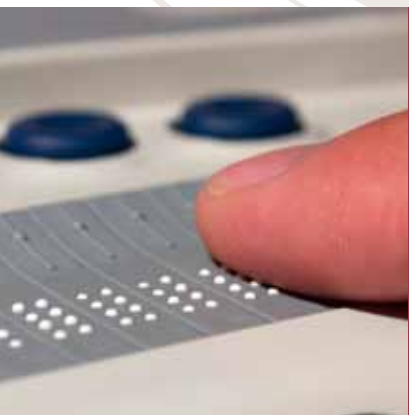




# EMPLOYMENT

TAKING CONTROL OF YOUR FUTURE



# THE ROAD TO PAYDAY

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**Becoming an adult** is a big transition that includes new opportunities to make your own decisions – like choosing a job that will help you become more independent.

You can start by writing a good resume — whether you have lots of work experience or little, this short history of your skills and experience will help you present yourself in a professional manner. And, it will help you when you're interviewing. There are many agencies in place to assist you with all the issues you will be faced with, from figuring out your interests and strengths to resume writing and interview training.

Planning ahead is the key – so, be sure to utilize the resources available to you. You'll find a lot of useful information in this employment section to help you on your way! No matter what your goals are, dedication and hard work will help you reach them. So set your sights high because Talent Knows No Limits.

# GET TO KNOW YOURSELF FIRST.

## WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO?

Can you turn what you like to do into a career? It's possible. In most cases, however, finding a job that you enjoy can be a challenge. This is why it is so important to be prepared when you start the process. Here's a great checklist to use that will help clarify a few things.

1. I know the career field I will enter after high school/college.  Yes  No  
Write it here:.....  
Or, note your fields of interest: .....
2. I know what study path to take toward the career I want. ... Yes  No  
Write it here:.....
3. I am currently employed and it is a field I like.  Yes  No
4. My current job has career training or college assistance.  Yes  No  
(If you don't know, find out. Ask your supervisor/boss.)
5. I plan on joining the military after high school.  Yes  No
6. I am undecided about my future employment/career.  Yes  No





Questions to consider when planning for employment:  
(write your answers on the space provided)

1. Do you know what benefits you are receiving?  
.....

2. Have you considered how working will affect your benefits?  
.....

3. Have you thought about what kind of support or accommodations you may need in order to perform the job that you want?  
.....

4. Do you know what kind of work you want to do?  
.....

5. Have you researched all of your available options to find what may fit you best?  
.....

6. Have you developed a resume?  
.....

7. Are you going to need a personal assistant to help you at work?  
.....

8. Have you thought about whether or not you are going to disclose your disability to your employer?  
.....

If you don't know the answers to some of these questions, read on for information and resources that will help you!

# RESUME WRITING

## SAMPLE RESUME

**PAT SMITH**

500 South Elm Street • Los Angeles, California 94434 • (555) 555-5555 • pat@school.com

**OBJECTIVE:** Obtain a part-time position working as a veterinary assistant.

**QUALIFICATIONS:**

- Volunteered for 6 months at the Los Angeles Animal Shelter
- Excellent at customer service and working with animals
- One year successful experience in providing medications and serving customers

**EXPERIENCE:**

Los Angeles Animal Shelter

- Provided food, water, and medications to approximately 100 animals per day
- Recorded and tracked eating habits and behavior of animals

Administrative Support

- Assisted store manager in training and assigning employees.
  - Prepared new employee personnel folders
  - Called substitutes to cover during illness or rush hours.
- Filed and retrieved personnel records.
- Word processed letters; answered telephone; made reservations.

Personal experience

**WORK HISTORY:**

2000	Full-time student	Cedar High School
May 99-Present	Cashier	McDonald's
Dec. 98-May 99	Bookkeeper	McDonald's
Summer 98	Clerk	Cedar Recreation Center

**EDUCATION & TRAINING:**

Senior – Cedar High School  
Business courses: Accounting, Word Processing, and Journalism  
President of school Business Club

The best way to catch the eye of a potential employer is to have a great resume. A resume is the most effective way to tell a potential employer about you, your work, school and volunteer experience. You can include any awards that you may have won, school projects that you have participated in, volunteer work you've completed, and any prior job experience that you may have.

There are a number of resources available to help you put together a winning resume and put you at the top of the list!

