Thinking about Employment Supports?

Are you an individual looking for support in finding meaningful employment and building independence in adulthood? The Integrated Post Secondary Education Society of Alberta (IPSESA) offers an employment service called GSS (Graduation Support Services).

What is GSS?

Our Graduate Support Services is an employment preparation & placement program. Our Employment Facilitators work with PDD clients on resume and cover letter development, interview prep, increasing employable skills, applying for employment and on job training and support.

What GSS does not provide:

- **Employment Placement:** We are not a placement agency and do not seek jobs on behalf of clients. Active participation in job searching is required from clients accepted into the program.
- **One-on-One Job Support:** We offer initial support and gradually reduce it as clients become independent in their roles. Regular check-ins will be provided during the employment term.

How do you apply for GSS?

GSS is not a guaranteed service for PDD clients. There are limited spots and often we receive more referrals than we have space available in the GSS program.

Application Timeline:

1. **January -** Contact PDD caseworker to express interest
2. **February** – PDD coordinates referrals and send to IPSESA office
3. **March** – Interview are conducted to assess suitability of clients
4. **April** – Acceptance or deferral letters are sent to candidates
5. **July –** Successful candidates start with IPSESA GSS program on July 1st

Frequently Asked Questions

How long is the GSS program?
Clients in GSS can receive services for up to 5 years. However, the specific length of time each client remains in GSS depends on their individual support needs, which are continuously evaluated. Clients may leave GSS services before reaching the 5-year maximum.

What if my son/daughter isn't sure about their career interests?
Our trained facilitators specialize in guiding students through all stages of career exploration. We utilize interest assessments, evaluate strengths and skills, organize job site visits, conduct informational interviews, and collaborate with the family to help identify potential career paths.

What type of jobs are available to graduates?
We offer a variety of job opportunities, including positions in retail, sports and entertainment, and office work. GSS facilitators work to match graduates with opportunities that align with their interests and career goals.

Do supports stop once you get a job?
No. Graduates will continue to receive weekly support focusing on job-specific skills and ISP goals.

Why do support decrease as my son/daughter becomes more independent in their job?
IPSESA promotes natural supports to foster inclusion and organic development. Our facilitators work closely with employers to create training plans that incorporate natural supports in the workplace. These plans are tailored to each individual's role and needs.

What if my son/ daughter needs workplace accommodations?
Our facilitators maintain regular communication with employers to assist with arranging necessary accommodations and to support career advancement opportunities as needed.

Does GSS guarantee employment opportunities and hours?
No, GSS does not guarantee employment or hours. We do not have contracts with employers or job allotments. Job availability and hours vary depending on the employer's needs.