Supported Employment in County Government

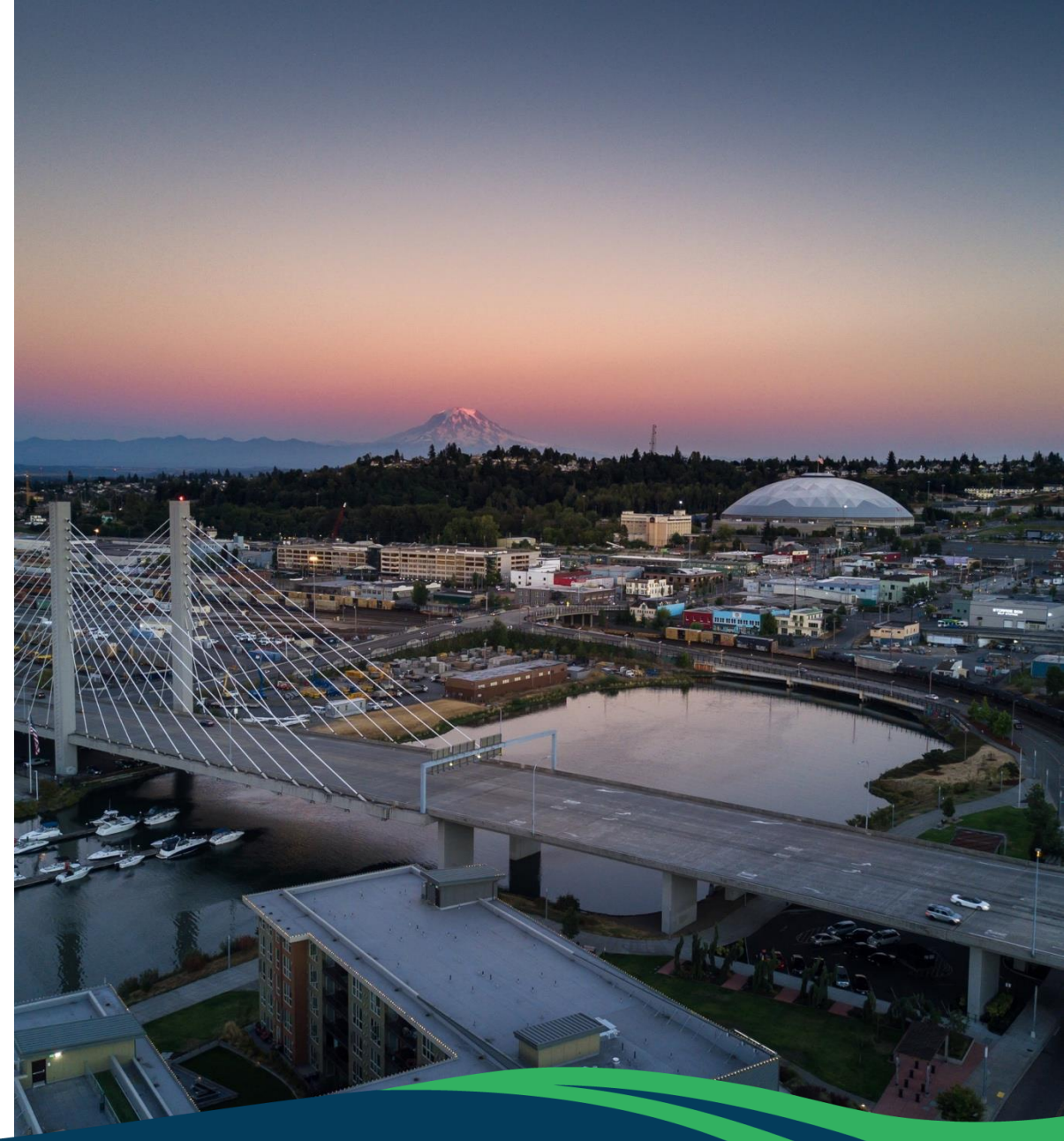
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Agenda

- Intro to Supported Employment
- Classification Process
- Recruitment Process
- Getting Started



What is Supported Employment?

