



REHABILITATION SERVICES & CONSULTING

A Full-Service Business Assistance Program
for Arkansas Business Owners and Employers



Mike Beebe
Governor
State of Arkansas

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Director
Arkansas Department of Career Education

Welcome to Rehabilitation Services & Consulting (RSC). Inside you will find the features and benefits RSC provides.

In today's business world companies are constantly seeking ways to gain a critical advantage in a highly competitive marketplace. Employers are striving to put the people, practices and materials in place to aid them in earning a greater share of the market and maximizing their customer service. **Rehabilitation Services & Consulting** is a business consulting agency assisting Arkansas businesses in gaining key resources about staffing, financial incentives, and education important to people with disabilities.

RSC has the talent and services to provide a positive impact on your business. We have assisted hundreds of companies in meeting the challenges of today's workplace. To learn more about the strategies to help you maintain a critical and competitive advantage, please call 1-877-417-7416 and request a visit.

Rodney Chandler
District Business Relations Manager



Our goal is to help business owners and employers find solutions to their disability-related issues. Whether in staffing; education; tapping into financial incentives associated with hiring an individual who has a permanent injury, illness, or impairment; or ensuring accessibility to your goods or services, RSC can provide you with critical business options.

For most Arkansas businesses, these options mean opportunity.

Rehabilitation Services & Consulting, or RSC, is a full-service business assistance program for Arkansas business owners and employers. Through RSC services, businesses can gain a critical advantage in today's highly competitive marketplace.

Launched in 2008 as an initiative of the Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division, a unit of the Arkansas Department of Career Education, RSC represents a real opportunity for business owners to build on their business or organizational success.

RSC is a professional business consulting program designed to assist business owners and employers in developing short- and long-term strategies regarding their varying disability-related issues. Our consultants have extensive experience in this arena and receive continuing training to

ensure that they have the latest information and resources to aid your operation.

With regional offices located strategically throughout the state, RSC consultants provide outreach to every county in the state. Whether your business or organization is large or small, RSC services will prove beneficial. Through a network of workforce development partners, we can access information and services that will have a positive impact on your bottom line.

Our efforts go far beyond the typical business program. RSC consultants are active members of their communities. They are members of many civic and service organizations working to better the communities in which they live. We are good stewards of the state and take our role seriously in helping Arkansas remain a "bright light" for economic development and a safe haven for the state's citizens.

Serving our clients - whether businesses with disability-related issues or individuals with permanent injuries, illnesses, or impairments - is the primary focus of everything we do.



For an overview of RSC services or to obtain additional information, contact our business service division at 1-877-417-7416.



S taffing

Never has hiring the right employee been of more importance to Arkansas business owners and employers than today.

To reach the business and organizational success you are seeking, you need to tap into highly reliable and qualified job applicants who can put their diverse abilities to work for you.

With 42% of the national workforce eligible to retire within the next decade and an accelerating median age in Arkansas's population, finding the right employment match, hiring, and then retaining that employee is critical.

Finding and keeping good employees is a major challenge to today's employers. National studies show that individuals with disabilities have equal or higher job performance ratings, higher retention rates, and lower absentee rates than employees without disabilities. The simple translation is that an individual with a permanent injury, illness, or impairment is often a more reliable employee.

Statistically Speaking,

Individuals with disabilities have a
an 85% one-year employment retention rate
a 90% average or better in performance rating
an 86% average or better in attendance rating
a 97% average or better in safety rating

RSC programs are designed to aid you in finding the right match to fill your needs.

Also,

82% of managers say employees with disabilities are not harder to supervise than those without disabilities.

A common misperception that many business owners and employers have is that individuals with disabilities are not well-educated or trained. Nothing could be further from the truth. Today, these individuals are more highly educated and have more training than ever before.

Putting individuals with permanent injuries, illnesses, or impairments to work is at the core of the RSC mission. Our consultants are experts in career development and rehabilitation, and our services can offer pre-screening of potential qualified job applicants and provide job testing and training to potential job applicants.



To gain this advantage, business owners and employers seek the right opportunity to affect the bottom line. RSC can show you how a progressive and proactive approach to ensuring accessibility and employing individuals with permanent injuries, illnesses, or impairments can have this desired effect through financial incentives.

Remember the old business adage “The bottom line is the bottom line?” In today’s highly competitive global market, this adage still applies.

