

Common Transition Options in Jefferson County

Revised October 2026

Missouri is an ***Employment First*** state which means that we believe everyone, including people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, are capable of competitive, integrated employment (CIE). CIE means that an individual has a job with the same pay, benefits, interpersonal exchanges, and advancement opportunities as other employees without disabilities in similar positions. All individuals who want to work, can work, and contribute to their community when given informed choice, opportunity, training, and supports that build upon one's strengths, talents, and skills. The expectation is that everyone of working age, and those supporting them, should consider employment as the first option as fully participating community members and develop career pathways consistent with one's preferences and interests.

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

Missouri VR helps eligible people with disabilities obtain, maintain, or advance in employment. A rehabilitation counselor will determine if you are eligible for services within a reasonable period of time - usually within 60 days after you have applied for services unless exceptional and unforeseen circumstances occur. If you are eligible for rehabilitation services, you and your counselor will develop a vocational goal that will assist you in reaching an employment outcome. This is known as your Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). This plan will be completed within 90 days unless you and your counselor agree upon an extension. At all stages throughout your VR program, you will be provided vocational information and guidance allowing you to make informed choices regarding your employment. VR provides a wide range of services. You and your counselor will determine which services are required to help you become employed. At least every 12 months, your plan will be reviewed with you to see if it is still the best plan for you.

Local VR office serving Jefferson County – (314) 877-1900 or 1-877-222-8968

<https://dese.mo.gov/media/pdf/vr-transition-brochure>

Department of Mental Health (DMH) Employment Services

- **Career Planning** – Career planning is a comprehensive individualized service which supports an individual with vocational discovery, identification of career themes, and development of a plan to achieve competitive integrated employment or self-employment goals. Activities may include job exploration, job shadowing, informational interviewing, assessment interests and skills, and community observations. Supports, resources, outcomes, and goals will be identified during this service for each individual.
- **Benefits Analysis** – A benefits analysis will determine how benefits would be impacted by varying levels of work at varying pay rates to identify the best path forward. The results of a benefits analysis are individualized and extremely helpful in determining how employment could impact benefits including SSI, Medicaid, and food stamps.
- Missouri also offers disability benefits assistance (DB101 – <https://mo.db101.org/>) which is an online, introductory benefits planning tool.
- **Pre-Vocational Skills** - Prevocational services focus on developing generalized, non-job task specific skills needed to succeed in competitive, integrated employment (settings where compensation is at or above minimum wage). Services prepare the individual to attain the highest level of independence and autonomy in the most integrated employment setting aligned with the individual's interests, abilities, and capabilities. Skills including

communicating professionally in the workplace with co-workers, problem solving, accepting feedback, and how to handle conflict will be taught during this time. This also includes hygiene skills, dressing, body language, and decision-making skills.

- **Job Development** - Job Development is available to individuals that may need assistance in obtaining competitive, integrated employment and promotes the greatest degree of integration, independence, and autonomy. Services may include building a resume, completing job applications, job interviewing activities, job task analysis, and negotiation and education with prospective employers. This service will assist individuals with searching for the best possible match for employment based on skills, abilities, and interests. Securing employment is the goal of this service, which includes identifying public and other transportation resources available.
- **Supported Employment** - The goal of this service is sustained paid employment at or above the minimum wage in an integrated setting in the general workforce, in a job that meets personal and career goals. Services may include: on-the-job training to help individuals learn and perform their job duties, supervision and monitoring of the individual's performance, training in related skills which promote attendance and social inclusion, facilitation of natural supports to fade out paid supports over time, and problem solving with the employee or employer about any issues or concerns that arise.

DMH Employment Providers – Most provide services through VR and DMH

- **Pony Bird – (636) 282-4400** <https://ponybird.org/programs/employment-services/>
- **Judevine Center for Autism – (636) 489-3595** <https://judevine.org/our-services/>
- **Aspiring Solutions – (636) 725-2505** <https://www.aspiring-solutions.com/>

Sheltered Workshop

Lafayette Jeffco is a sheltered workshop bringing meaningful employment to adults with developmentally disabilities in Jefferson County and a reliable workforce providing quality workmanship to businesses in the St. Louis region. Founded in 1976, Lafayette Industries is a Contract Packager offering shrink wrap, blister pack, display assemblies and other business services. Their Mission is to exceed the customer's expectations while employing hundreds of adults with disabilities within their business operations. Through extensive training and support programs, employees learn to maximize their abilities to be successful in a productive and professional work environment. The result is high quality products and services at a competitive price on a timely basis

Lafayette Jeffco (formerly JSI) – Arnold (636)296-6211 <https://www.lafayetteindustries.com/>

Employment Training Programs

Mercy Jefferson Hospital – Pathways to Employment Program – this is a collaborative employment training program between the hospital, a Jefferson County school district and Pony Bird Employment Services. Referrals to this program can come from any school district in Jefferson County. Only students in their last year of high school are eligible to participate. They spend a full school year at the hospital learning job skills and receiving instruction from a certified teacher using an employment/life skills focused curriculum.