One agency that can be very helpful to you when you are ready to write your resume is the One Stop Career Center that we will talk about later in this guide. They can show you how to create a very professional resume that will impress a potential employer and help you get the job you want and deserve! Here's what a resume looks like with tips and ideas on how to write your own.



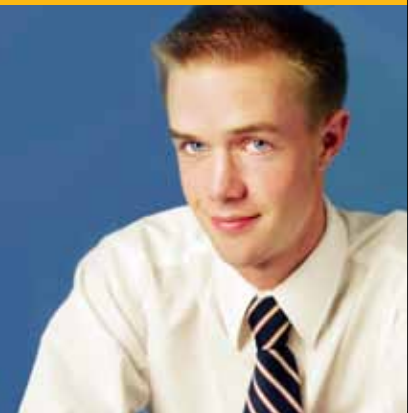


resume

### Tips for Preparing a Resume:

- List your jobs starting with your current or most recent job. Give exact dates for each job.
- Briefly describe the main duties you performed in each job.
- Emphasize duties that are important to the job for which you are applying.
- Use simple, short, active sentences.
- Include scholarships, honors and major school subjects if related to your job goal.

See CD for PDF of sample resume



# INTERNSHIPS

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A great way to gain valuable work experience is to spend some time in an internship program. What's an internship? An internship is basically a job. It's a program intended to let you see what a real job looks like, sounds like and even smells like. It'll help you understand what a job you may be interested in is like. Working as an intern will not only provide you with valuable experience, it will also give you a great opportunity to make connections with possible future employers. Some internships offer some pay or salary of some kind, some do not. The most important things to remember are that an internship will get you started on your career path and it's a great way to show a potential employer what you are capable of accomplishing! It may turn out you love that particular field, or maybe not. So, try different types if you're not sure.

One extremely helpful internship program called WorkAbility is for high school students who are ready to go to work and move on to the next phase of their lives. They provide pre-employment skills training, employment placement, and follow up on you as you make that big transition from school to work. For more information, visit their website (<http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/sr/wrkably1.asp>) or ask your high school if they have a WorkAbility program.

Another great internship program available to college students with disabilities is “The Workforce Recruitment Program for College Students with Disabilities”. If you are in college or have graduated from college within the past year you can participate in the program. You’ll be taught helpful job skills, learn how to best interview for a job, and be given the opportunity to meet potential employers from all across the United States. For more information, visit their website: <http://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/brochures/wrp1.html>





# STARTING A JOB SEARCH AND WHAT TO EXPECT.

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## One Stop Career Centers

Okay, so you've got the resume going, the pants are pressed, and you're ready to start working. Now, all you need is a little bit of help choosing the right job. Your local One-Stop Career Center is a great place to start! They can help you assess your skills and experience to help you decide on the best career, help you search for a job, and can also offer you education and training. To find your local One-Stop Career Center, visit [www.servicelocator.org](http://www.servicelocator.org) or just pick up the phone and dial 1-877-US2-JOBS (1-877-872-5627).

## Department of Rehabilitation (DOR)

The Department of Rehabilitation serves people with many different types of disabilities. Their main goal is to get you working. They'll work closely with you to help you achieve your goals! DOR may be able to help you pay for college, with job training programs, transportation (bus pass, etc.), and sometimes may even purchase equipment (computer, software) to help you reach your career goal. They are a valuable resource and will provide you with a counselor who works directly with you to help you become more independent. How's that for service?!

## PLANNING FOR POTENTIAL CHANGES IN YOUR BENEFITS

It's important to know that the cash and health benefits you currently receive may be affected by having a job. Public benefit programs including Social Security (provides a monthly cash check) and Medi-Cal (provides health insurance to see the doctor) are used by many people with disabilities (You can read more about Medi-Cal in the "Health Care" section in this toolkit). However, these benefit programs sometimes change once you get a job. A lot of people think that the second they start working they are going to lose all of their check and health insurance coverage – but this isn't always true! It's important to understand your options. Because these issues can get complicated and confusing, there are resources available to help you figure things out. Read on to find out a little bit about the different "work incentive" programs and who to talk to about these programs.



## Social Security / SSI

If you are getting cash benefits from Social Security you need to plan for possible changes to your benefits if you get a job. But, first and foremost, you need to know what benefits you are currently receiving. You can get this information from Social Security by asking for a Benefits Planning Query (BPQY). Once you have your BPQY it's a good idea to visit a benefits planner. These individuals can help you figure out how working and earning money may change your benefits. (To find a benefits planner near you, please check out the resources below.)

