

**Pre-Employment Transition Program**

**Program Description**

Citizens Development Center’s Pre-Employment Transition Program provides services to help transition students develop essential work readiness skills and gain knowledge about their job interests and abilities. This Program consists of two components: (1) Vocational Adjustment Training and (2) Career Exploration Services.

Vocational Adjustment Training

Vocational Adjustment Training (VAT) is a classroom-based training that assists transition students acquire the job readiness skills necessary for work success.

Citizens Development Center offers four (4) different VAT modules. Each curriculum-based module is taught in a classroom setting by a qualified and experienced instructor. Two of the modules are 10 hour programs and two are 20 hour programs. Students may participate in 1, 2, 3, or all 4 modules. Each module can be provided to up 6 students at the same time, and each module can be taught numerous times throughout the year.

Although Citizens Development Center offers this training at our Ambassador Row facility, we can also provide these classes directly to students at their school during their school day. Students would be referred to this program by DARS in partnership with the school’s Special Education Department. Citizens Development Center would provide all necessary materials and resources, and the school would provide a classroom or office that can comfortably accommodate up to 6 students and 1 instructor. The training schedule is flexible based upon the needs of the school and students. For example, a 10-hour program can be taught 1 hour a day for 10 days or 2 hours a day for 5 days.

The following VAT modules are offered:

1. **Exploring the You in Work** (10 hours): Helps students learn about their work personality, work interests, work values and transferrable skills. Students complete self-assessments, participate in individual and group discussions and activities, and apply information learned to improve their employability.
2. **Soft Skills to Pay the Bills** (20 hours): Assists students develop workplace interpersonal and professional skills that focus on six key skill areas: communication, enthusiasm and attitude, teamwork, networking, problem solving and critical thinking. The curriculum includes 30 core activities that include practice and discussion.
3. **Entering the World of Work** (10 hours): Provides the students with knowledge and skills related to workplace expectations, rules and laws. Topics include Health and Safety in the Work Setting, Work Rules and Expectations, and Employer Benefits, Payroll and Paycheck Basics.
4. **Preparing for the Job Search** (20 hours): Exposes students to work and work concepts to increase their long-term employability including Job Exploration, Employment Data Collection, Job Applications, Resumes, Elevator Speeches, Interviews, Written Correspondence, and References.

Career Exploration Services

The second program component is Career Exploration Services which allow transition students to explore and learn about different career paths. Through these services, students have the opportunity to explore and receive hands-on job experience in the following career paths/skill areas:

* **Clerical/Receptionist Skills** (sort mail, stuff envelopes, operate copy/fax machine, answer phone/direct calls, file papers alphabetically, etc.)
* **Computer Skills** (use computer mouse, start/restart computer, identify and use icons and menus, create and name files/documents, etc.)
* **Dining Room Attendant Skills** (dispose of trash, wipe tables, sweep floor, etc.)
* **Gardening/Landscaping Skills** (collect/remove litter, rake leaves, edge and water flowerbeds and lawn, etc.)
* **Housekeeping** (dust, make a bed, dispose of trash, wipe counters, clean windows, vacuum, etc.)
* **Janitorial Skills** (clean bathroom fixtures, clean toilet, mop floor, clean walls, etc.)
* **Laundry Skills** (sort clothes, operate washing machine/dryer, fold/hang clothes, iron clothes, etc.)
* **Grocery/Stocking Skills** (bag groceries, stock/restock items, return carts, etc.)
* **Warehouse Skills** (proper lifting, operate hand truck and pallet jack, palletize, etc.)

Citizens Development Center operates a 30,000 square foot facility in Dallas that includes a warehouse, health room with a bed, large dining room, restrooms, and laundry room. This service would be provided to transition students at this facility during their summer or holiday breaks.

Although students would receive the most benefit by participating in both the Vocational Adjustment Training Classes and the Career Exploration Services, students may participate in only one of these services.

**Student Benefits**

The program will enable transition students to:

* Develop the competencies and essential skills necessary to function successfully on the job and in the community
* Gain the ability to identify their work related strengths, interests, and abilities.
* Identify career paths that match their skills and interests as well as those that are not a match.
* Develop the job preparation skills that will increase the probability of them getting a job.
* Develop the soft skills that are critical for work success.
* Improve their communication and interpersonal skills.
* Learn about work rules and expectations, workplace safety and pay basics.
* Create a professional resume, employment data sheet, and cover letter.
* Effectively answer interview questions and make an elevator speech.

**About Citizens Development Center**

Citizens Development Center has been providing vocational and educational services to individuals with disabilities for nearly 65 years. Our Mission is to empower men and women with disabilities to achieve their highest level of independence and employment, and we accomplish our mission through our two primary programs: Work Center (Work Training) and Employment. Current services include: Vocational Adjustment Training, Work Adjustment Training, Job Placement, Supported Employment, Job Coaching, and Personal-Social Adjustment Training. This past year, we provided comprehensive services and support to 526 individuals with severe disabilities and helped them obtain essential vocational, social and job seeking skills and achieve work success and independence.

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