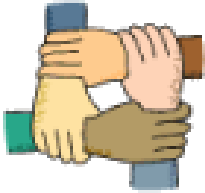


WSJC

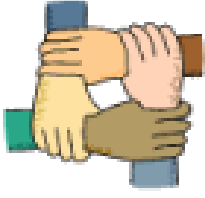


# **EMPLOYMENT STRATEGIES FOR SPECIAL POPULATIONS**

Developed by The West Suburban Jobs Council

Client Needs Committee

**WSJC**



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*We want to express our appreciation to the WSJC Client Needs Committee which developed this handbook:*

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## **Job Seekers that are IMMIGRANTS**

### Barriers to Employment

Inadequate **language and literacy proficiency**

**Racism and prejudice** towards immigrants has increased due to illegal immigration issues and 9/11.

**Academic credentials** from foreign countries have little acceptance in North America.

**Cultural differences** negatively impacts telephone screening, personal interview questions and written communication related to the job search.

**Lack of a network** to generate job leads due to isolation in their various cultural communities

### Suggested Interventions:

- Ongoing language immersion within formal or through on-line tutorials. The ability to speak with English speakers on an ongoing basis.
- A job coach/mentor that understands cultural differences and can provide one on one training to explain employer expectations e.g. nonverbal communication, the ability to describe accomplishments, appearance and punctuality.
- Interaction with native English speakers within multiple environments to promote assimilation and modeling.
- Awareness of potential bias related to stereotypes for particular culture and overcoming those concerns during interviews through providing examples that dispute them e.g. ambition, team orientation, citizenship, etc.
- Identifying a mentor from their nationality that has overcome cultural bias and has accessed employment successfully.
- Acquire certification e.g. NCRC Plus or additional degrees that augment and demonstrate academic proficiency relevant to employment goals.

### DuPage County Resources:

World Relief [www.worldrelief.org](http://www.worldrelief.org) 1825 College Avenue Wheaton, IL 60187 (630) 462-7566

The People's Resource Center [www.peoplesrc.org](http://www.peoplesrc.org)  
201 South Naperville Road, Wheaton, IL 60187 (630) 682-5402

College of DuPage [www.cod.edu/academics/conted/basic/index.aspx](http://www.cod.edu/academics/conted/basic/index.aspx)  
425 Fawell Blvd. Student Resource Center (SRC), Room 1110 Glen Ellyn, IL 60137, (630) 942-3697

## **Job Seekers Who Are VETERANS**

### Barriers to Employment

Lack of awareness **of resources for employment assistance** from social service organizations.

Coping with **multiple repatriation issues** and feeling overwhelmed with the job search process.

**Inadequate linkage of military occupational training to private sector** job descriptions.

**Unaware of financial support and benefits** for veteran families during their transitional year.

**Emotional issues** after combat and multiple deployments and potential bias from employers concerning **PTSD** related issues.

Dealing with **newly acquired disabilities** caused by deployment.

### Suggested Interventions

- Development of a *Veteran Employment Resource Guide*, listing all of the resources available with DuPage County.
- Stress management interventions and training to deal with potential transition issues.
- Access to social service agencies specializing in job seekers with disabilities
- Developing examples of accomplishments in the military that transfer to the private sector, demonstrating leadership, teamwork, calm under pressure, quality orientation, etc.
- Transfer military jobs to civilian occupations using the Military to Civilian Occupation Translator from the US Department of Labor <http://www.acinet.org/MOC/Default.aspx?nodeid=213>
- Access to other veterans through job search cohort programs.
- Technical assistance to apply for veteran benefits for further education.
- Accreditation opportunities in occupational areas within desired occupational fields e.g. MSSC, CNA, etc.

