

BESTBUDDIES[®] JOBS TOOLKIT

Getting Started

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Thank you for your interest in Best Buddies! We are thrilled to support your initiatives to build a more inclusive workplace. We are committed to meeting your diversity, equity, and inclusion goals.

The attached toolkit provides details on our menu of services. Our Jobs program is one solution for businesses seeking qualified, dependable talent. With a 97% retention rate, our participant talent helps to reduce turnover costs and improve culture. We conduct a thorough vetting process to source talent for employment, ensuring that each participant is ready for a position that maximizes their talents and the employer's needs. We support you every step of the way.

Diversity and inclusion is good for business. Our employers have experienced the benefits of hiring individuals with IDD, such as gaining dependable, motivated employees, promoting an inclusive and diverse workforce, and improving customer satisfaction. We look forward to speaking with you and helping your organization become a Champion of Inclusion.



In friendship,

David Quilleon, *Senior Vice President, Global Mission,
State Development & Operations, Best Buddies International*

Best Buddies International is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to establishing a global volunteer movement that creates opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment, leadership development, and inclusive living for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

BESTBUDDIES®

Best Buddies International is the world's largest organization dedicated to ending the social, physical and economic isolation of the 200 million people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Our programs empower the special abilities of people with IDD by helping them form meaningful friendships with their peers, secure successful jobs, live independently, improve public speaking, self-advocacy and communication skills, and feel valued by society.

Mission

Best Buddies International is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to establishing a global volunteer movement that creates opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment, leadership development and inclusive living for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

Vision

To put Best Buddies out of business. Best Buddies envisions a world where people with IDD are so successfully integrated into schools, workplaces and communities that its current efforts and services will be unnecessary. Until that vision becomes a reality, the organization will continue to educate middle school, high school and college students, community members, corporations and employers about the emotional, functional, and natural needs and abilities of people with IDD.

Who We Serve

The IDD community that Best Buddies serves includes, but is not limited to, people with Down syndrome, autism, fragile X syndrome, Williams syndrome, cerebral palsy, traumatic brain injury and other undiagnosed disabilities.

Programs

Best Buddies programs sit on the four key mission pillars below:

One-To-One
Friendships



Integrated
Employment



Leadership
Development



Inclusive
Living



One-To-One Friendships

Builds friendships between people with and without IDD, offering social mentoring while improving the quality of life and level of inclusion for a population that is often isolated and excluded.

BESTBUDDIES. Middle Schools, High Schools, Colleges and Citizens

Creates an inclusive community for students and adults with IDD, helping them become socially integrated with their peers at every age.

e-BUDDIES.

Offers an e-mail program, in which a participant with IDD communicates online with a friend without IDD.

Integrated Employment

Secures jobs for people with IDD, allowing them to earn an income, pay taxes, and continuously and independently support themselves.

BESTBUDDIES. Jobs

Matches skilled, qualified individuals with IDD with businesses seeking enthusiastic and dedicated employees. Through the Jobs program, Best Buddies develops partnerships with employers, assists with the hiring process and provides ongoing support to the employee and employer.

An estimated 81% of adults (18+) with developmental disabilities do not have a paid job in the community. The Best Buddies Jobs program strives to place participants with IDD in supported employment, with the potential to receive benefits and earn a total income upwards of \$900K over 30 years. In turn, these individuals will contribute \$153K in taxes back into the economy, rather than receive nearly \$895K in Federal SSI and Medicaid benefits during that time period.

Leadership Development

Educates and empowers people with and without IDD to become leaders, public speakers and advocates.

BESTBUDDIES. Ambassadors

Offers people with IDD the opportunity to gain the public speaking skills, self-esteem and confidence needed to successfully advocate for themselves, their peers and Best Buddies in communities, workplaces and government.

BESTBUDDIES. Promoters

Empowers youth to become advocates for people with IDD and help open new Best Buddies chapters and programs by organizing special events that promote awareness to the disability rights movement.

Inclusive Living

Provides an integrated experience in which people with and without IDD are active, contributing citizens – living independently in a dynamic environment where they can learn, grow, and thrive.

BESTBUDDIES. Living

Provides individuals with and without IDD an opportunity to live together in a vibrant, educational community that supports all residents in advancing their employment, financial literacy, continued education, and life skills as they work to achieve their personal goals.