Every business and organization is looking for a critical advantage over the competition. Maximizing profits, limiting expenses, and offering a solid return on investment for stakeholders is a priority.

First of all, the Internal Revenue Services (IRS) can actually help businesses and employers save money! Secondly, the IRS encourages business owners and employers to use these incentives.

The Disability Access Credit IRS Code Section 44

This credit is available to small businesses for expenses paid or incurred to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The small business must have 30 or fewer full-time employees or have revenues below \$1,000,000.

Under this credit, 50% of the expense over \$250 and not exceeding \$10,250 is applicable. The credit may not exceed \$5,000 annually. The credit is subtracted from your total tax liability.

What are eligible expenditures? Reasonable expenditures are those made to comply with the ADA, like removing architectural, communication, physical, or transportation barriers; sign interpreters; or modification or purchase of equipment and materials. This credit cannot be applied to new construction expenses.

The Barrier Removal Deduction IRS Code Section 190

All businesses are eligible to take this deduction, which is available to make facilities or public transportation vehicles more accessible.

The deduction, which is subtracted from total income to establish taxable income, allows up to \$15,000 annually. Amounts over \$15,000 may be depreciated.

What are eligible expenses? Expenses that can be specifically attributed to the removal of existing barriers such as steps, narrow doorways, inaccessible parking spaces, inaccessible toilet facilities or transportation vehicles are applicable. Expenses incurred in the construction or comprehensive renovation of a facility or in the normal replacement of depreciated property are not deductible.

Equal access is not only required by law but is just good business sense. By ensuring accessibility, you are tapping into a greater share of a potential market base. Plus, an accessible building has a higher resale and rental value!

F inancial Incentives

Work Opportunity Tax Credit

WOTC

Conditional Certification
Work Opportunity and
Welfare-to-Work Tax Credits

U.S. Department of Labor
Employment and Training Administration

OMB Approval No. 1306-0071

1. INITIATING AGENCY CODE (Per Agency Use Only) 2. CONTROL NO. (Per Agency Use Only) 3. TYPE OF CONDITIONAL CERT. (Per Agency Use Only)

4. FOR EXPLOSION HAZARD GROUP ONLY 5. Wages 6. DATE COMPLETED (Per Reg. 79.1)

Form **8850** Pre-Screening Notice and Certification Request for the Work Opportunity Credit OMB No. 1545-1000
Rev. June 2007
Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service

▶ See separate instructions.
Job applicant: Fill in the lines below and check any boxes that apply. Complete only this side.

Your name _____ Social security number ▶ _____
Street address where you live _____
City or town, state, and ZIP code _____
Telephone number () _____
If you are under age 40, enter your date of birth (m, day, year) ____/____/____

1 Check here if you are completing this form before August 26, 2007, and you lived in the area impacted by Hurricane Katrina on August 26, 2005. If so, please enter the address, including county or parish and state where you lived at that time.

2 Check here if you received a conditional certification from the state workforce agency (SWA) or a participating local agency for the work opportunity credit.

3 Check here if any of the following statements apply to you.

- I am a member of a family that has received assistance from Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) for any 9 months during the past 18 months.
- I am a veteran and a member of a family that received food stamps for at least a 3-month period during the past 15 months.
- I was referred here by a rehabilitation agency approved by the state, an employment network under the Ticket to Work program, or the Department of Veterans Affairs.
- I am at least age 18 but not age 40 or older and I am a member of a family that:
 - a Received food stamps for the past 6 months, or
 - b Received food stamps for at least 3 of the past 5 months, but is no longer eligible to receive them.
- During the past year, I was convicted of a felony or released from prison for a felony.
- I received supplemental security income (SSI) benefits for a month ending during the past 60 days.

4 Check here if you are a veteran entitled to compensation for a service-connected disability and, during the past year, you were:

- Discharged or released from active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, or
- Unemployed for a period or periods totaling at least 6 months.

5 Check here if you are a member of a family that:

- Received TANF payments for at least the past 18 months, or
- Received TANF payments for any 18 months beginning after August 5, 1997, and the earliest 18-month period beginning after August 5, 1997, ended during the past 2 years, or
- Stopped being eligible for TANF payments during the past 2 years because federal or state law limited the maximum time those payments could be made.