### DuPage County Resources:

workNet DuPage - [www.worknetdupage.org](http://www.worknetdupage.org) 2525 Cabot Drive #302 Lisle, IL 60532 (630) 955-2030

Veterans Administration, DuPage County - <http://www.dupageco.org/vac/>  
421 N. County Farm Road 2nd Fl Wheaton, IL 60187 (630)407-5655

IDES Veterans' Division- <http://www.ides.illinois.gov/> 837 Westmore Meyers Rd ,Lombard,IL60148 (630)495.0311

College of DuPage Veterans' Room 2225 Program [www.cod.edu/admission/veterans/index.aspx](http://www.cod.edu/admission/veterans/index.aspx)  
Student Services Center (SSC) 425 Fawell Blvd. Glen Ellyn IL 60137 (630) 942-3814

Ability Links- [www.abilitylinks.org](http://www.abilitylinks.org) 26W171 Roosevelt Road Wheaton IL 60187 (630)909-7445

## **Job Seekers with DISABILITIES**

### Barriers to Employment:

**Extra costs** for getting ready for work, transportation to work and medical care.

**Lower average levels of education and training.** No high school diploma - 25% vs. 12%  
College degree (13 % vs. 30%)

### **Extra time needed for self-care, therapy, medical appointments and transportation problems**

Potential loss of **financial and healthcare support from public disability income** (SSDI, SSI, Medicare or Medicaid)

Unaware of **ADA legislation, job readiness programs and job training programs.**

Employer **discrimination and reluctance to hire** (*20% of employers admit to this*)

Human Resource concerns **regarding coworker acceptance and productivity.**

Concerns about ADA **accommodations costs.** (*Average cost is \$500 or below*)

**Lack of knowledge by employers regarding access to recruit people with disabilities** and what resources or support services are available to them

### Suggested Interventions:

- Increase job seekers' knowledge of SSDI guidelines for employment to ensure no loss of supplemental income
- Utilize resources provided by agencies serving this population including job coaches, on-line job fairs, transportation assistance, and legal advice.
- Prepare job seekers to respond to interview questions regarding special accommodations effectively, citing how they will add value to the organization through skills that are unrelated to disability.
- Pursue education/training in high demand occupations, such as information technology, medical records, financial services, customer service, etc.
- Utilize accredited "on-line" education resources and explore tuition reimbursement options for career development and retraining opportunities.

### DuPage County Resources:

Parents Alliance Project for Employment – [www.parents-alliance.org](http://www.parents-alliance.org)  
2525 Cabot Drive #302 60532 (630)955.2075

Supported Employment Associates – [www.seaassociates.org](http://www.seaassociates.org)  
1755 South Naperville Road Wheaton, IL 60189 (630)653.5662

Ray Graham Association – [www.ray-graham.org](http://www.ray-graham.org)  
901 Warrenville Rd, Ste 500, Lisle IL 60532 (630)620.2222

Ability Links [www.abilitylinks.org](http://www.abilitylinks.org) 26W171 Roosevelt Road Wheaton IL 60187 (630)909-7445

## **Job Seekers who are AT-RISK YOUTH**

### Barriers to Employment

Access to **transportation**

Lack of **career planning information**

Low **education levels**

Few **support systems** or adult role models

Little **job search experience** or knowledge

### TEEN PARENTS:

**Low self-esteem** and self confidence

Lack of a support system for **child care**

Lack of **occupational awareness** and preparation

### LOW INCOME YOUTH:

**Transient home life** and housing availability

Need for **role models**

Poor **employability skills**, including appearance

Lack of **motivation**

### Suggested Interventions:

- Role models and mentoring ( Big Brothers/Sisters, Junior Achievement)
- The National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC Plus from College of DuPage)
- Career Ready 101 (College of DuPage)
- Employability and job search skills development
- Job shadowing, internships and on the job training programs
- Career exploration leading to identification of a strong career interest/aptitude to increase motivation to pursue occupational training.
- Workplace mentors (on-site at places of employment to provide coaching)

### DuPage County Resources:

Teen Parent Connection – [www.teenparentconnection.org](http://www.teenparentconnection.org)

