments, condominiums, townhomes, houses, or mobile or manufactured homes.

Home ownership may be the right option for you if you have enough income.

Renting a home is a common choice for people with limited incomes or who want the flexibility. Rent assistance is sometimes available.

Finding affordable housing can be hard. A supported living coach or agency can help.
Education and Training

Universities and Colleges

Many schools in Florida offer programs with extra help for students with I/DD after high school. Some programs offer scholarships and other help with costs. For more information:

- **Florida Consortium on Inclusive Higher Education**: fcihe.com/resources/programdevelopment/credential-guidance

- **The Florida Center for Students with Unique Abilities (FCSUA) at the University of Central Florida**: fcsua.org/E_postsecondary.php and fcsua.org

- **Florida Comprehensive Transition Programs approved for federal financial aid**: studentaid.gov/understand-aid/eligibility/requirements/intellectual-disabilities

State Universities: flbog.edu/universities

Florida Colleges: fldoe.org/schools/higher-ed/fl-college-system

Commission for Independent Education: fldoe.org/policy/cie
Enroll in a career and technical education (CTE) program at a state college or technical college and train for a job in one of 17 career areas: fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/career-tech-edu

Explore a CTE program at a Florida College: fldoe.org/schools/higher-ed/fl-college-system

Explore a CTE program at a Florida Technical College: fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/dist-ps-instit.stml

“I knew I could do it, but it was tough,” said Josh. Today, Josh works in the automotive service industry.

Josh Duncan went to Florida State College at Jacksonville with the help of Project Achieve. This project was initiated through funding by the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council.
Self-Advocacy is when people speak for themselves instead of having someone else speak for them.

People involved in Self-Advocacy help each other work for change.

They work on both big goals, like closing institutions, and individual issues, such as supporting someone with their personal concerns.

To learn more: flsand.org or contact flsand@gmail.com.
Disability Rights Florida is the advocacy system for Florida. It offers the following free services:

- Information and referrals
- Self-advocacy support
- Technical assistance
- Investigations into complaints of abuse, neglect, and rights violations
- Assistance with Social Security Representative Payees and their beneficiaries.
- Dispute support
- Negotiation and mediation support
- Advocacy services
- Litigation (lawsuits)

To learn more: disabilityrightsflorida.org or 1-800-342-0823.

Issues with Social Security disability determination or appeals? Call 1.800.772.1213.

Issues with Americans with Disabilities Act? Call the Commission on Human Relations at 1.800.342.8170 or the ADA Hotline at 1.800.514.0301.

Issues with Housing? Call Disability Rights Florida at 1-800-342-0823 / 800-346-4127 (TDD).
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<tr>
<th>Agency/Organization</th>
<th>Resource Services and Supports</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD)</strong></td>
<td>APD provides services to people with I/DD in the areas of living, learning, and working.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>apd.myflorida.com/about/faqs.htm 1-866-APD-CARES/1-866-273-2773</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>APD’s iBudget Waiver program for Florida Medicaid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>apd.myflorida.com/ibudget 1-866-273-2773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Directory of Resources for people with I/DD in Florida</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>resourcedirectory.apd.myflorida.com/resourceirectory 1-866-273-2773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CareerSource Florida</strong></td>
<td>Provides job counseling, training and placement assistance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>careersourceflorida.com 850-692-6887</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Centers for Independent Living</strong></td>
<td>Provides help in all aspects of independent living, including jobs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>floridacils.org/LocateYourLocalCIL 850-575-6004 Toll Free 1-866-575-6004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PCA Services Program: Assistance to working adult Floridians.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>floridacils.org/pca-services-program</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Florida Youth Leadership Forum: Leadership training for high school students with disabilities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>floridacils.org/youth-leadership-forum</td>
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## Resource Guide

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</table>
| Disability Rights Florida                                | Information and referral, self-advocacy support, complaint investigation/resolution, advocacy   | 🟢    | 🟢    | disabilityrightsflorida.org  
                                                                                         850-488-9071 or Toll Free 1-800-342-0823 or TDD 1-800-346-4127 |
| Down Syndrome Association of Central Florida             | Resources on education, health and employment for people with Down Syndrome                     |       | 🟢    | dsacf.org  
                                                                                         407-478-5621 |
| Florida Alliance for Assistive Technology (FAAST)        | Provides assistive technology to eligible people                                                | 🟢    | 🟢    | faast.org  
                                                                                         850-487-3278 Toll Free 1-888-788-9216 TTY 877-506-2723 |
| Florida Center for Students with Unique Abilities at University of Central Florida | Support for on-campus college experiences that lead to employment                            |       | 🟢    | fcsua.org  
                                                                                         407-823-5225 |
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<tr>
<td>Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD)</td>
<td>Provides transportation services to people with disabilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ctd.fdot.gov/ctcsbycounty.htm 850-410-5700 TD Helpline 1-800-983-2435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida Department of Education</td>
<td>State University System</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>flbog.edu 850-245-0466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida Colleges</td>
<td>Florida Career and Technical Education and Adult Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>fldoe.org/schools/higher-ed/fl-college-system 850-245-0407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida Career and Technical Education and Adult Education</td>
<td>Division of Blind Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>dbfs.myflorida.com 850-245-0300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, Inc. (FDDC)</td>
<td>Change policy and create services to support independence, inclusion, and decision-making of individuals with I/DD in all aspects of life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>850-488-4180/800-580-7801 TDD 850-488-0956/888-488-8633 FDDC.org</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Florida Housing Coalition</td>
<td>For an affordable Housing Resource Guide</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>flhousing.org/publications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida Housing Finance Corporation</td>
<td>Help to apply for a loan to buy a home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>floridahousing.org</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida Housing Search</td>
<td>Free resource to find affordable rental housing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FloridaHousingSearch.org 877-428-8844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Public Housing Authorities</td>
<td>Apply for rent help through a Housing Choice Voucher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>hud.gov/resources 800-955-2232</td>
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<td>Social Security's Ticket to Work</td>
<td>National program that pays local providers to help SSI/DI client get jobs and keep them</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>choosework.net 866-968-7842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational Rehabilitation</td>
<td>Provides services to people with disabilities including assessment, education, training, and accommodation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>rehabworks.org/office_directory.shtml 1-800-451-4327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Incentives Planning and Assistance</td>
<td>Benefits Planning for Social Security Beneficiaries and Recipients</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ssa.gov/work/WIPA.html 1-866-968-7842 Voice 1-866-823-2967 TTY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thank You

Special Thanks

We would like to pay our respects to our colleague, Barbara Butz, who initially developed this document with the Capstone Group in 2015. Barbara passed away in November of 2019. The guide was updated in 2020 by Dale DiLeo Consulting, Inc.

Special thanks to the following people for their guidance and input:
- Warren Davis, CareerSource Florida
- Cherie Hall, Disability Rights Florida
- Eddie Hall, FDDC Council Member and Self-Advocate
- Kiersten Lee, Agency of Persons with Disabilities
- Jan Pearce, Vocational Rehabilitation
- FDDC Council Staff

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Tallahassee, Florida 32301-2981
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Fax 850-922-6702
TDD 850-488-0956/888-488-8633
FDDC.org