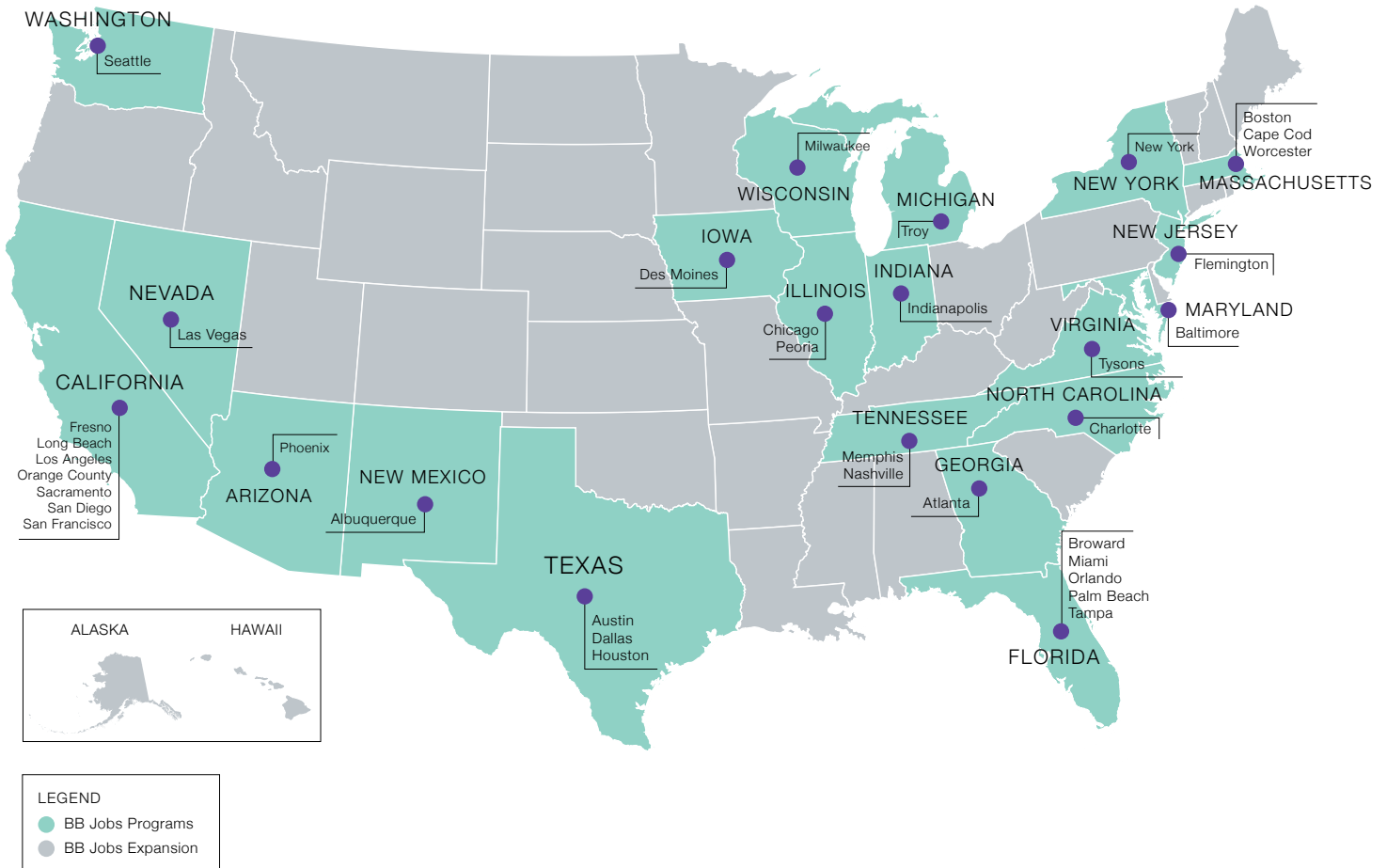
Best Buddies Jobs Market Coverage

Best Buddies Jobs is currently active in 36 markets across the United States. Please note that the cities which we cover are denoted on the map.