739 Roosevelt Rd. Building 8 Glen Ellyn, IL. 60137 **(630) 790-8433**

360 Youth – [www.ncoyouth.org](http://www.ncoyouth.org) 1305 W Oswego Road, Naperville IL 60540 **(630)961.2992**

workNet DuPage - [www.worknetdupage.org](http://www.worknetdupage.org) 2525 Cabot Drive #302 Lisle, IL 60532 **(630) 955-2030**

Wheaton Youth Outreach [www.outreachcommunityministries.com](http://www.outreachcommunityministries.com)

122 West Liberty Drive Wheaton, IL 60187 **(630)682.1910**

Metropolitan Family Services – [www.metrofamily.org](http://www.metrofamily.org)

222 East Willow Avenue Wheaton, Illinois 60187 **(630)784-4800**

## **Job Seekers who are OLDER ADULTS**

### Barriers to Employment

**Age discrimination** is prevalent, although illegal

**Generational differences** are significant regarding perspectives on work values, culture, management style and roles

They are often viewed as having less **technical skills**

Older adults may appear to be **inflexible**

**Appearance** may be out of date and accentuate ageism

May be unwilling or have a difficult time reporting to **younger supervisors**

May be seen as **over confident in abilities and unwilling to learn new things.**

### Suggested Interventions

- Understand the biases against hiring for older job seekers
- Develop strong answers citing past behaviors and accomplishments that dispute stereotypes (attendance, health, learning new things, flexibility, adaptability, problem solving)
- Video -taped interviewing to assist with body language, nonverbal communication, and coaching on personal appearance that will help create a more youthful appearance to prospective employers
- Increase technical skills through training or open classroom instruction to become more comfortable and proficient on a variety of software systems and applications.
- Earn a new credential to prove proficiencies e.g. NCRC, Microsoft Certification, etc.
- Use Poised for Success for women's clothing and the People's Resource Center for men's clothing to enhance self- confidence and improve physical appearance

### DuPage County Resources :

Jewish Vocational Services- [www.jvs.org](http://www.jvs.org) 10 East 22nd Street, Lombard, Illinois 60148 **630.889.0548**

Senior Services DuPage County - [www.dupageco.org/seniorsvcs/](http://www.dupageco.org/seniorsvcs/)  
421 N. County Farm Road Wheaton, IL 60187 **630-407-6500**

Poised for Success – [www.poisedforsuccess.org](http://www.poisedforsuccess.org) 312 Westmore Meyers Rd Lombard, IL 60148  
**(630) 691-1455**

Peoples Resource Center - [www.peoplesrc.org](http://www.peoplesrc.org)  
201 South Naperville Road, Wheaton, IL 60187 **(630) 682-5402**

Northeast Area Agency for Aging [www.ageguide.org](http://www.ageguide.org) 245 W. Roosevelt Road, Bldg. 6, Ste. 41  
West Chicago, IL 6018 **(630) 293-5990**

## Job Seekers with MENTAL ILLNESS

### Barriers to Employment

**Stigma** toward individuals with mental illness; derived from stereotypes in the media, and atypical violent events that have been highly publicized.

A **negative outlook** and **low self esteem** due to clinical depression hinders the ability to remain optimistic and resilient during a job search.

**Isolation and lack of structured activity** during unemployment can increase symptoms.

Anxiety, another common form of mental illness, is an inherent part of unemployment and makes **apprehension and fear of the unknown** even more severe, limiting activity and progress.

**Setting deadlines and staying organized**, is very challenging for job seekers that have attention deficit problems, and can prevent follow through, as well as, the ability to stay focused on the details and plans necessary to be successful.

**Decreased access to medications** due to loss of insurance and income may make the mental health issue become more severe without treatment.

Bi-polar job seekers that have mania may have **unrealistic career expectations and inflated perspectives** of job skills and employment goals, or become **immobilized** when depressed.