Signature—All Applicants Must Sign
Under penalty of perjury, I declare that I gave the above information to the employer on or before the day I was offered a job, and it is, to the best of my knowledge, true, correct, and complete.
Job applicant's signature ▶ _____ Date ____/____/____
For Privacy Act and Paperwork Reduction Act Notice, see page 2. Cat. No. 22881L Form 8850 (Rev. 6-07)

THE WORK OPPORTUNITY TAX CREDIT, or WOTC, is available to employers who hire Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) referrals or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients. A credit is available for each new hire, and there is no limit placed on the number of new hires under WOTC.

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit is available on up to 40% of the first \$6,000 in wages or \$2,400 paid in the first 12 months of employment. The tax credit is subtracted from the total tax liability.

For a new business start-up or for a small business operation, WOTC can have a dramatic and immediate impact on business expenses. For all employers, it offers a real opportunity to build a loyal and reliable employee base.

There is minimal paperwork associated with WOTC, and there is no hidden requirement to retain an employee who isn't meeting the job requirements. *You have the right to hire, fire, or promote the most qualified, deserving individual.*

REMEMBER...

- It is always advisable to consult with your tax accountant or advisor to ensure that you are properly using the tax incentives available to businesses and employers.
- Each of the financial incentives may be used by your business annually.
- Using these financial incentives will not automatically trigger an IRS audit.

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the U.S. Department of Labor's website. The page title is "Opportunity Tax Credit, Employment & Training Administration (ETA) - U.S. Department of Labor". The URL is "http://www.doleta.gov/business/incentives/opptax/". The page features a navigation menu with links for "About ETA", "Find Job & Career Info", "Business & Industry", "Workforce Professionals", "Grants & Contracts", "ETA Library", "Foreign Labor Certification", "Performance & Results", and "Regions & States". The main content area is titled "Work Opportunity Tax Credit" and includes a section "WHAT IS THE WORK OPPORTUNITY TAX CREDIT (WOTC)?" with a brief description: "The WOTC is one tool in a diverse toolbox of flexible strategies designed to help move people from welfare into gainful employment and obtain on-the-job experience. It joins other tax credits, education, and workforce training programs that help...". There are also links for "Related Documents" (ETA Handbook 408, 3rd, Ed., November 2002) and "Related Links". A sidebar on the right contains "Find it! in DOI" with links for "Compliance Assistance" and "Resources" (Find it in ETA, Compliance Assistance, Other Topics).

A ccessibility Analyses

Every business or organization in the state has at least one individual who is an integral part of the success of that business or organization. The question that poses a challenge to many of these operations is “What happens if that individual incurs a disability?” An additional question raised by the competitive environment for workers is “What happens if I find an individual who is qualified for the job but who may need an accommodation?”

Many employers have the misconception that reasonable accommodations are very expensive and will impose financial burden on their operation. Not true. Most employees with disabilities don't require special accommodations. If they do, the accommodations are often inexpensive, with 20% costing nothing and the average costing less than \$500.

It is often estimated that it will cost a business on average \$25,000 to train a new employee and integrate that employee into the company's workforce. It is simply more cost-effective to keep an existing employee who incurs a disability in your workforce by making a reasonable accommodation.

Of equal importance in today's highly competitive marketplace is ensuring that all your potential customers can effectively access your goods or services. Whether through physical access or electronic access, your goal is to connect your customers to your product or services. To effectively accomplish

RSC services are designed to present you with accessibility options and solutions.

this, you need to understand the changing market dynamics and understand your options.

A person now has a 51% chance of incurring a disability in his or her lifetime; one in five Arkansas citizens has a disability; one in three Arkansas families has a family member with a disability.

Nationally, individuals with disabilities have a discretionary spending power of \$220 billion. Is your business or organization making the accommodations to tap into this market segment?

RSC consultants assist with

- Job site evaluations
 - Site evaluations
 - ADA consultations and referrals
- Plus, RSC can work with you on
- Job restructuring
 - Reasonable accommodations
 - Assistive technology

RSC is a leader in disability-related solutions, and we can help your business or organization develop progressive and proactive approaches to accessibility and accommodation issues.





Diversity

If you were to ask a human resources professional to name one key aspect of today's Arkansas workforce that is one of the biggest challenges for business owners and employers, the answer would most likely be diversity.

Your business knowledge needs to go far beyond finances and manufacturing or sales processes. You need to understand the complexities of dealing with a diverse workforce. Whether cultural, gender-related, religious, or racial, these complex issues must be a primary focus of management.

Understanding disabilities is an important aspect of this list.

