

Missouri Workshops: The State's Biggest Bargain?

What provides employment for more than 8,000 Missourians, works with hundreds of businesses across the state and serves people with developmental disabilities?

The answer is Missouri's approximately 100 sheltered workshops. But don't feel bad if you were slow with the answer. You're not alone.

Although Missouri sheltered workshops are among the best bargains in the state, they're not the most visible. One reason is their very success: Missouri's workshops use an "industrial model" built on business services. This not only builds important work ethic among workers with developmental disabilities, it also reduces dramatically the costs borne by taxpayers.

The way this works is how private business comes in. Missouri workshops provide services such as packaging and assembly, filling business needs in everything from recycling to maintenance, and even creating some original products for sale nationwide. The contracts for this work—the revenue that workshops receive from businesses and organizations—pay for the lion's share of overall workshop operations.

In other words, workshops earn revenue that covers much of their costs.

That means taxpayers don't have to pay for an expensive system, while communities across the state receive important services for people with developmental disabilities. On top of all this, workshop business services bring economic development by providing often critical business services that help their local economies prosper and grow.

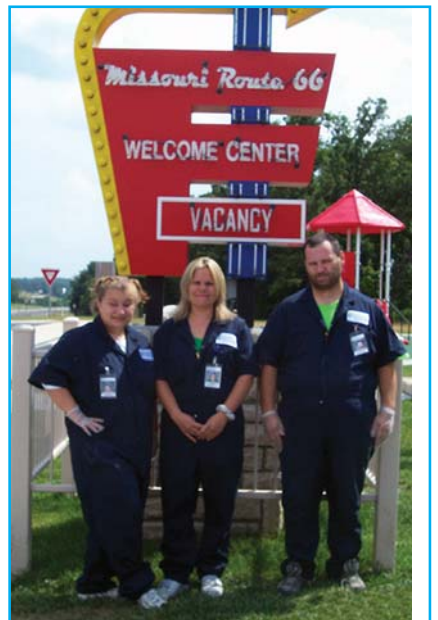
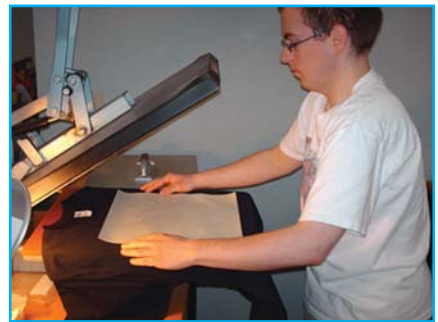
It's literally a win, win, win scenario!

I won't say all of this always operates perfectly. Workshops have been especially hard hit by foreign outsourcing. And, everything from health care to workman's compensation often brings a

double whammy for workshops and their workers.

But since 1966, Missouri's workshops have been providing services that would otherwise cost taxpayers millions

of dollars and guaranteeing employment opportunity for literally thousands of our residents. That truly is a bargain.



Community-Based Programs Collaborate for Widespread Goals

The Missouri Association of Sheltered Workshop Managers (MASWM) is unique among many professional groups with its emphasis on “bottom up” rather than “top down” priorities, leadership and even ongoing operations.

A big reason for this is the history of MASWM and its membership of nearly 100 workshops across the state.

The creation of services for people with developmental disabilities took a major step in the mid-1960s with a widespread grassroots effort. The work culminated in the 1965 SB 52 Sheltered Workshop Law and the 1969 voter authorization of SB 40. The latter allowed county-based tax levies to help fund such services.

These and other efforts came not from a state organization, but from grassroot parent and other organizations. The Missourians who founded and supported this legislation were the same people who founded and supported the creation of Missouri work-

shop and continue that service today.

The motivation was straightforward. These Missourians saw firsthand the need for a practical, community-based program to provide services for people with developmental disabilities—their sons and daughters who until the mid-60s were often under-served and unemployed. Typical of realistic, real-world Missourians, they focused first on employment as a key to providing sustainable, practical solutions.