### Suggested Interventions

- Consistent use of support groups that foster a sense of security and reality checks.
- Having a job coach that recognizes the warning signs of mental health problems in clients and is able to provide clinical referrals in a timely way.
- Volunteering at organizations that provide the ability to become involved in activities of interest, as well as, provide a sense of community to promote increased optimism and self-worth.
- Emotional support from family and friends who are aware of the mental health history of their loved one.
- Visits to a community clinic or general practice physician to monitor medicine and ensure ongoing mental health treatment, as well as access to financial support to maintain treatments.
- Physical exercise/activities and stress management to alleviate depression and anxiety.
- Use of community based organizations that provide free or sliding scale professional counseling.

### DuPage County Resources

Metropolitan Family Services DuPage – [www.metrofamily.org](http://www.metrofamily.org)  
222 East Willow Avenue Wheaton, Illinois 60187 (630)784-4800

NAMI (National Alliance for Mental Illness) [www.namidupage.org](http://www.namidupage.org)  
2100 Manchester Road Wheaton, IL 60187 (630) 752-0066

DuPage Community Clinic [www.dupagecommunityclinic.org](http://www.dupagecommunityclinic.org)  
1506 East Roosevelt Road Wheaton, IL 60187 (630) 682-0639

DuPage County Health Department - [www.dupagehealth.org/mental-health](http://www.dupagehealth.org/mental-health)  
111 N County Farm Road Wheaton IL 60187 (630)682-7400



## **Job Seekers who are EX-OFFENDERS**

### Barriers to Employment:

The **stigma** that relates to prior criminal behaviors, including theft or violence viewed as a threat for hiring organizations.

**Low literacy/education** levels and **lack of marketable job skills** preventing access to living wage jobs

Lack of effective job search skills or the ability to **answer interview questions** related to convictions and resume gaps

Access to **transportation** for interviews and employment

**Substance abuse** that may have contributed to prior offense(s)

**Anger/conflict management** issues that caused or are a result of imprisonment

**Low self-confidence** due to confinement

Difficulty taking **orders from supervisors and following workplace rules**

**Limited access** to certain occupations due to prior convictions e.g. health care and financial services

### Suggested Interventions

- Mental health and substance abuse evaluations to identify potential issues
- Ongoing communication with probation representative to ensure ongoing adherence to release guidelines.
- Information and access to reliable transportation to reach potential employers
- A network of employers and industries that are willing to hire re-entry job seekers
- Transitional job and OJT (On the Job Training) programs provided through federal and state grants offered by community colleges and workforce development agencies
- Occupational information based on self-assessments to identify interests, skills and aptitudes
- Literacy education and pursuit of a GED
- Computer training to update technical skills.
- Employability skills training including: communication, teamwork, conflict resolution, goal setting, organizational skills, punctuality, attendance, and accountability.
- Coaching in effective job search skills including, resume development, effective interviewing, etc.

### DuPage County Resources:

DuPage County Department of Probation - [www.dupageco.org/probation](http://www.dupageco.org/probation)  
503 North County Farm Road, Wheaton IL 60187 (630)407.8393

JUST DuPage – [www.justofdupage.org](http://www.justofdupage.org) P.O. Box 1253 Wheaton IL 60187 (630)407.2201

Serenity House (Substance Abuse Counseling) 891 S Rohlwing Rd Addison, IL 60101 (630) 620-6616

*Finding a Job: On Your Own or With Help*, provided by DC-CURE at [www.curenational.org](http://www.curenational.org)

## **Job Seekers who are VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

### Barriers to Employment

Decreased **self-confidence** caused by history of abuse and living situation.

**Emotional issues** such as anxiety and depression due to separation from abuser/family/friends and change in living conditions.

Lack of **continuity in employment** or **up-to-date employment skills**.

Access to **reliable transportation** and **affordable housing**.

Difficulty accessing **child care arrangements** due to expense and nontraditional work schedules.

