

HOST AGENCY & SITE SUPERVISOR

SCSEP

SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

HANDBOOK



National Able Network®

EDUCATION • EMPLOYMENT • OPPORTUNITY

WELCOME

SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

On behalf of National Able Network, I would like to welcome you to the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). We are thrilled to connect you with talented members of your community who can contribute to your organization's goals and mission.

For more than 40 years, our mission has been to help showcase the value mature workers bring to the workplace. Today, our work is more important than ever: Did you know that **more than 40 percent of people age 55 or older** are seeking work?

There are many benefits to host agencies that participate in the SCSEP program. Not only will your organization be contributing to your community by providing older workers opportunities to put their existing job skills to use and acquire new ones, your organization will also enjoy increased resource capacity. Our host agencies find that the addition of a SCSEP trainee allows the organization to utilize their existing resources more efficiently.

This SCSEP handbook will help guide you through the benefits of the program. You will also build an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a SCSEP participant. In addition, you will learn about how you can benefit from our network of program partners and host agencies.

When referencing this Host Agency Handbook, you should do so as a supplement to our Participant Handbook which is the foundation of our program policies. Both handbooks are regularly reviewed and updated. You should routinely reference our website www.NationalAble.org to access our most current SCSEP participant and host agency policies.

We look forward to hearing about your success!

Bridget Altenburg
President and CEO



**"I enjoy this job.
It's the grandest thing.
Before this job, I was
shy and withdrawn and
terrified of people. It's
helped me financially
and I have a lot more
confidence."**

—RT, former SCSEP Participant

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ABOUT NATIONAL ABLE NETWORK



NATIONAL ABLE NETWORK

National Able Network, Inc. (Able) is a leading non-profit organization serving most-in-need job seekers through innovative workforce development programming. Able specializes in administering workforce development programs for mature workers, military veterans, single heads of household, and individuals who have experienced long-term unemployment.

Able's best-practice re-employment strategies provide individuals with critical skills that help them in their current job search and throughout their participation in the workforce. Through its service footprint in both the Midwest and East Coast, Able serves approximately 75,000 job seekers annually. As a service provider for the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), Able serves approximately 1,600 low-income seniors who provide more than 850,000 working hours at hundreds of community-based organizations each year.

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SCSEP OVERVIEW



WHAT IS SCSEP?

The Senior Community Service Employment Program, or SCSEP (the “program”) is a federally-funded employment training program under the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) and the Employment and Training Administration (ETA). The program is governed by Title V of the Older Americans Act and was designed to support President Lyndon Johnson’s “War on Poverty” campaign in the 1960s. The program has been continuously funded since its inception and is a direct response to economic changes and loss of employment.

National Able Network, Inc. administers the SCSEP program on behalf of the DOL. It is the intent of Able to follow the spirit of local, state, and federal laws governing the Equal Employment Opportunity, including the SCSEP Final Rule, and comply with Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act requirements.

Able works collaboratively with community-based non-profit and government organizations, known as “host agencies” to provide SCSEP participants with training opportunities which update their skills and get them employment ready. We adhere to Equal Employment Opportunity principles, including recruitment and hiring, compensation, benefits, training, promotion, discipline, and all other terms and conditions of employment.

The SCSEP is designed to be used in conjunction with other programs and services. These programs are provided by public, private and not-for-profit agencies to create holistic services that maximize the goals and skills of SCSEP participants to achieve employment and economic self-sufficiency. Able has curated a network of trusted partners so that SCSEP participants can easily access trusted resources that help them to achieve their employment goals.

TODAY

Navigating today’s job market can be challenging for job seekers of all ages, but especially for mature workers. Many mature adults are not financially ready for retirement and must seek work in a market where their job skills are rapidly being outpaced by technological advances. Additionally, many older workers, especially women, find themselves seeking employment for the first time or re-entering the workforce after many years of not participating in the job market. In a rapidly changing environment, a skill gap is often created between mature workers and available job openings, and they must continuously update their skills if they wish to compete.