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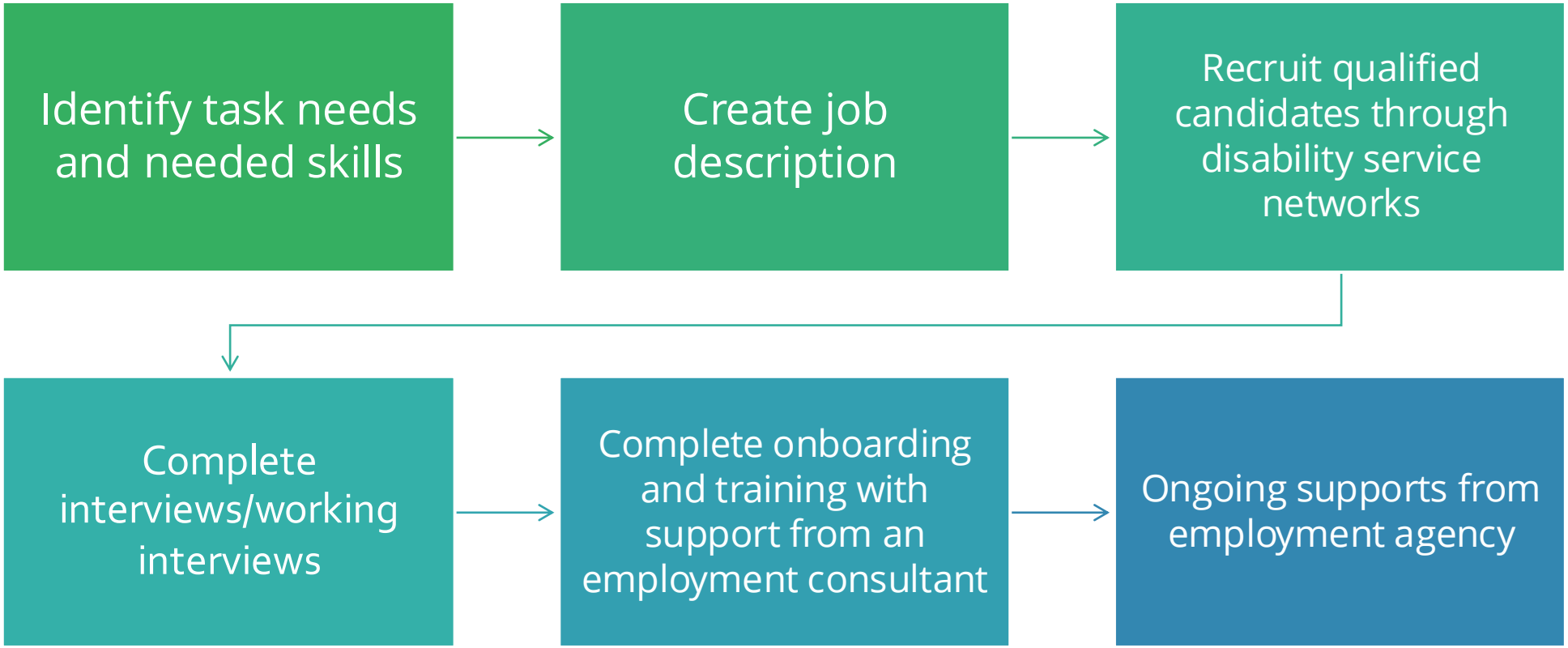
- Support for clients with developmental disabilities
- Customized employment opportunities
- Support to client and business to maintain success
- Part or full-time career service positions

Why to Consider Supported Employment as a Hiring Solution

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- Increase efficiencies
- Diversify workforce
- Improve welcoming workforce culture
- Workforce reflective of the communities we serve
- Job identification, recruitment, interview, and training assistance
- Flexibility in hiring

Supported Employment Process



Task Examples



Office & Clerical

- Archiving
- Data entry
- File maintenance
- Mail sorting and delivery
- Conference room prep
- Copy, scan, collate, bind
- Supplies maintenance



Landscaping & Maintenance

- Weeding
- Clearing debris
- Mulching
- Pruning
- Mowing
- Planting
- Pressure washing



Warehouse & Labor

- Restocking
- Parts assembly
- Labeling
- Shipping
- Pack/unpack inventory
- Warehouse organization

How Pierce County got Started

- Information sharing
- Internal champions
- Connections with experienced partners
- Support from DD Team

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Classification Process

Questions to Answer



What is the work?