**Physical injuries** that may prevent access to some occupations e.g. lifting or standing for extended times.

### Suggested Interventions

- Support groups with peers led by professional facilitators that understand the cycle of abuse.
- Mental health assessment and remediation to address emotional issues related to abusive relationships.
- Access to wrap-around services, including child care, transportation, and affordable housing.
- Wardrobe assistance and coaching on “dressing for success” to increase self- confidence and create a professional appearance during job interviews.
- Job coaching to develop a strong resume and effective responses to interview questions regarding a potential “spotty” work history.
- Development of a work plan, targeting reliable child care and transportation arrangements.
- Access to health professionals to deal with the results of physical abuse.
- Transitional job programs to develop employability skills and access temporary jobs leading to full time employment.
- Volunteer responsibilities, job shadowing and mentor relationships to build self-confidence and future job skills.

### DuPage County Resources

Family Shelter Services [www.familyshelterservice.org](http://www.familyshelterservice.org) 605 E Roosevelt Rd Wheaton, IL 60187 **(630) 221-8290**

DuPage County Family Self Sufficiency Services [www.dupageco.org/Community\\_Services/Client\\_Services](http://www.dupageco.org/Community_Services/Client_Services)  
421 N. County Farm Road Wheaton, Illinois 60187 **(630) 407-6500 800-942-9412 (Toll-Free)**

Teen Parent Connection [www.teenparentconnection.org](http://www.teenparentconnection.org)  
739 Roosevelt Rd Glen Ellyn, IL 60137 **(630) 790-8433**

Poised for Success [www.poisedforsuccess.org](http://www.poisedforsuccess.org) 312 Westmore Meyers Rd Lombard, IL 60148 **(630) 691-1455**

Metropolitan Family Services DuPage [www.metrofamily.org](http://www.metrofamily.org) 222 E Willow Ave Wheaton, IL 60187 **(630) 784-4800**

Bridge Communities [www.bridgecommunities.org](http://www.bridgecommunities.org)  
505 Crescent Boulevard Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60137 **(630) 545-0610 x10**

Care for Cars [www.careforcars.org](http://www.careforcars.org) [applicants@careforcars.org](mailto:applicants@careforcars.org)

Salvation Army-Ways to Work <http://www.salarmychicago.org/family/familyServicesWTW.htm> **(847) 392-0265**

YWCA Patterson and McDaniel Family Center – 55 E North Ave. Glendale Heights, IL 60139. **(630)790-6600**

## **Job Seekers Who Are HOMELESS**

### Barriers to Employment

Access to **basic needs** e.g. food, clothing, hygiene resources, shelter

The ability to explain why they do not have a **permanent residence** during initial interview

**Lack of self-confidence** due to homelessness and previous employment experiences/rejections

**Substance abuse and/or mental health problems** which caused homelessness or was caused by homelessness

**Low Literacy** or education levels due to long term academic problems

**Lack of marketable work skills** due to lengthy periods of unemployment

**Gaps in employment** on employment application and resume

**Poor employability (soft) skills** (interpersonal, teamwork, conflict resolution, anger management) due to challenging living conditions and lack of self-confidence.

### Suggested Interventions

- Connection to basic services (food/clothing, etc.) through community based organizations
- Use of mailing address provided through community based organization.
- Transitional job programs (temporary employment) to provide access to potential employers and work experience
- Employment coaching to provide information on effective job search skills
- On-line tutorials for literacy and GED to upgrade academic skills or pursue certifications or degrees.
- Support groups to learn from peer experiences and receive advice from others with similar backgrounds
- Referrals to substance abuse or mental health counseling if applicable.
- Formal mentoring programs to provide role models and observe positive behaviors.

### DuPage County Resources

DuPage PADS [www.dupagepads.org](http://www.dupagepads.org) 705 W Liberty Dr Wheaton, IL 60187 (630) 682-3846

Catholic Charities [www.cc-doj.org](http://www.cc-doj.org) 26 W St Charles Rd #2 Lombard IL (630) 495-8008

Bridge Communities [www.bridgecommunities.org](http://www.bridgecommunities.org)  
505 Crescent Boulevard Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60137 (630) 545-0610 x10

Serenity House (Substance Abuse Counseling) [www.serenityhouse.com](http://www.serenityhouse.com)  
891 S Rohlwing Rd Addison, IL 60101 (630) 620-6616