For more information about launching a Jobs Program in a new city, please reach out to; AmberCoffman@bestbuddies.org



BESTBUDDIES.JOBS National Programs



Best Buddies Jobs Program Process

The Best Buddies Jobs Program is the solution to your business needs. We conduct a thorough and person-centered vetting process to source appropriate talent for integrated employment, ensuring that each participant is work-ready and matched to a position that maximizes their talent and the employer's needs. Below is what to expect during our process:

Sourcing Talent: Referral Process

The Best Buddies Jobs Program accepts referrals from Vocational Rehabilitation (VR). VR is a state funded agency that supports individuals with disabilities in preparing for and engaging in supported employment services. After VR refers a qualified individual to Best Buddies, an Employment Consultant (EC) conducts an initial meeting to ensure the Best Buddies Jobs Program is appropriate for the individual's desired employment outcome.

Preparing and Supporting Candidates for Employment

Once a referral is accepted by Best Buddies, the EC begins the intake and development process, which covers the pre-employment skills necessary for successful employment. During this time, the candidate works with the EC to set career goals, develop a resume, participate in mock interviews, and fine tune pre-employment and on-the-job skills. Then, the EC connects with potential employer partners to learn their hiring needs and match those openings to the skills and abilities of the candidates in the Best Buddies pipeline. Finally, the EC works with the candidate to submit applications and schedule interviews.



Interview Support

The EC will attend the interviews as discreet support for both the employer and the candidate. They will stay mostly in the background but will be available as a resource to facilitate communication when needed and may prompt an individual to help them highlight specific areas of their experience and talent. This is also a great time for the employer to ask the EC any questions they may have about the Best Buddies program.





The Role of a Best Buddies Employment Consultant

When a job offer is extended, the EC will attend the onboarding and training alongside the new employee. They will support the employee as needed during their scheduled shifts, reinforcing their training, and ensuring the employee and employer are set up for success. The EC, the manager, and training staff work together until they all agree that the employee is independent in their role. Once independence is reached, the EC will gradually fade support, but will continue to be available as a resource to both the employee and employer as needed. The goal is for the employee to establish supportive relationships with coworkers on their new team.

Educational Resources for Employers: Creating an Inclusive Workplace

Best Buddies strongly encourages its employer partners to participate in the Best Buddies Inclusive Workplace Training that is offered

as a resource. This training can help prepare and educate hiring managers and employees on how to best support and work alongside a coworker with a disability. The training covers best practices from interview to retention and includes resources on disability etiquette. Best Buddies also offers customized training options to integrate into a company's current learning and development practices.

Life-cycle Support

Best Buddies Jobs supports both employees and their employers for the duration of employment. ECs are available when support or guidance is needed to conduct check-ins, create professional development goals, and any retention needs such as problem solving, support for annual reviews, and throughout transitions or changes in management.



Best Buddies Jobs Employer FAQs

Hiring individuals with IDD can pose questions from an employer perspective. Here are the answers to a few frequently asked questions when hiring a Best Buddies Jobs participant.

Q1. Is a person with IDD able to perform the job duties?

A1. Research shows people with disabilities are an effective solution to hiring needs and Best Buddies matches individuals to roles based on their skills, abilities, and interests. The individual hired should be able to complete the functions and tasks of their job. If needed, their employment consultant will support with implementing any reasonable accommodations.

Q2. Are these individuals more susceptible to accidents or injuries?

A2. The individual will be matched to a position where they will be effective and safe. Appropriate training and support will ensure the individual understands and adheres to all safety protocols.

Q3. Would my company have to pay more for insurance?

A3. Insurance policies cover all employees regardless of their race, gender or disability so companies should not raise your rates based on your employee demographics.

Q4. How will my customers react?

A4. Research reveals that consumers tend to favor companies that hire people with disabilities. People see this as a positive reflection of their community.

Q5. Will my employees be welcoming?

A5. Hiring individuals with disabilities can help to make your workplace culture more diverse and inclusive. Feedback from most employers is that employee morale is boosted when they hire our participants. Best Buddies offers training

materials to share with the staff to help them to better understand how to work with these individuals successfully.

Q6. How does hiring an individual with IDD impact retention??

A6. Studies show people with disabilities are dependable, motivated, and have a very high retention rate along with a low rate of absenteeism. Once they have found the right job, they will likely be there for a very long time. Best Buddies has participants that have been with the same employer for over 20 years!

