

## Employer guide:

### Hiring youth with Holland Bloorview's Employment Pathways program

Work with Holland Bloorview's Employment Pathways program to connect with talented young workers with disabilities. Our goal is to provide the support that you and the student want and need to have a successful and rewarding experience.

Hiring a young worker can bring many benefits to a team, including energy, passion, and fresh perspectives. Additionally, being a disability inclusive employer is good for business. Diverse employers experience high levels of employee engagement, customer satisfaction and overall performance.

Our processes are flexible so the information in this guide is an example of how things can work, rather than an outline of requirements.

At any step along the way, we can provide written information or give presentations to your team.

#### 1. Understanding your talent needs and recruitment processes

The more we understand about your organization's needs, the better we can connect you to youth who have what you are looking for.

Share job postings, job descriptions and/or training outlines with us. Tell us what makes a great employee.

Give us information about your recruitment process. For example, do you pre-screen by phone or email? How do you typically interview candidates?

#### 2. Proposing candidates

We screen candidates and support our candidates to follow your typical application requirements. We flag the candidates to you.



### 3. Selecting candidates

You determine which candidates you would like to meet. Please include us in candidate communications.

We recommend if possible:

- **1:1 interview** rather than group.
- Start interview with a **tour** of the workplace. This gives our candidate(s) a clear picture of the work.
- Include a short **work trial** as part of the interview. Many of our candidates showcase their abilities better through “hands on” work.
- Allow candidate to show you a **video or visual resume** during the interview if they ask. This helps them explain their experiences and strengths to you.
- Include our **job coach** in your interview. The job coach is a person who knows the candidate’s experience and strengths. The coach may occasionally rephrase a question or provide a prompt so the candidate can fully respond to your questions.

If any other interview accommodations would help our candidates demonstrate their strengths, we will explain our request.

During the interview, we support our candidates to share information with you about their disability and what helps them do their best work.

- Often these are personal strategies – for example taking a picture as a memory aid of the way a display is supposed to look.
- Sometimes these are simple accommodation requests such as requesting that a supervisor say the start and end time of the break – “It’s 10:00. Please take your break and come back at 10:15.” (Rather than saying “Take 15 minutes now.”)

### 4. Making job offers

Please include us in communications as part of your typical offer process whether by phone or email. We assist our candidates in following through on all the logistics for accepting an offer.

We can support you in communications with candidates who will not receive an offer, if you wish. We appreciate any feedback you can provide the candidate or our program.



## 5. Starting the job

### Consistency:

- ☑ Generally, we recommend training initially with a consistent supervisor or team lead and/or with some consistency in shift times and job tasks. This will enable your new employee to clearly understand the tasks and requirements as well as know the team.
- ☑ Once this initial learning stage is complete, they will be well positioned to add new tasks, shifts and team members.

### Clarity:

- ☑ Young workers usually find it helpful to have a clear list of tasks to accomplish during their shift (written if possible).
- ☑ Please clearly state what “doing a good job” looks like. This will include explaining your standards for quality, quantity and timing. For example, “Restock and front face the shampoo section. I expect this will take you 60 minutes. Come see me when you are done.”

### Coaching:

- ☑ We provide a **job coach**. This is an employee of our organization who is trained to support an employee with a disability and their employer. A job coach’s primary role is to support during the period when the new employee learns to perform the job tasks and gets used to the workplace culture and expectations. A job coach will:
  - Participate in job task training and organizational orientation. Incorporate learning strategies suited to the individual and tasks to promote job performance such as: adapting the daily schedule format, making a detailed checklist of the steps in a task.
  - Work with supervisor/lead/manager to respond to feedback and ensure standards for quality and output are being met.
  - Demonstrate to co-workers training and feedback techniques that are tailored to the individual’s learning style.
  - Help promote social inclusion.
- ☑ When the employee is performing the job as expected, and the employee and team are comfortable working together, the job coach plans a **gradual fading** of support with the manager.
- ☑ The job coach **checks in** and remains available to consult if needed.

### Constructive feedback:

- ☑ **Schedule regular check-in meetings** to discuss progress on work tasks and give feedback.
- ☑ **Share positive feedback** when it is merited and will be meaningful.



- ☑ All workers, and particularly those who are new to the workplace, have areas where they can improve. **Provide direct and specific feedback** on areas for improvement. Focus on the behaviours or actions to be improved on and provide specific suggestions for how to improve.

**Connection:**

- ☑ Some teams like to designate a **mentor** who may act as a back-up with questions about tasks when the supervisor is not available and/or may play more of a role in facilitating social connections.
- ☑ **Make time for small talk** and social connection at the start of the day or during downtime as you would with other co-workers.
- ☑ Young workers may be nervous to join team events. **Invite them to a break or lunch** and **include them in planning and enjoying department-wide parties and celebrations.**

## 6. Ongoing support

Some of our candidates are looking for summer employment as they are returning to school. However, many of our young workers are available for ongoing employment. If they are performing well in their jobs, please discuss options for continuing with them. The job coach can assist.

Please communicate with the job coach and our program if any performance challenges arise. We will support you and your employee to resolve them if possible. If not possible, we assist the individual to look for other employment opportunities.

Ongoing employment support may be provided by one of our partner organizations such as Community Living Toronto or March of Dimes Canada. We will introduce you if this becomes applicable.

**Contact:** Carolyn McDougall, Manager, Employment Pathways [cmcdougall@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:cmcdougall@hollandbloorview.ca)

### About our candidates:

We know our candidates well. They have either volunteered or trained through co-operative education placements at our organization. Our candidates are participants in one of these two programs:

- **Ready to Work:** This program supports youth who are returning to school to get summer work experiences. All candidates have at least 50 hours of experience with us.
- **Project SEARCH:** This program is jointly operated by TDSB, Community Living Toronto, University Health Network (UHN) and Holland Bloorview. Candidates have gained more than 700 hours of hands-on training at UHN and Holland Bloorview



## Candidate availability:

Timing	Ready to Work	Project SEARCH
Spring (April-June)	Paid seasonal employment for post-secondary students	Co-op or begin paid employment
Summer (July, August)	Paid seasonal employment for high school students	Paid regular full or part-time employment
Ongoing	Some participants may be interested in ongoing part-time/casual roles but all return to school	

