



NEWS RELEASE

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DISABILITY NAVIGATORS OPEN DOORS FOR STATE'S DISABLED POPULATION *Program Offers Help in Using the State Workforce System to Oklahomans with Disabilities*

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK – Finding your way through the many programs designed to help you return to work can be a nightmare, and understanding how these programs can affect any current assistance you are receiving can be complex. Add in the barriers already facing those with disabilities, and you have a serious challenge. This challenge is now being met head-on by Disability Navigators. Created through a partnership between the U.S. Department of Labor and the Social Security Administration, Disability Navigators touch lives by giving Oklahomans with disabilities someone to help in navigating the deep waters of the state's workforce system.

There are currently 12 Disability Navigators, one for each of Oklahoma's Workforce Investment Areas, providing a wide variety of assistance to their customers. Navigators work one-on-one with people with disabilities as they move through the Oklahoma workforce system, acting as a personal guide and information resource at all points of the process. The responsibilities of the Disability Navigators include:

- Assist with available services,
- Ensure resource accessibility,
- Be available,
- Provide resource information,
- Assist with applications and funding,
- Provide limited job counseling,
- Make appropriate referrals,
- Educate the community and employers,
- Be persistent,
- Act as an advocate.

Disability Navigators are located at Workforce Oklahoma Centers in Ardmore, Bartlesville, Clinton, Enid, Lawton, McAlester, Muskogee, Norman, Oklahoma City, Shawnee and Tulsa.

The Disability Navigator program was designed in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the New Freedom Initiative. State partners in the program include the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission and the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitative Services.

Oklahomans who would like to access these services should contact their nearest Workforce Oklahoma Center. For more information on the Disability Navigator program, visit our website at www.oesc.state.ok.us/Emp-Trng/disability-navigator.shtm or call John Carpenter at (405) 557-5469.

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