That grassroots focus continues today in several ways. Workshop boards of directors, as well as county SB 40 boards, continue to be led by parents along with interested civic and business leaders. Workshops and partner organizations rely heavily on parents and interested volunteers for many of their efforts. Although professional staff is critical, workshops remain very much “local services by and for local residents.”

It’s a formula that is a proven winner for Missouri and Missourians.



Workshop services include contracts with individual businesses, as well as community wide programs such as recycling.

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Mission

Sheltered Workshops in Missouri share a common mission of providing dignified and meaningful employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

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Services for Businesses Include Huge Range of Abilities

Business services: providing an economic boost across the state and nationwide

Business and other services provided by Missouri's workshops include a wide range of outsourcing, custom and other important programs that save businesses money and make difficult projects possible.

Nearly every workshop in the state provides packaging, mailing, assembly and related services related to fulfillment and delivery. Because workshops offer these skills in an extremely flexi-

ble manner, often working with individual businesses to create custom programs, companies in effect have an on-demand expansion of capabilities.

Along with these traditional outsourcing programs, workshops also operate a number of on-demand efforts. These include award-winning maintenance of state facilities such as high-traffic, highway rest areas. Workshops have also successfully joined—and in many areas lead—the “green” revolution with recycling and other programs. These efforts continue the expansion of employment opportu-

nities for people with disabilities in communities throughout the state and also improve their communities while helping other businesses and organizations.

Many workshops also produce their own, original products. These range from first aid kits for pets or people to industrial wooden skids.

All of these programs provide ever increasing employment opportunities for Missourians with developmental disabilities. They also provide outstanding services to Missouri communities and the state as a whole.

Jobs, Training, Community Skills and More

Services for those with a developmental disability: employment and much more.

For more than 40 years, Missouri Sheltered Workshops have served as the hub for development of community-based services for people with disabilities and their families. Some of these community services and supports are:

Sheltered employment—Facility-based employment provides meaningful work experience based on the industrial model with support to accommodate individual needs.

Transitional employment—Work experience and skills development

designed to enable persons with disabilities to move from one work environment to another.

School to work—Sheltered employment to competitive employment; competitive employment to sheltered employment.

Supported employment—Work experience in a community-based, integrated environment with individual job coaching.

Competitive employment—Placement in regular industry with ongoing minimal support.

Transportation—Assistance in using existing public transit or provision of travel to and from work.

Behavioral Support—Accommodation and planned assistance for people with challenging behavior to enable them to better access work and community.

Skills development—Training in specific areas to acquire skills needed for work and community access.

Personal care assistance—Support staff to assist a person with a disability in personal activities of daily life (eating, dressing, etc.)

Advocacy and family support—Listening to the needs and wants of people with disabilities and their families and developing the support network to translate those needs and wants into meaningful services. This also includes development of self—

advocacy skills so people with disabilities and their families can advocate for themselves.

Group homes—Residential facilities where several persons with disabilities live together supported by staff.

Work and social adjustment—Programs designed to support people in the development of positive work and social behaviors which enable them to function more independently.

Day activities—Programs designed to support individual needs in an habilitative setting. Programs are not vocational in nature, but address skills development in the activities of daily living.

Assessment and evaluation—Systems designed to measure a person's level of functioning against established criteria and to predict future outcomes or design programs based on those findings.

Community integration—Planned opportunities to access the community with staff support.

Recreation—Leisure time activity opportunities.

Retirement options—Programs designed to meet individual needs to fill his or her leisure time with enjoyable, meaningful activities.

Residential options—Assistance and referral to group homes or independent living facilities.



Packaging and assembly are among the most widespread business services provided by workshops, but weighing, counting and sorting are also evident. Customers range from small businesses to Fortune 500 corporations.

Workshops Build On Solid Foundation

Although Missouri's nearly 100 sheltered workshops are community-based organizations that reflect the unique needs of their region, they also share important fundamental values:

- Missouri Sheltered Workshops are based on an industrial model of development rather than the medical model used in many states. We value individual work ethic, skills development and productivity. The industrial model of service delivery provides meaningful employment of people with disabilities through the production of goods and services for the private sector. The medical model of service delivery, through intensive staff support and programmed development, relies heavily on public funds, and provides day activities with secondary emphasis on meaningful work.