Q7. Does our company have to pay for accommodations?

A7. Most accommodations can be made with existing materials and Best Buddies Jobs can assist with this. If any expense is incurred, it will likely benefit all employees/customers either immediately or down the road.

Q8. Are there any tax incentives?

A8. There are tax credits that reduce tax liability when you hire someone with a disability. The tax credits are for individual employees, so the more people with disabilities your company hires, the more incentives you will receive during tax time.

Q9. How do I provide support for this employee?

A9. Providing support for an individual with a disability will look a lot like the support you provide for all your employees. Best Buddies Jobs will assist and support your team during the onboarding and training phases to ensure the individual has a smooth transition into the workplace. The EC will work with your team

to facilitate the connection with natural supports within the workplace. A natural support is an employee or supervisor that is available to answer questions, model problem solving or new tasks, and someone the individual is comfortable asking for help. Treat this employee just like any new person who starts within your company.

Q10. How will disability inclusion benefit my company?

A10. The benefits to hiring individuals with disabilities go beyond “doing the right thing” and address many facets of a successful organization. Creating a diverse workplace culture will enhance the performance of all employees and your customers will appreciate your dedication to the community. Additionally, you will have access to an untapped pool of qualified individuals that will make your business run smoother and who will be excited to be at work each day.



“As business owners, we have been given the privilege to add value to people’s lives through gainful employment. It is our responsibility to create a work environment that includes members of our community of all abilities.”

- Mary Jane, Mack Cycle CEO

Information adapted and obtained from the following sources:
i4cp.com | ssa.gov | ada.gov | Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation

Best Buddies Jobs

Employment Consultant Q&A

Below are answers to common questions about the EC's role and the support they provide to employers:

Q1. What is an Employment Consultant (EC)?

A1. An EC will assist an individual with IDD in finding and maintain employment. Once hired, the Employment Consultant will help the individual to learn their new role and become proficient and independent at work. An EC also supports the employer with onboarding, training, and navigating ongoing support, ensuring a smooth transition for the new employee into the workplace. They also support management and staff by offering tools and ideas for implementing accommodations if needed.

Q2. Who needs an EC?

A2. Individuals with disabilities who want to work but need some assistance in navigating the workforce will be referred for these services. Best Buddies ECs prepare their clients with work-related skills, help to navigate transportation to and from work, and assist with tasks and training as needed.

Q3. When will we see the EC?

A3. The EC's level of support is based on the needs of the individual and the employer. The EC will attend the interview to assist an individual if needed. You will then see the EC at orientation and during their first 1-2 shifts as they learn the role together. After the first week, the EC and the supervisor will determine the levels of support as they move forward, fading the presence of the EC as independence increases. The EC can come in at any time to help the employee learn new tasks if needed. The EC will check in regularly and will communicate with the employee and supervisor to ensure success.

Q4. When will this support end?

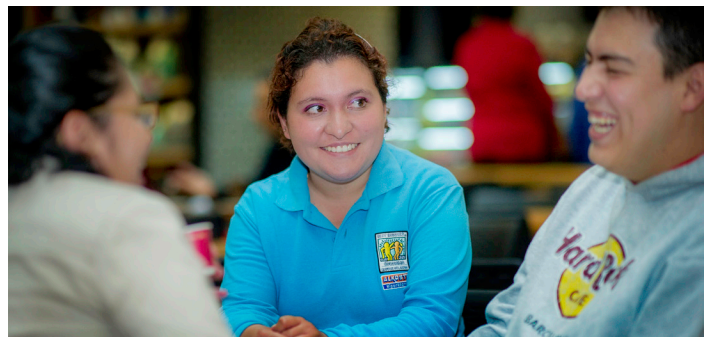
A4. The goal is for the individual to become independent, so the presence of the EC will fade over time; however, the EC will be available to provide support as needed for the lifecycle of employment and is always just a call or email away.

Q5. Who pays for this service?

A5. Best Buddies works with several different agencies throughout the US who provide funding for these services. From state agencies to employer Partners, and other community sources each market is different so check with your EC if you have any questions. In some cases, candidates may use the private pay route for Best Buddies services.