If you're getting Supplemental Security Income (SSI) cash benefits, the amount of money you receive from SSI may change if you start earning money from work. Basically, your SSI cash benefit amount is reduced \$1 for every \$2 you earn from work (however, the first \$85 you earn isn't counted at all). Students are especially lucky – they are allowed to “exempt” (meaning “not count”) up to \$6,240 (in 2008) before their SSI cash benefit will be reduced. This is called the “Student Earned Income Exclusion” and it's a great way for you to work and earn more money than you are getting on SSI!

See, this can be complicated, so it's a good idea to meet with a benefits planner – they're good at explaining the rules in an easy-to-understand way!

## Medi-Cal

Medi-Cal is a health insurance program for people who are low income and/or disabled. However, some people with disabilities can work, earn a good amount of money, and still keep their Medi-Cal. There are two main ways to do this:

### 1. For people who are on SSI:

People who are on SSI automatically get Medi-Cal. If you stop getting cash benefits from SSI because you are making too much money, you can still keep your Medi-Cal through a program called “1619b” (kind of a weird name for a health insurance program, huh?). The 1619b program allows people who used to be on SSI cash benefits to work, earn up to \$34,000/year (in 2008) and still keep their Medi-Cal benefits for FREE! Sometimes, you can even earn above \$34,000 and still get your Medi-Cal through 1619b.



## 2. For people who are not on SSI (or for people who used to be on SSI but are making over \$34,000/year):

The Medi-Cal 250% Working Disabled Program allows individuals with disabilities to work, earn up to \$53,000/year (that's a nice chunk of change) and still keep their Medi-Cal. People in this program pay an affordable monthly premium between \$20-\$250.

### Additional Resources

To request a Benefits Planning Query (BPQY) from Social Security, call 1-800-772-1213, or visit your local Social Security office (to find your local office go to: [www.ssa.gov/locator/](http://www.ssa.gov/locator/)).

For information on all the different disability benefit programs in California, check out the Disability Benefits 101 website ([www.disabilitybenefits101.org](http://www.disabilitybenefits101.org)). This website even has benefits planning calculators which make it easy to figure out how working will affect your benefits.

To find a Benefits Planner in your area – go to:

<http://www.disabilitybenefits101.org/ca/directories/planners.htm>

### Personal Assistance

Having a disability may mean that you need assistance at work, so choosing the right person to help you is very important. This care can be provided by a family member, a friend, a volunteer or by someone who gets paid to help you. This person works directly for you and you are in charge of choosing him or her. Paying for personal assistance can become expensive, but don't worry. You have a couple of options available to help fund your care. Below, we'll outline a couple of them.

Agencies such as the Regional Centers and programs such as In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) may be able to assist you with paying for and finding the right type of personal assistance to fit your needs. IHSS provides personal assistance services to help you live safely in your home. And, thanks to a law passed in 2003, you can use some of your IHSS hours to meet your personal care-related needs at work.



There are two types of Workplace Personal Assistance Services (Workplace PAS). The first type is personal care-related assistance – such as help in the restroom or at your lunch breaks. A second type of assistance, called job-related assistance, includes tasks such as help with reading, interpreting, lifting or reaching work materials, and travel assistance between work sites. These job-related services are not available through the IHSS program. However, your employer may have a responsibility under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other laws to provide reasonable accommodations for you to perform job-related tasks. Employers are not generally required, however, to provide personal care-related assistance.

A personal assistant can be very important for achieving your goals and can help you lead a more independent life, so be sure to use all the resources available to you to help you make a good choice.

#### **Additional resources:**

Your local departments of health services and social services are responsible for determining eligibility and need for Medi-Cal and IHSS. Please check out their website at: [www.dhs.ca.gov/mcs/medi-calhome/CountyListing1.htm](http://www.dhs.ca.gov/mcs/medi-calhome/CountyListing1.htm)

The IHSS Public Authorities are responsible for keeping local lists of screened and trained personal assistance service providers, making individual referrals, and providing information and training. This is a safe and effective way of finding a personal assistant. Please check out their website at: [www.capaihss.org/IHSS\\_PA\\_YourCounty.html](http://www.capaihss.org/IHSS_PA_YourCounty.html)

