

Self Determination Conference Employment Toolbox

Self-Employment Tip Sheet

What is self-employment?

Self-employment is owning and operating your own small business. This could mean selling products (such as jewelry or bakery) or services (such as dog sitting or lawncare) to people in your community.

How is self-employment different than a hobby?

People who are self-employed have a “profit motive.” Meaning they want to make money by selling products or services. They price their products and services to make a profit and they try to sell them on a regular basis.

Some people make money on their arts and crafts hobbies by occasionally selling their products and services only a few times a year. They don’t really care if they make money and they are not out trying to sell their products and services regularly.

What are the advantages of self-employment?

Making your own schedule, being your own boss, and doing something you are good at and love to do. Self-employment might provide people with the ability to have more control over their working life. People with disabilities who are self-employed may be able to self-accommodate their disability in their own business in a way that they are not able to do at work.

What are the disadvantages?

Some of the advantages above could be disadvantages for people who might need structure or someone to give them directions about what to do every day. Self-employment takes effort and planning in order to connect with customers and sell your products and services. How much effort you put in determines how much money you will make.

How do I get started on the path to self-employment?

One first step could be to form a “business planning resource team” to meet with you to help you plan your business. Members of your business planning resource team could be friends, family members, other business owners that you know in your community, your DVR counselor, care manager, IRIS Consultant, or job coach. If you google “Customized Self-Employment” you will find some helpful resources the internet.

Self-Employment Discussion/Activity:

My Business Idea(s) is:

Three reasons why I might like to be self-employed:

1.

2.

3.

People I can ask to be on my Business Planning Resource Team:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.