

# Adapt Newsletter



## SPOTLIGHT ON SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

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Adapt has offered Supported Employment services since 1985. Supported Employment (SE) is “Real Work for Real Pay”. The definition of Supported Employment is: Competitive employment in an integrated setting with ongoing support services for individuals with the most severe disabilities, for whom competitive employment has not traditionally occurred or for whom competitive employment has been interrupted or intermittent because of a severe disability; and who, because of the nature and severity of their disabilities, need intensive supported employment services.

Job seekers often need support in identifying and accessing job opportunities. Employment Resources employees identify job opportunities and match employer/participant interests, needs, skills, and experience. An assessment of the job identifies job function and tasks, potential accommodation, and consumer support needs.

Job Coach/Developer/ Employment Specialist provides an array of supports to assist a person with a significant disability with obtaining and maintaining competitive employment in the community. The initial component of the service involves assisting the job seeker with 1) identifying his or her abilities and how these may relate to work, and 2) specifying vocational interests and preferences. Next, job development services geared toward helping the person secure work are offered. Typically, the employment specialist first meets with an employer to learn more about a business’ operations and potential labor needs. When viable opportunities begin to emerge, a meeting may be set up between the employer and the job seeker. At this point the typical pre-employment process begins, which involves completing an application and participating in an interview, all of which is supported by the employment specialist. The level of involvement will vary from business to business and is dependent upon the skill level of the job seeker. If a job is found or developed that is a suitable match for the job seeker and the employer, employment is secured.

The final component of the SE definition is the concept of continuous support services, which is referred to as Long-term Supports. Long-term Supports are the component of the SE definition that makes this service unique among a variety of service models. Long-term Support services include the provision of specialized support or assistance to the employee with a disability. This specialized support may occur either on or off the job site at least twice per month for as long as the person remains employed. Once the employee has attained stability with their job, the employment specialist continues to provide at least two contacts per month. The number and focus of these contacts are individually tailored to the needs of the employee. The supported employee directs how his/her services will be delivered.

Adapt works closely with Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) and Pines Behavioral Health Services (PBHS) to provide exemplary services to our consumers, community partners and our community employers. Some of our individuals experienced lay-offs or lost employment in 2020 due to the pandemic. We continue to strive to bring the best possible service to both employers and supported employees.

Currently we are working with a limited number of consumers and are in the process of getting those individuals that lost employment or were laid-off back into the work force.

Current local employers are:

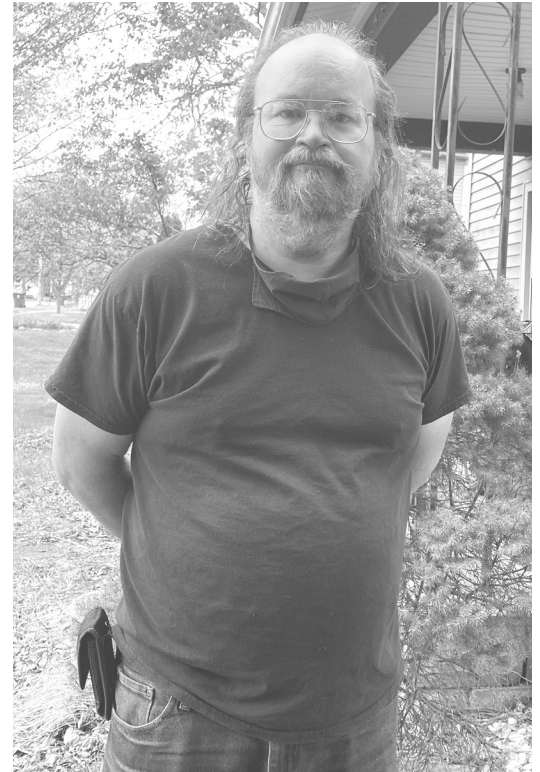
- Meijer's
- Taco Bell
- Alpine Janitorial Services
- McDonald's
- Auto Wares
- DHS
- Composition Performance Products (Bronson)
- St. Marks Church

For more information about the supported employment program, call Employment Resources at (517) 278-4647 and ask for Program Supervisor, Vicci Marson or stop by the office located at 190 Morse Street in Coldwater.

## Leon Kriser and Jesse Avery are working at Meijer in Coldwater.

Leon participated in the Supported Employment Program for many years. He has always gone above and beyond the call of duty at each job. Leon recently decided that he wanted to change jobs and accepted a position at Meijer on 12/10/2020. His position is store Janitor. He also does some maintenance. Leon works 24 hours each week and is earning \$11.00 per hour. He states that he loves everything about his job. Leon has a strong work ethic and reports to work each day on a timely basis. The store manager of 20 years has stated that they have never seen the restrooms so clean in all the time he has been manager. The manager also stated they could use 100 more employees like Leon.

Leon is well liked by his managers and co-workers!!



Jesse started working at Meijer on 10/09/2020 as a Covid cleaner. He is working 30 hours a week and earning \$11.50 per hour. Jesse is very social and loves the interactions with the customers and his co-workers. Jesse started working 25 hours per week and Meijer added an extra hour each day because he does such a great job. His manager has stated that he is friendly, outgoing, and always does a great job. Jesse also has a great work ethic and reports to work on all scheduled days and is always on time. Jesse is friendly, helpful, and always smiling at the customers. Jesse has stated that he loves his job and is very happy to be working for Meijer.

