



Medicaid Infrastructure Grant
Staff Development for Supported Employment Personnel
Winter- Spring 2012
Customized Self-Employment for Entrepreneurs with Disabilities

As an initiative of the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant, AHEDD is coordinating reimbursement to PA for the following online courses through Virginia Commonwealth University's Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (VCU-RRTC):

Amount	Course	Dates
\$250 or \$1,000 for 5 staff	Customized Self-Employment for Entrepreneurs with Disabilities	March 5 – May 14, 2012

This online course is being offered by Virginia Commonwealth University's Rehabilitation Research and Training Center in collaboration with Griffin-Hammis Associates. Discussion groups will be led by nationally known experts in self-employment from Griffin-Hammis and Associates.

Overview of the Course

The success rate of small business is surprisingly high, despite widely accepted folklore to the contrary. The U.S. Small Business Administration reports that over 79% of small businesses are still operating after the initial eight years. And, the long term trend in employment is smaller firms. Self employment and small business are a defining characteristic of America's economic landscape, and present a tremendous opportunity for those most challenged by the competitive labor market.

Self-employment is increasingly recognized as a viable employment option for people with disabilities. Self employment for individuals with disabilities involves minimizing the fears of the prospective business-owner, as well as the rehabilitation and local small business development professionals who assist them. A person does not need to "get ready" to own a business, if a customized approach is used. In customized self-employment, the focus is on the talents and interests of the individual and identifying personal assets. Self-employment uses a strength-based, not deficit-based outlook.

A person who has all the necessary skills to own and operate a business may be a rare entrepreneur! What is important is to identify each individual's strengths and talents as well as support needs while assembling a team to facilitate self-employment. Self-employment is all about customized supports. The basics are a business plan, a solid marketing plan, management skills, and capital. Where the entrepreneur can lead the way and where support is needed will vary from one person to another and from one situation to another. Some individuals may need more assistance with start up activities; others may need support with operations; still others may need ongoing assistance using a variety of workplace supports. What is crucial is to provide customized supports to assist the person in moving forward with business ownership.

The course will cover these important topics on self-employment and more:

- Strategies for Exploration and the Discovery Process



- Writing a Business Plan
- Conducting a Feasibility Study
- Accessing Community Supports
- Identifying Funding
- Using Work Incentives

Lesson One: Self-Employment Overview

Lesson Two: Social Security Work Incentives, Medicaid Waivers, and Self-Employment

Lesson Three: Accessing Support Services from Vocational Rehabilitation and Community Rehabilitation Programs

Lesson Four: Community Supports for Self-Employment

Lesson Five: Quick Launch Business Start-Up

Overview Information: ALL instruction is web based. The lectures are in audio format, and you must have the technical requirements for the course as described below to benefit from the course. Information for a specific lesson will be available by 9:00 am (eastern) on the first date listed for any given lesson. The course includes five lessons. Each lesson lasts two weeks and should take approximately four to five hours to complete. Weekly lessons include an online discussion forum, audio lectures, and select readings. All participants will be assigned to groups. These groups will be asked to correspond with each other during the course on the course bulletin boards.

Participants can earn **2.5 CEUs or 25 CRCs** upon course completion. A certificate of completion will be issued to all participants who participate in the discussion boards and complete all of the course assignments. Participants must finish all required assignments within the specified time frame in order to be eligible to receive CEUs, CRCs and/or the certificate of completion from Virginia Commonwealth University.

Technical Requirements: You will be able to log on to the course at any time of the day and access the audio lectures. Each person **MUST** have an individual e-mail account, or we cannot accept your registration. If the individual does not already have an account, a free one can be set up through <https://login.yahoo.com> or other free services. We send updates on the course activities and feedback on course activities through e-mail contact. Participants must be able to receive and send messages in order to benefit from this online experience.

TO REGISTER: Participants/agencies who want to participate in this reimbursement program must complete this form and send a check payable to AHEDD for each participant on or before February 24, 2012 (address provided below). **Please note that reimbursement funds are limited so we are accepting on a first come basis.** AHEDD will register participants and submit a master list of attendees and block payment. Unfortunately, if you do not complete the form and payment by this date, you must register yourself and will not be eligible for reimbursement. At the completion of the training, we will reimburse for each staff who completes the course. For questions about the reimbursement program, contact Lori Tyndall, AHEDD (717) 763-0968 ext 130. For questions about the course curriculum available through VCU-RRTC see www.worksupport.com/training/index.cfm

TO RECEIVE REIMBURSEMENT: Forward a copy of certification of completion or email verification to AHEDD (address provided at bottom of form) from VCU no later than June 22, 2012.



Name of Organization	
Address	
Phone	
Course	Customized Self-Employment for Entrepreneurs with Disabilities
Name of Participating Staff	
Email of Participating Staff	
Name of Authorizing Staff	
Contact Phone & Email of Authorizing Staff	

In order to receive reimbursement, please send completion of training certificate on or before June 22, 2012 to:

AHEDD

3300 Trindle Rd.

Camp Hill, PA 17011

Attn: MIG Staff Development

OR Fax to: (717) 763-0988