What kinds of work will you assign to your supported employees? Office work? Physical work? Public contact?

Best practice: Look for tasks that are flexible!



What levels are needed?

How complex are the tasks? How many levels would make sense for your organization?

Levels allow both supported employees AND departments to have their needs met.

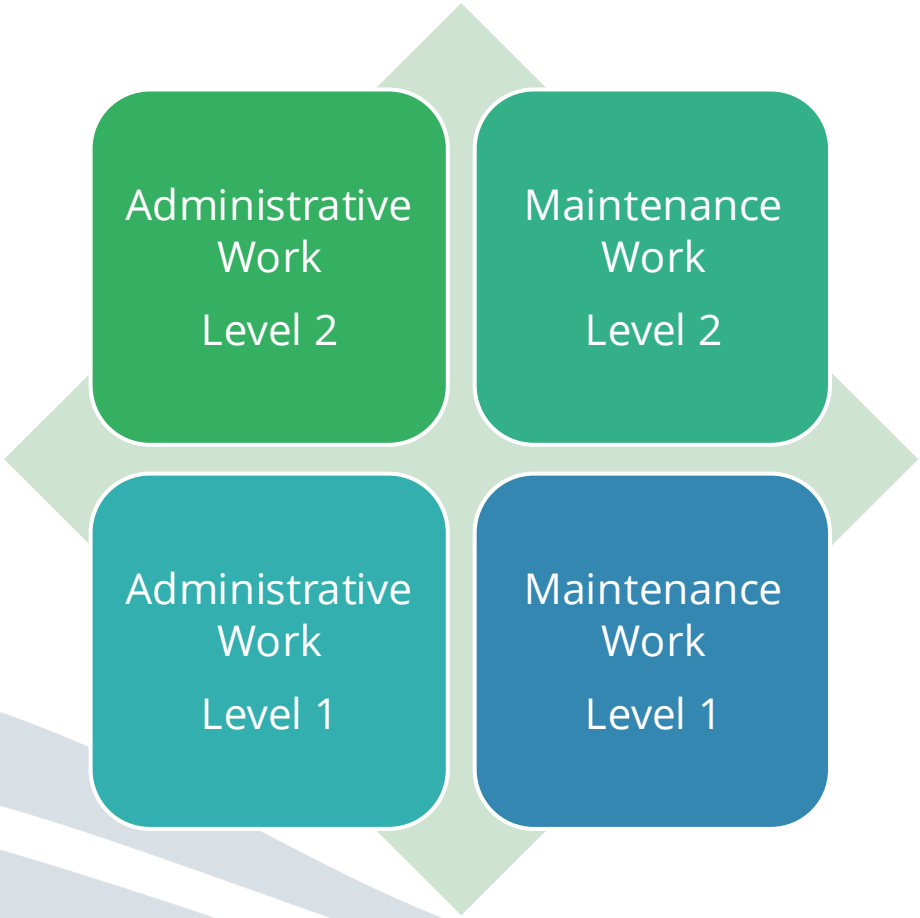


Can you make it more flexible?

Consider: weekly hours, schedule, break timing, task breakdown, completing a partial task

Know where you can't flex, and flex wherever you can!