Metropolitan Family Services Behavioral Services [www.metrofamily.org/community-centers/dupage](http://www.metrofamily.org/community-centers/dupage)  
222 East Willow Avenue Wheaton, Illinois 60187 (630)784-4800

Peoples' Resource Center [www.peoplesrc.org](http://www.peoplesrc.org) 201 South Naperville Road Wheaton IL 60187 (630)682-5402

PACE Suburban Transit <http://www.pacebus.com/sub/schedules/default.asp>

DuPage Community Clinic [www.dupagecommunityclinic.org](http://www.dupagecommunityclinic.org) 506 E Roosevelt Rd Wheaton, IL 60187 (630) 682-0639

## **Job Seekers with Addictions**

### Barriers to Employment

**Gaps** in employment, poor **work history** and lack of references hinders ability to get hired.

**Stigma** and **interpersonal abilities** compromised by addiction(s) can interfere with networking efforts.

**Sporadic workplace attendance and performance** due to addiction(s) and accompanying life stressors such as family, medical, legal and financial problems make it difficult to maintain employment.

**Transportation** to job fairs, re-employment assistance, temporary work and job interviews hinder and prolong the job search if driving privileges have been revoked for DUI.

**Co-morbid addiction(s)** and mental health condition(s), such as anxiety and depression, can complicate overall daily functioning and job search.

### Suggested Interventions

- Twelve-step addiction support groups, such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous and Gamblers Anonymous.
- Hospital behavioral health units for addiction assessment and treatment.
- Addiction and mental health specialists for counseling when appropriate.
- Legal and financial advisors as needed.
- Guidance on the realities of employment prospects. May need help re-assessing career path and vocational interests when particular jobs and work environments are no longer attainable or would compromise recovery, such as in health care, schools, transportation, finance and food industry (food addiction, eating disorders).
- Job coaching to develop a strong resume and effective responses to interview questions regarding a potential “spotty” work history.
- Depending on severity and mental impairment, client may qualify for disability benefits. Refer to doctor or therapist for assessment.
- Support for self esteem issues and coping with the stress of a job search.

### DuPage County Resources

Alcoholics Anonymous - (630) 653-6556 [www.aa-nia.org](http://www.aa-nia.org)

Narcotics Anonymous - (630) 407-6400 [www.chicagona.org](http://www.chicagona.org)

Gamblers Anonymous - (626) 960-3500 [www.gamblersanonymous.org](http://www.gamblersanonymous.org)

Overeaters Anonymous - (708) 346-0000 <http://www.oa.org/membersgroups/find-a-meeting/>  
(Consult for times and locations of local meetings)

Smart Recovery - [www.smartrecoverychicago.org](http://www.smartrecoverychicago.org)

Behavioral Health Departments at local hospitals  
DuPage County Health Department - (630) 682-7400,  
English or Spanish 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday- Friday Crisis Services (630) 627-1700  
available 24/7 [www.dupagehealth.org/mental-health](http://www.dupagehealth.org/mental-health)

Department of Human Services Directory of Providers and Treatment Centers  
[www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=20725](http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=20725)

## WEST SUBURBAN JOBS COUNCIL MEMBER AGENCIES 2013

360 Youth Services	Literacy DuPage
Bridge Communities	Loaves and Fishes Community Food Pantry
Care for Cars	Metropolitan Family Services
Catholic Charities	Naperville Cares
College of DuPage	Outreach Community Ministries
DuPage Community Foundation	Pace Suburban Transit
DuPage County Community Services	Poised for Success
DuPage County Probation Services	PADS of DuPage
DuPage United	Supported Employment Associates
DuPage Workforce Board	Ray Graham Association
Family Shelter Services	Teen Parent Connection
Hamdard Center	Walk In Ministry of Hope
Illinois Department of Employment Security	workNet DuPage
Jewish Vocational Services	YWCA Patterson and McDaniel Cente
Lisle Township Employment Services	

