



### Looking Closer into Local Unemployment

Unemployment rates in Transylvania County have been steadily decreasing over the past year. During the height of the COVID 19 shutdown (April 2020) the unemployment rate was a staggering **11.90% in Transylvania County**. It was during this time that TVS Employment Specialists had to put in-house evaluations on hold until the pandemic's restrictions had lifted. Instead, Employment Specialists began looking into new ways to assist the individuals receiving services through Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and TVS. A new service offered was Community Inclusion. TVS Employment Specialists also integrated Zoom education and exposure by using this technology for meetings. Individuals also practiced interviewing via Zoom. However; other services offered, like job development and job exploration, was still full steam ahead.

*Defining our Services*

- **Job Development:** includes resume building, going on job tours, participating in job sampling, job interviews, and assisting getting individuals hired in jobs of their choice.
- **Job Exploration:** includes learning about jobs available in the community, completing assessments to help determine what type of jobs individuals are interested in, and exploring job requirements. *Job Exploration* may also help individuals to begin developing a career pathway to work towards their "Dream Job"!

### Who are TVS Employment Specialists?

TVS Employment Specialists provide supports to Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) recipients as well as Long-Term Follow-Up recipients. These individuals have some form of barrier to employment that has been verified by Vocational Rehabilitation or by LME/MCO (VAYA Health).

### Where might you see us coaching in the community?

- TVS
- Dollar General
- Ingles
- EnMarket
- New Excelsior Inc
- Falls Landing
- Transylvania Hospital
- Food Matters Market



### TVS Employment Specialist have some great stats!

- An individual receiving Employment Services support has been at the same job for **15 years**.
- Another individual has been employed for **over 20 years** after receiving services from employment specialists.
- The average caseload for Employment Services is **50 individuals** at any given time!

### Mending Unemployment

Unemployment rates have since plummeted to 4.30% as reported in July 2021. The Employment Specialists have seen a surge in job placements around the community as testament to the changing work atmosphere in the county. This rejuvenation of the workforce has come with benefits as well:

- **pay rates higher compared to 2020**
- **businesses are more receptive to customized employment and willing to make more accommodations**

This is an unusual occurrence in the economy where there is high demand for employees and there are a large portion of individuals looking for competitive employment.

### Don't Give Up on Working!

Individuals wanting to work but are concerned about losing Social Security benefits can receive benefit counseling through VR to get a better understanding of how working may affect their benefits.



Individuals who are interested in receiving supports from TVS Employment Specialists should contact Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) to begin the approval process.

**Brevard VR:** 203 E Morgan St, Brevard NC **Phone:** (828)-883-2190

Compiled by TVS Employment Specialists

Visit <https://tvsinc.org/meaningful-employment/jobs-in-our-community> to learn more.