What We Determined



Divided the work into:

- Two job levels
  - Balancing employee and department requirements
- Two job types
  - Allows candidates to select the type of job that interests them
  - Labor considerations

Job Levels

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	Level 1	Level 2
Decision-Making	Limited by design	Some structured choices and independence
Task Assignment	Presented with support of job coach	Presented by supervisor or lead; job coach may explain or supplement with training
Task Types	• Matching • Counting • Sorting items by color, word, number, or category • Basic computer operation	• Basic calculations • Preparing documents • Driving, operating vehicles • Operating specialized computer software
Example Tasks	• Vacuuming fleet vehicles • Greeting visitors and asking for sign-in • Making onsite deliveries • Entering data in excel using routine process • Sweeping and raking debris	• Sending/receiving standardized internal emails • Printing, scanning, and filing documents • Routine care and planting of vegetation • Basic and routine customer service • Charging electric vehicles
Work Schedule	Flexible, set based on the needs of the employee	May be assigned a regular schedule of 20+ hours/week

Job Types



Administrative

- Performed indoors in an office setting
- Document maintenance, greeting visitors, making deliveries
- Filling kits or envelopes



Maintenance

- Routine cleaning/care of vehicles, buildings, or outdoor spaces
- Counting, stocking, and requesting supplies
- Loading and unloading materials

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Determining Pay

- Multiple options
- Important consideration: Interaction of earned income and disability benefits
- What we decided:
  - Set pay based on job duties
  - Pay supported employees the same way we would pay anyone else performing that work

Classification Descriptions: General Summary

- All Levels:
  - This classification is limited to clients of the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) who are eligible for long-term Supported Employment services.
- Level 1:
  - An employee in this classification performs routine maintenance tasks under direct supervision from supervisors and leads. Instructions and assignments are specific and received verbally, in writing, with the use of symbols and pictures, or via other means of communication. New tasks and assignments are presented to the employee with support from their job coach.
- Level 2:
  - An employee in this classification performs routine maintenance tasks that are structured to allow limited decision making. Instructions and assignments are specific and received verbally, in writing, or via other means of communication as appropriate. New tasks and assignments are presented to the employee from the supervisor, lead, or other natural supports. The job coach is available as needed to explain new tasks and supplement training.

Classification Descriptions: Series Concept

- All Levels:
  - All jobs in this series are tailored to the abilities of the employee and are structured around routine tasks.
- Level 1:
  - Duties assigned to this level require limited decision making and may include matching, counting, and sorting items by color, word, number, or category. Some duties may require basic computer operation. The work schedule may be set based on the abilities of the incumbent.
- Level 2:
  - Duties assigned to this level allow for greater independence and decision-making, and may include driving, operating specialized computer software, performing basic calculations, and preparing documents. Employees in this level may be expected to work a regular schedule of 20 hours or more per week.

Classification Descriptions: Essential Functions

- Key phrase for all levels:
  - Work performed may consist of a cross-section of the tasks below, which may be tailored to the abilities of the incumbent.

Be flexible in defining tasks:

- Perform general groundskeeping support tasks, which may include:
  - Routine care and planting of vegetation
  - Removing weeds
  - Sweeping and raking debris
  - Loading and unloading materials from a vehicle or wheelbarrow
  - Gathering and removing trash from grounds
  - Composting and trash removal
  - Cleaning windows

Classification Descriptions: Qualifications

- All Levels:
  - Education and Experience: Any education or experience which clearly indicates the ability to perform the essential functions of this position.
  - Must be a client of the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) and provide a valid ASDA number. Contact the DDA if you do not know your ASDA number.
  - Must be connected to an employment agency with a job coach and be willing to receive long-term employment support through DDA.
- Level 2 Only:
  - Some work assignments may require a valid driver's license.

Classification Descriptions: Competencies

- Knowledge of:
  - General office practices and procedures
  - Basic arithmetic
- Skill in:
  - Following verbal, written, illustrated, or demonstrated instructions
  - Working with a variety of individuals from diverse backgrounds
- Ability to:
  - Operate office equipment / Operate small hand tools
  - Work effectively and productively with others
  - Complete tasks as assigned, independently or with the support of a job coach
  - Learn and follow basic safety rules / Learn and follow basic safety and occupational hazards rules including the use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
  - Demonstrate predictable, reliable, and timely attendance
    - Add for Level 2: Use standard business applications / Operate basic vehicles