Everyone loves Jesse!!!!

## **Residential Program Referral and Retention**

Adapt is currently experiencing severe challenges with hiring, as are most local employers. We are competing with many companies that are NOT non-profits funded with Medicaid dollars. The rate at which Adapt pays employees is tied directly to Medicaid money and rates approved by our local CMH agencies – the agencies with which we share consumers. Since Adapt has “set” rates, we cannot change our pay rate for employees, however much we might wish to do so.

In order to attract employees so we do not continue to experience staffing shortages, we have to do something. Increasing our referral and retention bonuses is one of the few ways we can increase compensation to employees and hope to compete with manufacturing companies, etc. Whenever Adapt can provide bonuses, we do, and an example of this is the Christmas bonus. Another thing we have done is to pay overtime hours using the “premium pay” wage rather than the base pay. Adapt is not reimbursed for this, but we use whatever resources we can find to continue using the “premium pay” rate for overtime, which is well-deserved by our many dedicated Direct Care Workers.

Any positive changes we make in our hiring process benefit all Adapt employees and the people we serve. This is what we are trying to do in a local economy that is not conducive to this effort and with our limited resources. If we did nothing to improve this process, we would be settling for shifts that are short-staffed which can impact the quality of care for our residents and the well-being of our employees. Having an adequate number of employees in the Residential Program allows each shift to run as smoothly as possible for all involved, including our current Residential employees. If a shift is supposed to have three employees working, we want three employees, so everything goes better for everyone. We cannot do this if we cannot get people in the door for an interview.

I encourage current employees to take advantage of the referral bonus by talking with people you know about applying for employment at Adapt. Follow Adapt’s Facebook page, like the posts, and share the job postings so we can spread the word. The updated referral and retention policies are included in this newsletter.

## Updated Referral and Retention Policies

\*Effective 4/20/2021

### Recruitment Program for Residential Employees Referral Bonus

Employees who refer a person who is hired into the Residential Program at Adapt become eligible to receive a Referral Bonus. The following criteria must be met to receive the bonus:

The person referred to Adapt for employment in the Residential Program must put the referring employee's name on his/her job application as the referral source. Only one name can be written as the referral source.

If the referred employee is still employed at Adapt 60 days from the date of hire, has completed all required training, and is working at least 50 hours per pay period in the Residential Program, the referring employee (referral source) will be paid \$500.

If the referred employee is still employed at Adapt six (6) months from the date of hire, is working at least 60 hours per pay period in the Residential Program, and has completed all required training, the referring employee (referral source) will be paid an additional \$500.

All bonuses are subject to applicable taxes.

The referring employee is responsible for tracking when the referred employee has been employed for 60 days and at six (6) months and should notify office personnel.

The referring employee must be actively employed by Adapt at the time the bonus is earned and requested. Employees who are on leave of any kind will receive their bonus upon returning to work.

### Retention Bonus

Employees who are hired into the Residential Program or work as Substitute Residential Aide at Adapt become eligible to receive a Retention Bonus. The following criteria must be met to receive the bonus:

The new employee must be a "first-time" hire, meaning he/she has never been employed by Adapt or a "rehire" who left Adapt previously in "good standing".

"Good-standing" generally means the employee was not involuntarily terminated from Adapt, gave proper notice, and worked scheduled shifts after giving notice. Further, any determination regarding a former employee having left in "good standing" is solely at the discretion of Adapt hiring personnel and is final.

Employees who reach 60 days of employment (from date of hire), who have completed all required training, who work in the Residential program either as a full-time employee or as a Substitute Residential Aide, and who averaged a minimum of 50 hours per pay period, are eligible to receive a \$500 Retention Bonus.

## **Updated Referral and Retention Policies Continued**

Employees who continue to be employed at six (6) months are eligible for an additional \$500 Retention Bonus if working in the Residential Program or as a Substitute Residential Aide, have continued to meet all training requirements, and who have averaged a minimum of 60 hours per pay period over the previous three (3) months.

All bonuses are subject to all applicable taxes.

It is the responsibility of the employee to notify office personnel when he/she has been employed for 60 days and again at six (6) months.

The employee must be actively employed by Adapt at the time the bonus is earned and requested. Employees who are on leave of any kind will receive their bonus upon returning to work.

### **Temporary Premium Pay**

A temporary premium pay increase for Direct Care Workers has been in effect for much of the Pandemic. Most recently, MDHHS approved an extension of the premium pay and an additional \$.25/hour, bringing the premium pay to \$2.25/per hour in addition to Adapt's normal wages. This extension and increase became effective March 1, 2021 and is currently approved through September 30, 2021. It has not been approved for certain programs.

## ***COMPLIANCE REMINDER***

### **DATED SIGNATURE**

Whenever you place your signature on any ADAPT document, place the date there too!

We do this to inform the reader when the writer documented the information, even if it was the same day the document was created.

*—Melissa Rice 05/25/2021—*



In observance of Independence Day, Adapt's Administrative Offices and Day Programs will be closed July 5, 2021



# ADAPT, INC.

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

## Administrative Offices

202 Morse Street Phone: 517-279-7531  
Coldwater, MI 49036 Fax: 517-278-3154

## St. Joe County Office

907 North Clay Street Phone: 269-651-7900  
Sturgis, MI 49091 Fax: 269-651-4136