- Missouri workshops represent the most experienced employment specialists for people with disabilities in Missouri. In 1966, nine workshops provided employment for 300 people with disabilities. By 1997, 90 workshops provided work for nearly 9,000 people with disabilities.

- Missouri workshops have a solid track record of providing meaningful, dignified employment to persons with disabilities in the state. People with disabilities, employed by Missouri's workshops produce goods and services for Fortune 500 companies as well as small local businesses.

A partial list of contracts include work opportunities in electro-mechanical and manual assembly; custom, high speed packaging; automated and computerized inspection and quality control; custom mailing; commercial laundry and janitorial work; data entry; machine operation; wood, metal and plastics fabrication; document preservation; and entrepreneurial enterprises.

- Missouri workshops have been advocates for people with disabilities for over 40 years acting as a catalyst for development of other needed services and supports.

- Workshops are proven leaders in enabling people with disabilities to access a variety of vocational and personal options through direct service or

referral networks.

- Workshops were instrumental in the support and passage of voter authorized county tax levies to assist people with developmental disabilities (Senate Bill 40) which provides for continued support of the local workshop and

In just one year, Missouri sheltered workshops returned to the community \$6.05 for every \$1 of taxpayer money invested.

expanded service opportunities for people with disabilities in their local community. The founders and supporters of Missouri Sheltered Workshops were the same persons who founded and supported the companion legislation Senate Bill 40 (voter authorized county tax levies to assist people with developmental disabilities) which was passed to provide local support for workshops and group homes.

In 1996, the 80 Missouri counties that had Senate Bill 40 tax levies collected approximately \$42 million and provided nearly \$7 million to more than 45 workshops around the state. It is estimated that more than 25 percent of these funds are used for capital and equipment expenses.

Not all workshops receive Senate Bill 40 funds. Contact your local manager for more information. Senate Bill 52- (Sheltered Workshop Law) passed in 1965 (RSMo 178.900-178.960) and Senate Bill 40-(Voter authorized county tax levies to assist people with developmental disabilities) passed in 1969 (RSMo 205.968-205.972).

- Our workshops are community-based programs operated by local Boards of Directors responsive to the grassroots needs of their citizens with disabilities. Each workshop is unique to its own local community and circumstance. There are 90 Sheltered Workshops in Missouri governed by over 1,000 local citizens serving as volunteers on boards of directors responsive to the needs of their communities.

- In partnership with the State of Missouri, workshops collaborate to produce an outstanding return on investment for both taxpayers and people with disabilities. Through Missouri's investment of \$1.50 per hour per person, workshops provide services that otherwise would cost the taxpayer \$9.27 per hour per person providing a return on investment of 618 percent. And this includes a wide range of services beyond direct workshop employment and supported employment in the community: habilitation training, community integration and more.

- Working with business and industry, workshops are an integral part of their local economies. In 1996, Missouri Sheltered Workshops returned \$6.05 to the community for every \$1 of taxpayer money invested. Missouri Sheltered Workshops generated \$54,605,078 in sales. Sales, combined with local and state revenues and grants, contributed approximately \$79,181,645 back into local economies through payrolls and purchase of goods and services.

- Missouri Sheltered Workshops believe in the self worth of every person and their right to full participation in their local community, as they choose. Missouri workshops actively involve persons with disabilities in the community through mobile work crews, stations in industry, Adopt-a-Highway projects, participation in civic organizations, supported utilization of public transit, participation in community fairs, tours, open houses, volunteerism, Special Olympics, and other opportunities that intersect the natural flow of life.

- Through safe and productive employment, Missouri's workshops provide meaningful family support. VISION Missouri sheltered workshops were born of the dreams of families for the future of their sons and daughters. As successive generations have dreamed new dreams, we have been there to help make them a reality. Missouri Sheltered Workshops are committed to meeting the vision of the future for people with disabilities.

Missouri Sheltered Workshop Directory

Below is a list of Missouri sheltered workshops and their satellites by county, with contact information and manager's name where available. Counties without a workshop are shown as "none."

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