

Your Guide to

# Disability Inclusion in the Workplace



Community Foundation  
*of Greater Dubuque*

Employers like you play an important role in building a Dubuque region where all people can thrive. Policies you set for your organization and actions you take go a long way in providing equitable opportunities for community members — and you set an example for others to follow across the region.

**Thank you for being our partner in this work.**



## **Recruiting and Retaining Employees With Diverse Abilities**

All employers can build strategies for hiring workers with a range of abilities and create workplaces where all feel supported and welcome.

Doing so involves understanding the connection between how people function and participate in everyday life.

With this understanding, employers can find ways of ensuring that all people in the workplace have the same opportunities to participate to the best of their abilities.

This guide provides an overview of why inclusive practices for people of diverse abilities is important to the community and your organization.

## Why is Disability Inclusion Important?

# 5 Facts to Shape the Conversation

1

In 2021, people with disabilities accounted for 11.9% of the civilian, noninstitutional population.

*U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*

2

The 2020 U.S. Census suggests there are over 9 million active workers with a disability – about 5% of the total workforce

*Accessibility.com*

3

People with disabilities are disproportionately unemployed and/or under-employed compared to those who do not report having a disability.

*Accessibility.com*

4

There is a high rate of unemployment among people with disabilities.

*Forbes*

5

The Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in several areas.

*U.S. Department of Labor*

# 6 Benefits for Your Organization

A more welcoming workplace

Accommodation of different learning styles

Better talent recruitment and retention

Increased productivity and innovation

A positive image and reputation

Stronger camaraderie among staff

## What Role Can You Play?

# 10 Actions You Can Take Now

- 1.** Leverage your staff members' unique skillsets to support workers of varying abilities.
- 2.** Build company-wide trainings that are consistent and continuous. Evaluate your hiring process to ensure it's comfortable, welcoming and fair to all.
- 3.** Evaluate your job descriptions to know what responsibilities are and are not possible for employees to accomplish.
- 4.** Reimagine your workplace design to maximize accommodation.
- 5.** Seek input about your policies and practices from people with disabilities. The best way to create an inclusive environment is to be inclusive in your input.
- 6.** Build a sourcing and retention plan.
- 7.** Offer job coaching opportunities.
- 8.** Create and communicate your disability inclusion plan internally.
- 9.** Measure your return on investment.
- 10.** Connect with local resource agencies for support.

# Local Resource Agencies

These organizations are here to provide support for your efforts to build a culture of disability inclusion in your workplace practices.

## **Goodwill Industries of Northeast Iowa**

Helps businesses fulfill their recruitment and workforce needs through job placement programs, job skills coaching and ongoing employer support. [visitgoodwill.com](http://visitgoodwill.com); 319-234-4626

## **Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services**

Provides services to Iowans with disabilities to achieve independence through successful employment and economic support. [ivrs.iowa.gov](http://ivrs.iowa.gov); 563-588-4697

## **Northeast Iowa Community College Business and Community Solutions**

Offers expert, customized services that support the growth and financial well-being of businesses of all sizes. [nicc.edu/business-community](http://nicc.edu/business-community); 844-642-2338 x1399

## **Hills & Dales**

Offers employment programs for people with disabilities, including a vocational/paid work program. [hillsdales.org](http://hillsdales.org); 563-556-7878

## **Dubuque Community School District VERTEX Initiative**

Offers business sector work experiences for students and provides assistance for establishing accommodations, job coaching and problem solving. [dbqschools.org](http://dbqschools.org); 563-552-3000

# Here For You.

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