You Don’t Need to Start from Nothing

- King County had an established Supported Employment program
  - Classification Descriptions
  - Task Ideas
  - Internal Presentation

- Pierce County Class Descriptions
  - Supported Administrative Associate 1
  - Supported Administrative Associate 2
  - Supported Maintenance Associate 1
  - Supported Maintenance Associate 2

- King County Class Descriptions
  - SEP Associate I
  - SEP Associate II
  - SEP Associate III
  - SEP Parks Specialist

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Recruitment Process

Questions to Answer



THE WORK

Daily tasks, projects, complexity, autonomy, oversight, public engagement, etc.

This will determine the appropriate classification needed for the role.



THE TEAM

Hiring manager, supervisor (may be same person), peer support,

This establishes the hiring team and the additional employee support.



THE CANDIDATE

Full-time or part-time preferred, advertising, interview questions, interview process

The better we articulate the role and assess for skills, the better candidates we will hire.

Recruitment

PHASE 1: Establish Your Team

- Clearly understand the need in the department/division and review classification/job description options for the best match.
- Identify hiring manager, supervisor (may be same as HM),and mentor/peer support.
- Identify a partner from your Recruitment team to support in hiring process.
    - It will be helpful if this person is brought into the process in the early stages .
- Meet to have all parties connect and establish roles and an understanding of the process.
- Help in this process is always available through the Developmental Disability Coordinator; don't hesitate to contact them for additional info and guidance.



Recruitment

PHASE 2: Plan Your Recruitment

- Assess your current recruitment process and adapt it for Supported Employment.
    - Ensure you have an eligibility screening consent question for the candidate and a process for confirming eligibility.
    - Offer the option for a video resume.
    - Ensure your space for the interview is ADA accessible.
    - It's recommended to have a portion of the interview be a working interview.
- Set a realistic timeline to have a hire finalized.
    - These positions may need to be open for longer than a traditional recruitment due to the specialized candidate pool and the support of a job coach that is often needed to complete an application.

PHASE 3: Train and Ready Your Team

- Train with industry leaders on best practices on working with employees needing supports and or who have developmental disabilities.
- Prepare your team for the presence of a job coach and train on what their role is.
- Your Developmental Disabilities Coordinator can be a great resource for training.



Recruitment

PHASE 4: Run Your Recruitment

- Draft your job announcement.
  - Clearly highlight the requirements for applicants to be receiving employment supports through the state.
- Open your position – allow sufficient time for candidates to apply.
- Screen Candidates.
  - Build in a question authorizing your team to verify DDA eligibility.
  - Work with your Human Services team to verify eligibility. Screen out anyone not receiving employment support through the state.
- Hold working interviews.
  - Print written instructions on how to complete the task, next demonstrate how to do the task, then ask the candidate to complete the task a couple of times. Evaluate their ability to perform the task as a part of your final decision.
- Make a final selection and process the formal hire of your new supported employee.



Onboarding

PHASE 5: Onboard Your New Employee

- Create a thorough onboarding and training plan for your new hire.
    - They will have a job coach assisting them as a part of onboarding. The coach's presence will be more regular earlier on, and they will reengage, as necessary throughout employment.
    - Utilize training and communication methods that work best for your new hire – the job coach can be a resource here.
- The Role of the Job Coach
- Ensure staff are aware of the job coach's presence when the supported employee is working
    - The amount of time will vary on the support needed.

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Why a Separate Process?

- Historic opportunity gaps
- Labor market statistics
- Accommodated processes allow people to better demonstrate their skills

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Pierce County Supported Employment



Other examples:

- King County's Supported Employment Program (AD Available)
- Microsoft Supported Employment: Program Overview – YouTube
- CityStream: Supported Employment
- Clark County NDEAM- 2022, Kevin

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How you can get Started

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- Connect with your County DD Coordinator
- Information sharing
- Connect with partners who have gone through the process
- Identify team members

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Questions and Discussion

Contact Information



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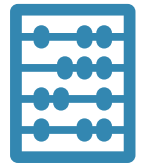


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