There are far too many misconceptions and myths surrounding this issue that are affecting over one-fifth of our state's and nation's population.

It is essential that your staff understands how to deal effectively with both employees and customers with disabilities. RSC can assist your employees in developing a broader understanding of the diversity in today's workplace and marketplace.

RSC services include educational and training programs focusing on

- Disability awareness
- Disability etiquette
- Sensitivity training

Additionally, RSC can provide the latest information and education on the Americans with Disabilities Act, or ADA. It is an imperative that every business owner, manager, employer, and employee understand this critical federal disability legislation.

E ducation & Training

Knowledge, awareness, and understanding is the key to creating a positive working environment for all employees, especially individuals with disabilities.

The ADA is a pro-business and a pro-individual-with-a-disability law. It is a positive piece of legislation designed to protect businesses as much as those individuals with permanent injuries, illnesses, or impairments.

RSC can show you and your employees how to replace misconceptions with a positive, business-building approach to enhancing your share of the marketplace and to having a positive impact on the community in which you live and do business.

Misconception 1

Persons with disabilities are unable to meet performance standards.

The reality is that studies show employees with disabilities rate average or better than average in job performance compared to employees without disabilities.

Misconception 2

Employees with disabilities have a higher absenteeism rate than employees without disabilities.

The reality is that studies show employees with disabilities are not absent any more than employees without disabilities.

5 Common Employment MISCONCEPTIONS

Misconception 3

Reasonable accommodations made for employees with disabilities are often expensive and cost-prohibitive.

The reality is the average cost of a reasonable accommodation for an employee with a disability is \$200.

Misconception 4

Workers' Compensation rates increase when hiring employees with disabilities.

The reality is that Workers' Compensation rates are based solely on the relative hazards of the operation and the organization's accident experience, not on whether workers have disabilities

Misconception 5

It is more difficult to terminate an employee with a disability than an employee without a disability.

The reality is that labor laws governing the firing of employees are no different for those with disabilities than those without. The basic truth is that if an employee is not adequately performing the requirements of the job as outlined in the job description, he or she can be terminated. As in all cases, specific documentation should be kept to support the job termination.



R esources



Essential Publications for the Arkansas Business Owner and Employer

- ADA Questions & Answers
- ADA Guide for Small Businesses
- ADA Business Briefs
- The ADA: Your Responsibilities as an Employer
- The ADA: A Primer for Small Business
- The ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG)

These publications may be downloaded at
<http://www.dlrp.org/>

Additional Resources
**Arkansas Disability Management/
Return to Work**
or
RAVE (Retaining a Valued Employee)
(501) 683-6052



Arkansas Department of Career Education
Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division
Rehabilitation Services & Consulting
www.ace.arkansas.gov
1-877-417-7416

Making Workplace Accommodations: Reasonable Cost, Big Benefits

Accommodations as a retention tool. Results indicated that employers want to provide accommodations so they can retain valued employees. Of the employers who called Job Accommodation Network (JAN) for information about accommodations, 80% were doing so to retain or promote a current employee.

Accommodations are effective. Employers who implemented accommodations were asked to indicate their effectiveness on a scale of one to five, with five indicating "extremely effective." Seventy-five percent of the respondents reported that the accommodations they implemented were either "very effective" or "extremely effective."

Direct and indirect benefits. During the interviews, the most frequently mentioned *direct* benefits of making accommodations were

- Retaining a valued employee (87%);
- Increasing the employee's productivity (71%); and
- Eliminating the costs associated with training a new employee (56%).

The most widely reported *indirect* benefits were

- Improving colleague interaction (67%);
- Increasing overall company morale (58%); and
- Increasing overall company productivity (56%).

The screenshot shows the DBTAC (Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers) website. The header includes the DBTAC logo, the text "National Network of ADA Centers", and the phone number "1-800-949-4232 Voice/TTY". The main content area is titled "The ADA Collection" and features a search interface with a search box, "Select Topic" dropdown, and "Search" and "Advanced" buttons. Below the search box, there are sections for "ADA Documents" and "Other Documents". The "ADA Documents" section lists various categories like "General", "Employment", "State & Local Gov", "Private Business", and "Facility Access", each with a link to a technical assistance manual or guide. The "Other Documents" section includes links for "Accessible IT Portal" and "Help America Vote Act". There is also a "Getting Started" section with a link to "Basic ADA Information" and a "Your email" field with a "Submit" button.