Q6. What accommodations can the Employment Consultant assist with?

A6. Employment Consultants are qualified individuals who will assess the workplace both before and during training to help implement effective accommodations if needed. Some examples of accommodations may include interview assistance, communication clarification, assistance in creating a checklist with tasks broken down, guidance in acquiring specialized software, equipment, or any other assistive devices.



Best Buddies Jobs Inclusive Workplace Training

The Inclusive Workplace Training is an opportunity for your current employees to learn about The Best Buddies Jobs Program, disability history, best practices for inclusive hiring, training, and retention.



Before hiring an individual through the Best Buddies program, make sure your employees are set up for success by providing access to the resources and training offered by Best Buddies. All partners receive a basic Inclusive Workplace training; however, there are additional levels of customizable training and resources available depending on your company's needs.

Inclusive Workplace Trainings

Best Buddies Basics - Goals of this training include:

- Providing a basic overview of the disability community and employment statistics
- Information to help all employees feel comfortable working with people with disabilities
- Improving communication techniques and skills, and reducing misunderstandings
- Providing workers with strategies to handle their own fears and anxieties related to disabilities

Customizable Options - Goals of this training include everything included in Best Buddies Basics plus opportunity to customize topics based on the needs of your company.

What does the future of inclusion look like to you? Ask us about our Train the Trainer program that takes inclusion to the next level!

Example Topics covered in the training Include

- Overview of Best Buddies Programs and Mission Pillars
- What to Expect when partnering with Best Buddies Jobs
- The Role of an Employment Consultant
- Business Benefits of Inclusive Employment
- Defining Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
- Disability Inclusion through a workplace lense
- Disability Work Force History
- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Best Practices for Inclusive Hiring
- Disability Etiquette
- Reasonable Accommodations
- Success Enablers
- Frequently Asked Questions

Best Buddies Jobs

Employer Partner Guide

Is your company looking to diversify your talent pool but uncertain where to start? Best Buddies has outlined a roadmap to a successful partnership that aligns with your vision.



What does a partnership with Best Buddies look like?

With a presence in 89 cities around the world, 30 years in the disability employment space, and our ability to provide 5-star in-person and virtual support, we are poised to meet any and all of your employment needs. Depending on your goals around this initiative, you have several standard options that can be customized to fit any vision:

- **Grass Roots Partnership** — Consultative, local support for one-off hiring
- **Pilot Partnership** — Small-scale initiative in targeted markets to determine future growth
- **Full-scale Employer Partnership** — Comprehensive initiative planning and implementation regionally, nationally, or globally

What are the cost options?

Best Buddies seeks the below investment to grow, streamline, and sustain our partnership. Uncertain of where funding might exist? We can help guide the conversation based on real-time experience and assist you in building the case for inclusion!

The below options are customizable based on your company's budget and vision as well as the change you're looking to create!

- **Grass Roots Partnership** — No charge for initial connections and consultative local support.
- **Pilot Partnership** — Fee per placement to support a smaller scale partnership with national support; potential to grow into a Corporate Employer Partnership targeted markets to determine future growth.
- **Full-Scale Employer Partnership**
 - **National** — \$25K - \$125K a year (sample pricing) Completely customizable and will depend on desired scope of partnership:
 - Number of hires
 - Marketing plan
 - Customized trainings
 - Employee engagement activations
 - Launching of a new program (case by case pricing)
 - **Global** — International fee for service system may vary by market. Please contact JenniferAllen@bestbuddies.org for more information.

Success Enablers-How do we get started?

Does your business want to go from DEI friendly to DEI ready? Successful implementation requires the following elements:

- **Internal Champion** — Point of contact dedicated to assist in messaging of partnership.
- **Executive Support** — Buy-in from the top-down.
- **Best Practices Commitment** — Provide competitive employment opportunities as defined by Best Buddies.
- **Communication Protocol** — Clear, concise communication process throughout organization.
- **Inclusive Workplace Training** — Company-wide Inclusive Workplace training initially, and ongoing.
- **Metrics** — Mutually understood set of measurement to track progress and opportunities.
- **Mission Engagement** — Dedication to our overall mission of inclusion by engaging in volunteer opportunities in local communities (corporate friendship chapters, participation in local events, etc).

