



Your Right to Competitive, Integrated, and Meaningful Employment

We work to make a living. But working offers more than just the satisfaction of getting a paycheck. It can give a person independence, the ability to learn new skills and to be a part of their community. Work allows people to reach their fullest potential. It is important for every individual to be empowered to choose meaningful work that will bring job satisfaction.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is a law that was passed in July 2014 to help job seekers be successful in the workforce.

What is competitive and integrated employment?

According to WIOA, to be in *competitive integrated employment* (CIE) means that you are-

- working full-time or part-time,
- making minimum wage or higher and at a rate comparable to non-disabled workers performing the same tasks, and
- working with coworkers without disabilities with the same benefits and opportunities for promotions.[1]

Another important law that protects workers is the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)[2]. FLSA is a federal law that sets minimum wage, overtime, recordkeeping, and youth employment standards.

[1] Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Pub. L. No. 113-128, H.R. 803, 113th Cong. (2014).

[2] UNITED STATES. (2011). *The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as amended*. [Washington, D.C.], U.S. Dept. of Labor, Wage and Hour Division. <http://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo24709>.

How do I know if I am a full time or part-time employee?

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) does not define full-time employment or part-time employment. An employer can generally develop their own definition of a full-time or part-time employee. Usually, in full-time employment an employee works between 30-40 hours a week, while part-time employment is usually less than 30 hours a week. If you are not sure of your employment status, you must speak with your supervisor at your workplace or your human resources (HR) department staff to confirm your status of employment.

What is minimum wage?

Minimum wage is the lowest amount that workers can be paid an hour. In Pennsylvania, as of 2021, the minimum wage is \$7.25.[3]

How much is overtime?

The FLSA requires overtime pay of at least one and one-half times an employee's regular wage after 40 hours of work in a workweek.

Can I be paid below minimum wage or subminimum wage?

Employers can get special permission from the government to pay less than the minimum wage. This is only allowed when an employer is granted a special certificate under section 14c of the FLSA.[4] Employers with such certificates are permitted to pay workers with disabilities less than minimum wage when workers with disabilities are not as productive as workers without disabilities. Certain factories and sheltered workshops (also called work centers) are known to pay their workers subminimum wages.

The laws around wage and hour issues are complicated. If you believe you are being paid unfairly, you should contact the Bureau of Labor Law Compliance, or the regional office nearest you:

[3] Wage FAQs, Department of Labor & Industry (2021), <https://www.dli.pa.gov/Individuals/Labor-Management-Relations/llc/Pages/Wage-FAQs.aspx>.

[4] Wage and Hour Division, U.S. Department of Labor (2021), <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/workers-with-disabilities/section-14c/certificate-holders>.

Altoona Regional Office

1130 12th Ave., Suite 200
Altoona, PA 16601-3486
Telephone: 1-877-792-8198 or 814-940-6224

Harrisburg Regional Office

1301 L&I Building
651 Boas St.
Harrisburg, PA 17110-0019
Telephone: 1-800-932-0665 or 717-705-5969

Philadelphia Regional Office

110 North 8th St.
Suite 203
Philadelphia, PA 19107
Telephone: 1-877-817-9497 or 215-560-1858

Pittsburgh Regional Office

301 5th Ave.
Suite 330
Pittsburgh, PA 15222
Telephone: 1-877-504-8354 or 412-565-5300

Scranton Regional Office

201-B State Office Building
100 Lackawanna Ave.
Scranton, PA 18503-1923
Telephone: 1-877-214-3962 or 570-963-4577



Can I get competitive and integrated employment?

If you want to be in employment that is competitive, integrated, and meaningful to you, then yes you can! With person-centered planning (that is, a plan that reflects *your* needs and choices), you can be successful in competitive and integrated employment.

Who can I contact for help to get competitive and integrated employment?

You should contact your nearest Office of Vocation Rehabilitation location for assistance. You can use this link for the [OVR Office Directory](#) or call:

