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Mental Health America's Supported Employment Program is where the staff are peers to the participant and work together with each other. The full case load is taken on as a team approach by the Supported Employment Specialists.

Each participant has an individual plan which dictates how often they will meet with our Supported Employment Program. Participants with many issues and barriers will meet with staff at least once a week until they become more stabilized. As time goes on and they become more self sufficient in certain areas the meetings become more sporadic.

Participants will stay on our case load for life as we have an obligation to serve them for as long as they seek assistance from our program.

Supported Employment staff has the resources to refer participants to other departments within our own organization for case management and residential services.

Supported Employment Specialists interact with case managers, housing authorities and therapists concerning mutual clients. Staff participates in shared decisions with other vocational workers about participant services.

Supported Employment Specialists and case managers are located in the same office which allows communication between all of us to be very affective.

Supported Employment Specialists have the same supervisor and meet for a team meeting once weekly to discuss issues and situations as necessary.

In order to receive vocational services a participant must have a mental health disability, physical disability or in recovery for substance abuse.

Referrals are made to our program by word of mouth, doctor's offices, other agencies, and by the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

Vocational Rehabilitation, a department of the Commonwealth, is the agency that ultimately decides if a participant is eligible for our services.

Vocational evaluation procedures are usually performed by vocational rehabilitation staff and provided to us as we begin our services.

The average length of time between a participant's first visit and their first contact with an employer is approximately two weeks.

Each participant must be stable in the major areas of their lives before they are assisted in their job search.

The Supported Employment Staff uses various interviewing techniques to gauge interests and provide choices for the participant to consider in seeking gainful employment. At times, it is necessary to help participants' find "stepping stone" employment until a preferred job becomes available or their skills meet the requirements of the preferred job.

Our program will assist participants in finding better jobs as well as those who have lost their job for any reason.

In our Supported Employment Peer to Peer Model most of our support is given to the participant in our office. We offer peer to peer support to all of our participants and they gain confidence and empowerment to go to interviews and employment sites on their own. We will provide these internal as well as external supports as long as the participant wants us to be a part of their support system.