



Employment Myths & Facts



1. If I disclose that I have autism, nobody will hire me. False!

Fact: Discrimination in employment on the basis of disability is illegal. Further, more and more companies are embracing inclusive hiring practices and proactively recruiting job candidates on the autism spectrum.

2. There are only certain types of jobs that I could be hired for. False!

Fact: Just like anyone else, people on the autism spectrum have access to the full range of employment opportunities. You can apply to any job based on your unique skills, interests, preferences and qualifications for the job.

3. I won't be able to get the support I need from my employer. False!

Fact: Employers are required by law to provide **reasonable** accommodations as long as the accommodations do not cause undue hardship to the employer.*

*www.dol.gov/agencies/odep/program-areas/employers/accommodations

4. There are no additional supports which can support me at my job. False!

Fact: You may be able to access additional support from an Employment Support Professional through Vocational Rehabilitation, Medicaid waiver services, Ticket to Work, or CareerLink. These can include supports such as travel training, transportation supports, job coaching, and benefits counseling.

5. If I work, I will lose my medical benefits. False!

Fact: Both Medicaid and Medicare can be maintained even when you earn significant income. Many employers offer medical insurance for full-time employees to give you additional health care options.

6. If I work more than 20 hours per week, I will lose my SSA cash benefits. False!

Fact: Although your cash benefits may decrease as you earn income, your overall income will always be higher when you choose to work. It always pays to work, and a Certified Benefits Counselor can help you make informed choices about work.

7. If I work, I will lose my waiver services. False!

Fact: There are many ways to maintain eligibility for your Medicaid waiver services, including Medical Assistance for Workers with Disabilities (MAWD). Under this program, you can maintain Medicaid eligibility if you have countable income less than 250%* of the federal poverty guidelines (updated annually).

*<https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Assistance/Pages/MA-for-Disabled-Workers.aspx>

8. I don't need to report my earnings to Social Security Administration (SSA), my employer does. False!

Fact: If you receive SSI or SSDI, you must report your earnings to SSA directly, and there are several ways to do so. Make sure you submit your paystubs to SSA monthly to avoid issues.

Additional Employment Resources:

ASERT Employment Resource Collection - This is a collection of resources focused on employment, aimed at helping individuals on the spectrum find, and keep jobs. <https://paautism.org/resource/employment/>

PA Department of Human Services - This website provides information for PA's Adult Autism programs and services. <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Disabilities-Aging/Pages/Autism-Services.aspx>

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation - OVR provides individual services to help persons with disabilities prepare for, obtain, or maintain employment, both directly and through a network of approved vendors. <https://www.dli.pa.gov/Individuals/Disability-Services/ovr/Pages/default.aspx>

PA CareerLink - This organization offers services to help job seekers explore careers, build skills, find jobs, and more. <https://www.pacareerlink.pa.gov/jponline/>

Ticket to Work - Social Security's Ticket to Work is a free and voluntary program that supports career development for Social Security disability beneficiaries age 18 through 64 who want to work. The Ticket Program helps people with disabilities progress toward financial independence. Individuals who receive Social Security benefits because of a disability and are age 18 through 64 probably already qualify for the program. <https://www.ssa.gov/work/>

Work Incentive Planning and Assistance - To access benefits counseling services (which can help you understand how employment and other life decisions will impact your benefits) call SSA's Ticket to Work Helpline 1-866-968-7842.