OVR Central Office

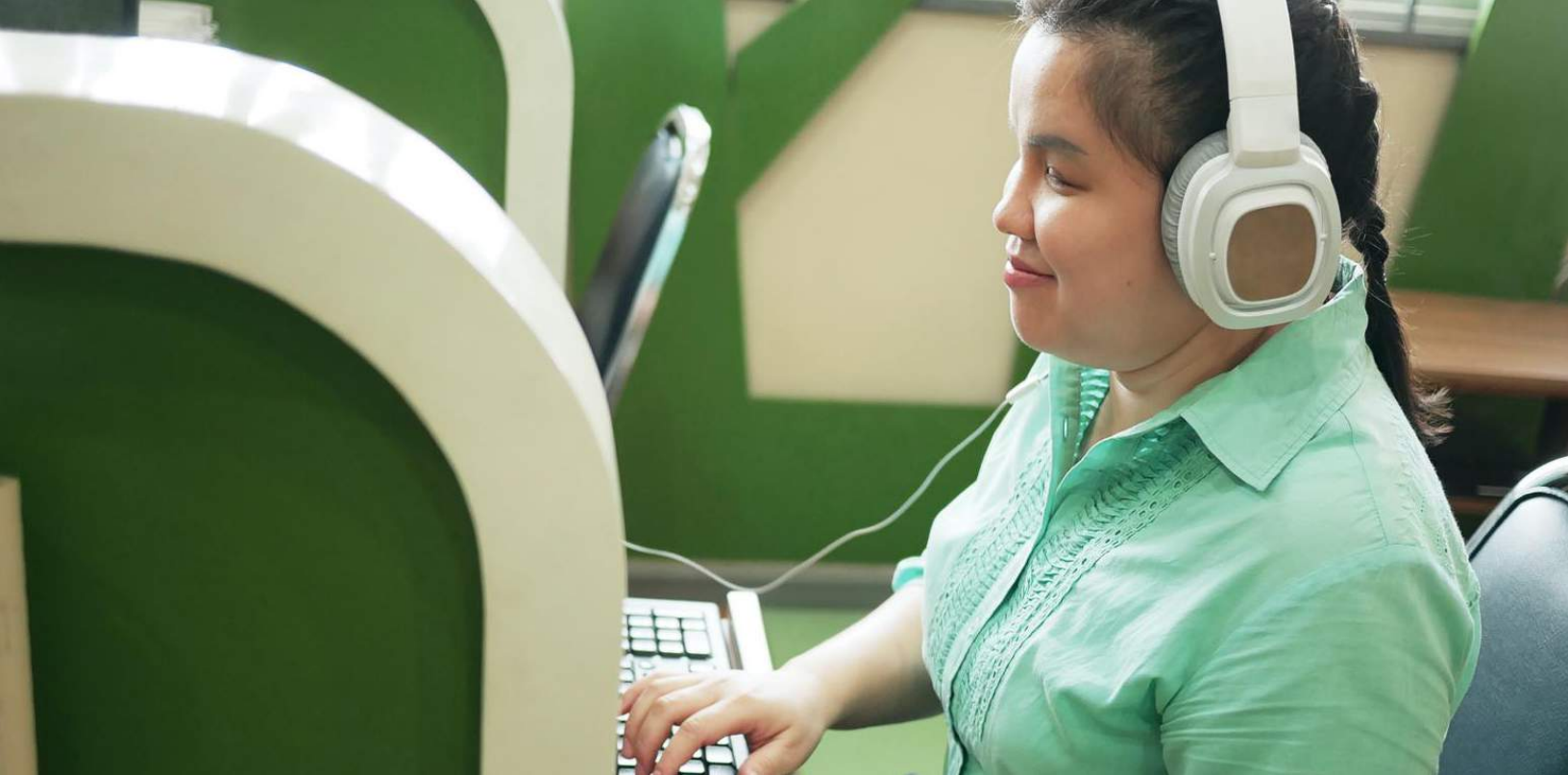
1521 N. 6th Street
Harrisburg, PA 17102
800-442-6351 or 717-787-5244 - Voice
717-787-4885 or 866-830-7327 - TTY

Blindness & Visual Services

1521 N. 6th Street
Harrisburg, PA 17102
800-622-2842 or 717-787-5244 - Voice

Once you are set up to receive vocational rehabilitation services, you can work with a vocational rehabilitation counselor to make competitive and integrated employment a goal on your work plan. If you are still in school, you should speak with your transition coordinator about including this goal in your transition plan. If you do not know who your transition coordinator is, please contact the special education director at your school for assistance.





Who can I speak with about my rights to competitive and integrated employment?

You can call Disability Rights Pennsylvania at 800-692-7443 (voice) or 877-375-7139 (TTY) for help. Our email address is: intake@disabilityrightspa.org

The mission of Disability Rights Pennsylvania is to advance, protect, and advocate for the human, civil, and legal rights of Pennsylvanians with disabilities. Due to our limited resources, Disability Rights Pennsylvania cannot provide individual services to every person with advocacy and legal issues. Disability Rights Pennsylvania prioritizes cases that have the potential to result in widespread, systemic changes to benefit persons with disabilities. While we cannot provide assistance to everyone, we do seek to provide every individual with information and referral options.

IMPORTANT: This publication is for general informational purposes only. This publication is not intended, nor should be construed, to create an attorney-client relationship between Disability Rights Pennsylvania and any person. Nothing in this publication should be considered to be legal advice.

PLEASE NOTE: For information in alternative formats or a language other than English, contact Disability Rights Pennsylvania at 800-692-7443, Ext. 400, TTY: 877-375-7139 or intake@disabilityrightspa.org.

This publication is produced at U.S. taxpayer expense.