For more information, contact Paul Lenhart at 314-251-4725 or paul.lenhart@mercy.net

Step Up Program – Lafayette Industries

Step Up is an employment training program at Grand Slam in Fenton. Ideal candidates are age 18-35 and have exited the public education system or individuals who have had previous competitive employment experience however are currently unemployed for various reasons. Supports are provided as a combination of classroom-based learning and internships at Grand Slam. Classroom learning is currently located in private office space within the shopping plaza where Grand Slam is located. Classes are offered in four 12-week sessions and virtual attendance is an option. Typically, supports are provided in a group setting of three total participants to one staff at Grand Slam and a maximum of one

instructor to ten participants during course instruction; however this may vary based on the individuals' needs and the work site.

For more information, contact Cat Woerner, Program Manager at 636-227-5666 or cwoerner@lafayetteindustries.com

Day Programs

Day services are designed to assist individuals to acquire, improve, and retain the self-help, socialization, and adaptive skills that enhance social development and develop skills in performing activities of daily living (ADLs) and community living. Activities and environments are designed to foster the acquisition of skills, building positive social behavior, interpersonal competence, greater independence, and personal choice. Day programs are typically 1-5 days per week, 9 am – 3 pm. Some have transportation available.

- **Pony Bird – (636) 282-4400 <https://ponybird.org/programs/community-support-services/>**
- **Judevine Center for Autism – (636) 489-3595 <https://judevine.org/our-services/>**
- **Aspiring Solutions - (636) 725-2505 <https://www.aspiring-solutions.com/>**

Community Networking/Individualized Skill Development

One-on-one instruction focuses on daily living skills training and community socialization. This service typically provides 4 to 10 hours of support each week.

Sunnyhill – (314) 845-3900 <https://www.sunnyhillinc.org/>

Independent Supported Living Assistance (ISLA)

People in the ISLA program receive one-on-one service focusing on the skills needed by a person to live in his or her own residence. Support staff promote the acquisition of skills for independence, formation of social roles, relationships, and self-reliance. This service can include up to 40 hours of support a month.

Sunnyhill - (314) 845-3900 <https://www.sunnyhillinc.org/>

Individualized Supported Living (ISL) - 24/7 Residential Services

ISL settings provide individualized support to people with developmental disabilities who live in homes of their choice. They may live alone or with roommate(s). Supports provided may vary from 24-hour support to occasional drop-in support. This service enables people to be fully integrated into their community, as well as enhance their independent living skills.

- **Pony Bird - (636) 282-4400 <https://ponybird.org/programs/community-living/>**
- **Judevine Center for Autism – (636) 489-3595 <https://judevine.org/our-services/>**
- **Sunnyhill - (314) 845-3900 <https://www.sunnyhillinc.org/>**
- **MO Mentor – (314) 991-7944 <https://www.mo-mentor.com/>**

RCF/ALF/SNF Residential Options

Residential Care Facility (RCF) and Assisted Living Facility (ALF): The primary difference between an RCF and ALF is that assisted living facilities (ALF) may admit and support individuals who require a higher level of assistance to evacuate the building than can an RCF, whose residents must be able to evacuate without assistance. A Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) is for individuals requiring twenty-four-hour care by licensed nursing personnel, including the administration of medications and treatments as prescribed by a licensed physician.

A specialized assessment can assist in determining which level of care is appropriate for the individual with a disability.

For all RCF, ALF and SNF options in Jefferson County, visit <https://healthapps.dhss.mo.gov/showmeltc/default.aspx>

Socialization/Leisure/Recreation/Camp/Respite

Services support individuals in accessing community and social life in self-directed, safe, and inclusive ways. Camp services support individuals to access time-limited recreational and leisure activities. Socialization services support individuals to develop and/or maintain relationships and connections to their community. Respite services provide intermittent, short-term relief to the primary caregivers.

- **St. Louis Arc Launch** - <https://www.slarc.org/programs/transition-adulthood/instructional-programs/>
- **Judevine Center for Autism** – (636) 489-3595 <https://judevine.org/our-services/>
- **Pathways to Independence** – (314) 863-0202 <https://ptistl.org/>
- **Pony Bird** – (636) 282-4400 <https://ponybird.org/programs/family-support-and-leisure/>
- **Camp Circle Star** – (314) 402-4032 <https://www.campcirclestar.com/home>

Post-Secondary Options in Missouri

Jefferson College – Hillsboro

Linda Ladendecker-Corley, M.A.
Disability Support Services Coordinator
Technology Center Room #101
Disability Support Services dss@jeffco.edu
lladende@jeffco.edu
(636) 481-3169
TTY users dial 711

Bear Power – Missouri State University, Springfield, MO <https://www.missouristate.edu/BearPOWER/default.htm>

E-mail: BearPOWER@MissouriState.edu

Phone 417-836-6656

SUCCEED – University of Missouri – St. Louis <https://www.umsi.edu/education/oipe/index.html>

E-mail: OPE@umsi.edu

Phone 314-516-5911

THRIVE – University of Central Missouri, Warrensburg, MO <https://thinkcollege.net/programs/thrive-program>

E-mail: Michael Brunkhorst, thrive@ucmo.edu

Phone 660-543-4260

For additional information about other inclusive post-secondary options in the United States, visit

[College Search](#) | [Think College](#)

This is a summary of services offered in Jefferson County, however there are many services and provider agencies in St. Louis County that provide similar or other supports. Transportation is not available to services in St. Louis County and may not be available for all services within Jefferson County.

Please discuss your transition goals with your DD Advocates Service Coordinator so they can assist you with making referrals for these and other community services. Not everyone will be eligible for all services listed.