

State of Connecticut Department of Developmental Services



Employment & Day Services Division

October is

Disability Awareness Month

The State of Connecticut has a vested interest in broadening the pathways to competitive and meaningful employment for people with intellectual disabilities. In as much, the CT Department of Developmental Services (DDS) has been designated an Employment First agency since 2011. To find out more about the creative employment opportunities, services, and options offered by the EDS division, check out our brochure below:



DJ Joe started his own DJ company and is self-employed with support through DDS' Incentive Employment Outcomes Pilot.

Employment First is a national movement to make competitive employment the preferred outcome for supported individuals. CT DDS has been an employment first agency since 2011.

Why is employment important? Employment provides opportunities for people to be part of their local community. At DDS, we know that every individual has the ability to achieve their goals and find employment that is right for them.

How does working benefit me?

- I am able to connect with and work in my community
- Working helps create friendships and natural supports
- Having a job is good for my social health and self-esteem
- Working is a fun way to try new things and learn about others

About Us
Employment and Day Services is a division of DDS working to increase employment for individuals in CT with intellectual disability. Our division works with providers, community partners, and CT businesses to prepare individuals for competitive employment and match them with their dream job.

We're Here to Support You
DDS is here to support individuals and their families every step of the way. We understand that the jump to employment brings much change in an individual's daily life. DDS staff is here to support families and individuals through the process to ensure the best outcome for everyone in our support community. We know changes to income may bring questions about benefit eligibility. DDS can also assist with connecting families to benefits counselors and other resources.

Employment Resources
www.ct.gov/agencies/edep/initiatives/employment-first

www.ct.gov/dds/employmentbase

www.ct.gov/dds/employmentbase

<https://portal.ct.gov/DDS/employmentbase>

<https://www.ct.gov/dds/employmentbase>

Contact DDS Employment & Day Services
460 Capital Avenue Hartford, CT 06106
portal.ct.gov/DDS/employmentbase
(860) 418-6091
dds.employment.dayervices@ct.gov



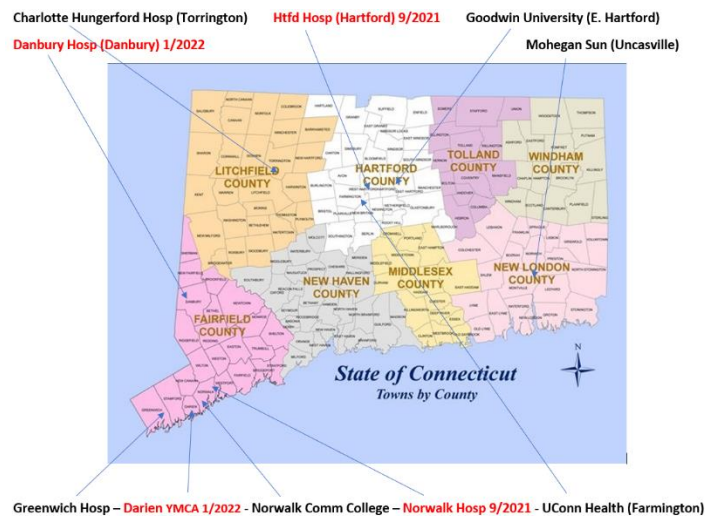
Employment & Day Services

An Employment First Agency



The federal government has increased its efforts to have individuals competitively employed by providing funding through WIOA to support apprenticeships. [Apprenticeships](#) are workforce development strategies that trains a worker in a specific occupation using a structured combination of paid on-the-job training and related instruction.

Connecticut has increased its own efforts by continuing to increase and expand our Project SEARCH internship program. We currently have 4 new host sites for Project Search including *Hartford Hospital*, *Danbury Hospital*, *Darien YMCA* and *Norwalk Hospital*. DDS has been working to further expand Project SEARCH in areas around the state where host sites are underrepresented on the map. In our initiative to provide employment related services so individuals may gain competitive integrated employment, we've made an objective to reach counties and communities where there are no Project SEARCH sites or where the distance is too far. We can ensure, in the state of [Connecticut Project SEARCH](#) is growing.



The logo features the text "CT JOB DEVELOPERS LEADERSHIP NETWORK" in a bold, red, sans-serif font. The text is centered within a light beige rectangular background that has a decorative, wavy top edge.

CT JOB DEVELOPERS LEADERSHIP NETWORK

CT Job Developers Leadership Network (JDLN) is hosting its second [statewide meeting](#) next month October 6th, 2021. This meeting is intended for employment staff, job developers and those in positions supporting and assisting individuals with gaining employment.

The meeting will be an afternoon of information, presentations, and updates on employment-related programs and resources from our state agencies. We intend for attendees to connect with others from regional JDLN groups! [Registration](#) is currently open for participants who would like to attend.

Customized Employment (CE)

The Department of Developmental Services (DDS), the Department of Aging and Disability Services (ADS), and the State Department of Education and the Regional Educational Service Center (RESC) Alliance have partnered to roll out the Connecticut Customized Employment (CE) Curriculum in October 2021.

Connecticut Customized Employment is a collaborative approach to service provision, based upon agreement that job seekers should be provided vocational options with priority placed upon creating opportunities for competitive work in the community providing for integration, economic self-sufficiency, challenge, and career growth. Services will be delivered based upon an individualized plan for a person according to his or her needs. More information about CE can be found [here](#).

Strategic Planning Committees

DDS has started to convene Strategic Planning Sub-Committees to address the State Employment Leadership Network's (SELN) Finding & Observations Report (February 2021). The report commends strengths, reviews areas of improvement, and makes recommendations for action. More information about this exciting process can be found [here](#).

Entrepreneurial Employment

The national trend with individuals interested and fulfilling entrepreneurship continues to expand and broaden. Entrepreneurship gives individuals the opportunity to take their passion and business initiative and blossom into their own bosses and leaders of their professions.



In July 2019, DDS introduced the 2019-20 IDPAC Pilot Project to establish alternative business models or alternative models of support that would employ or encourage the employment of people with intellectual disabilities. 21 applicants, drawn from business owners, provider agencies and families of individuals, were awarded funds for the project which led to several success stories. An example such a success is a small bakery named Love Lera, which

is owned and run by an individual with disabilities and her mother and has been recognized in the public for their start and continuation of thriving in the North Haven community.

Following the success of the IDPAC Pilot Project, DDS furthered its commitment to support entrepreneurship for individuals with intellectual disabilities through the creation of the [Innovative Employment Opportunity](#) (IEO) which carried forward the spirit of the 2019-20 IDPAC Pilot Project but included more supports through framework and collaboration through existing community small business assistance programs.

Contact Employment & Day Services:

460 Capital Avenue Hartford, CT 06106

(860) 418-6091 | [Email](#) | [Website](#)



Copyright © 2021 CT DDS Employment & Day Services, All rights reserved.

You are receiving this email because you are part of the State of Connecticut Department of Developmental Services, Employment & Day Services Division community.

Our mailing address is:

CT DDS Employment & Day Services

460 Capitol Ave

Hartford, CT 06106-1308

[Add us to your address book](#)