The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) provides free information on workplace accommodations, including PAS and assistive technology, self-employment options, and disability-related legislation. Please visit their website at: [www.jan.wvu.edu](http://www.jan.wvu.edu)



# MAKING WORK, WORK FOR YOU.

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## Reasonable Accommodations

In order to be productive at work, you may need to ask for a reasonable accommodation. And what exactly is “a reasonable accommodation?” It’s any change that may need to be made to your job or your work environment that will allow you to do your job well. These accommodations can include making your workplace accessible (for example, putting in a ramp), purchasing equipment, computer software, or providing sign language interpreters. You may also request a part time or an adjusted work schedule based on your ability to do the job. Your employer is often required to provide these reasonable accommodations for you based on your disability. Do not be afraid to ask for what you need, you have the right to do so!

## Additional Resources:

Your right to a reasonable accommodation is covered under Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). For more information on the ADA visit this website: <http://www.bu.edu/cpr/reasaccom/whatlaws-adaact.html>

To learn more about your legal rights to accommodations, contact Disability Rights California (DRC). For more information visit their website: <http://www.pai-ca.org/about/offices.htm>





## Disability Disclosure

Telling your employer about your disability is a personal decision and requires some thought. If you decide to share this information with your employer, it may allow for an open discussion about what kind of accommodations you may need to help you do your job. It's your choice when or whether to tell them about your disability. This can be a difficult decision but don't worry, you'll find useful information and advice on choosing the right time to disclose this information at: [http://www.ncwd-youth.info/resources\\_&\\_Publications/411.html](http://www.ncwd-youth.info/resources_&_Publications/411.html). The biggest thing to always keep in mind is — you're in control of your life, you decide what you want and how to do it. And yet, the beauty of it all is that you're not alone. There are lots of people and resources available to help. Never fear. Always ask!

## Transportation

Once you get the job of your dreams, you want to be sure that you can safely get to and from work. If you have the ability to drive, you'll need to start the process of getting a driver's license. Begin by taking a driver's education course. This is most appropriate way to properly prepare for the Department of Motor Vehicles' test.

If you do not have the ability to drive, you still have many options! You can always have your parents drive you, but if you're ready to be more independent you can use public transportation (buses, light rail, etc.). If you're a bit nervous or unsure about how to use public transportation or worried about how to pay for it, there are agencies such as Department of Rehabilitation and the Regional Centers that can provide you with a public transportation pass and training on how to use the public transportation system.

Another good option to help you get around is a program called Paratransit. Paratransit provides door-to-door transportation services to individuals with disabilities. To find the contact information for Paratransit service in your area, check out this website: [http://www.apta.com/links/state\\_local/ca.cfm](http://www.apta.com/links/state_local/ca.cfm)

Once you become comfortable using these services you'll find that getting around on your own is a huge step in becoming more independent. And when you're independent, you're free to see more, do more and be more!

**Now you're all set so, go for it!**



# SAMPLE RESUME

## PAT SMITH

500 South Elm Street • Los Angeles, California 94434 • (555) 555-5555 • pat@school.com

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OBJECTIVE: Obtain a part-time position working as a veterinary assistant.

### QUALIFICATIONS:

- Volunteered for 6 months at the Los Angeles Animal Shelter
- Excellent at customer service and working with animals
- One year successful experience in providing medications and serving customers

### EXPERIENCE:

#### Los Angeles Animal Shelter

- Provided food, water, and medications to approximately 100 animals per day
- Recorded and tracked eating habits and behavior of animals

#### Administrative Support

- Assisted store manager in training and assigning employees.
  - Prepared new employee personnel folders
  - Called substitutes to cover during illness or rush hours.
- Filed and retrieved personnel records.
- Word processed letters; answered telephone; made reservations.

#### Personal experience

### WORK HISTORY:

2000	Full-time student	Cedar High School
May 99-Present	Cashier	McDonald's
Dec. 98-May 99	Bookkeeper	McDonald's
Summer 98	Clerk	Cedar Recreation Center

### EDUCATION & TRAINING:

Senior – Cedar High School

Business courses: Accounting, Word Processing, and Journalism

President of school Business Club

The logo features the text "talent knows no limits" in a white, sans-serif font. To the left of the text is a graphic of four overlapping white squares of varying sizes, arranged in a grid-like pattern. The entire logo is set against a yellow background with a large, faint circular graphic on the right side.

talent  
knows  
no  
limits

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[www.tknlyouth.org](http://www.tknlyouth.org)



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