The SCSEP addresses existing and emerging trends by helping participants build the skills and qualifications needed to compete for jobs. Experience and current research reflect that mature adults can modernize and improve their skill levels in a wide range of activities. SCSEP participants create a job search plan that integrates hands-on work training with traditional learning and other support services. The ultimate outcome is that participants will develop skills and qualifications resulting in greater employability and increased chances of gaining unsubsidized employment and obtaining economic self-sufficiency.

Able works with participants to identify their employment barriers and help them overcome or diminish those barriers. Participants work with career coaches to undergo an initial assessment process and develop an employment plan. Thereafter, participants gain access to a wide range of training and supportive service opportunities. These opportunities are designed to enhance skills not only essential in entering employment but also necessary to retain a job and remain economically self-sufficient.

PROGRAM GOALS

The dual purpose of the SCSEP is to:

1. Help participants build skills and connections to employment opportunities in their community, and
2. Help participants achieve economic self-sufficiency through meaningful employment.

Participants will achieve these goals through a combination of on-the-job and instructional training, provided both directly by Able and with the help of Able's SCSEP collaborative partners. Other resources are available that will improve the participants' ability to contribute to the community or to an employer and ultimately become economically self-sufficient. Many participants will find that with these improved skills and experiences, they are more likely to achieve their skill development and employment goals. Able is proud to offer SCSEP participants with specially-designed opportunities including resume writing and interviewing skills, basic computer skills, employment workshops, and more.

Our offerings are designed to help SCSEP participants meet their employment goals and:

- Upgrade, add, or maintain job skills
- Provide added income during training
- Promote community involvement and networking opportunities
- Provide their local community with needed support

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GETTING TO KNOW YOUR TRAINEE

SCSEP Participants are mature job seekers in your community who are experiencing obstacles to unsubsidized employment due to skill gaps and/or other barriers. These workers are seeking to eliminate their employment obstacles by enhancing their existing skills. They hope to do this skill enhancement through technical and hands-on training that simulate the in-demand skills currently sought by employers in their local job market. Through the SCSEP, job seekers obtain these skills through community service opportunities provided by our community partners, like you, that host SCSEP participants.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for the SCSEP, job seekers must meet several eligibility requirements including, but not limited to, the following:

- Be 55 years of age or older
- Meet income qualifications
- Be unemployed
- Reside in a National Able service area with available funding
- Be willing to provide community service and attend required meetings and training
- Be willing to develop a personalized “Individual Employment Plan” (IEP)
- Be willing to use all available resources that assist in job searches and economic self-sufficiency

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SCSEP PROGRAM DETAILS

ONBOARDING

During the first few weeks of training, it is expected that your participant (“trainee”) will be on a learning curve and adjusting to their new training environment. Since it takes some time to adjust, we recommend thoughtfulness when assigning to them time-sensitive tasks at the beginning of their training assignment. After this onboarding period, you should expect that your trainee is becoming more comfortable with their training assignment and is completing tasks without constant direct supervision. Within a short time, they will be a strong asset to your team.

Participants should be encouraged to feel comfortable asking questions and seeking assistance from their supervisor and others in your organization.

TASKS AND ACTIVITIES

Prior to beginning their training assignment, the SCSEP participants work with their host agency site supervisor and their career coach to identify the tasks and activities they should expect to perform during their assignment, and they will document them on a Task and Activities Form. This form outlines their specific areas of training, the training schedule, and the role of their supervisor. Participants will train with their supervisor and attend other career coach authorized skill-building program activities (e.g. computer training) for approximately 10-25 hours per week.

In the event of changes to the original assignment, the career coach will revise the Tasks and Activities Form to better reflect any modifications to the participant’s activities.

INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYMENT PLAN (IEP)

Prior to initiating their training assignment, participants work with their career coach and receive an assessment of their employment needs. Once assessments are complete, the participant and coach build the participant’s Individual Employment Plan (IEP). The IEP serves as the participant’s personal roadmap to success and is designed to identify the steps the participant will take to eliminate the barriers to their employment. Once the participant’s IEP is developed, the career coach works with a host agency to develop a community service assignment tailored to the participant’s IEP goals¹. In addition to their CSA, participants must attend regular program meetings and workshops that provide training on goal-setting, job searches and related topics. They are also encouraged to attend third-party skills training identified by their coach as appropriate for their development. The participant’s career coach will provide the host agency supervisor with prior notice of these activities.

¹Career coaches and participants are prohibited from sharing the IEP with host agency personnel.

COMMUNITY SERVICE ASSIGNMENT (CSA)

Community service assignments (CSAs) are the heart of the SCSEP program. During the program, in order to build the skills necessary to be successful in obtaining and retaining unsubsidized employment, participants receive a training assignment with a host agency. In return for training, the host agency wages are paid directly by National Able network to the participant. All host agencies are community-based organizations, government agencies, or nonprofits that have partnered with us to provide SCSEP participants with the opportunity to obtain specific skills required to achieve their personal and professional goals and, ultimately, unsubsidized employment. Training in a realistic job environment provides learning and feedback which contribute to a participant's long-term success.

The following documents must be on file with Able before the participant may begin their assignment:

- A **Host Agency Application** for each training site confirming nonprofit status and funding sources,
- A **Host Agency Agreement** outlining the terms of the host agency relationship,
- A **Supervisor's In-Kind Wage Funding Statement** which provides the supervisor's hourly wage and the source of funding. This information is critical as it provides the basis of Able's reporting of in-kind matching as required for compliance with the federal grant,
- A **Host Agency Safety Checklist** to be completed by the career coach for each host agency site location. The purpose of the site inspection is to ensure that the participant's working conditions are safe and sanitary, and
- A **Task and Activities Form** outlining the participant's specific areas of training, training schedule and the role of the supervisor.

CAREER COACH

All SCSEP participants are assigned an Able career coach who is responsible for assisting them with identifying their personal and employment goals and providing them ongoing employment counseling. The coaches work closely with a network of outreach partners and community-based host agencies to identify quality skill-enrichment activities that will result in transferrable employment skills and, ultimately, opportunities for participants to obtain unsubsidized employment. The career coach also collaborates with the host agency to develop the participant's training assignment, manage the relationship between the participant and the host agency, and to ensure host agency satisfaction.

SITE SUPERVISOR'S ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Site supervisors play a critical role in preparing SCSEP participants for employment and economic independence. The SCSEP participant will rely on their supervisor to provide day-to-day support needed to be successful on their training assignment and to help them build the skills and behaviors they need to obtain and retain unsubsidized employment. The supervisors are also Able's host agency key contact and representative for the participants who's training they are supervising.

The following are some of the Able's expectations of a site supervisor:

- Read the National Able Network SCSEP Participant Handbook and review its policies with the SCSEP participant.
- Participate in the host agency site supervisor orientation provided by the participant's career coach.
- Provide adequate orientation to your organization, including a tour of your facilities, and necessary guidance on your organizational policies and the participant's training assignment activities.
- Retain a copy of the participant's Task & Activities Form. Supervisors are not authorized to change participant's duties or training conditions without the written authorization of their career coach.
- Provide a safe and sanitary training environment and give the participant necessary safety instruction. This includes the same, if any, operational and safety procedural training that host agency employees are required to obtain. Any accidents must be reported immediately to the career coach after taking the necessary steps to ensure the health and safety of the participant.
- Host agencies and their personnel must adhere to local, state and federal laws against discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, handicap, age, political affiliation or opinion, or ancestry in accordance with all Local, State and Federal Law.
- Attend an annual meeting of site supervisors as scheduled by SCSEP.
- Ensure that participants do not engage in any partisan or nonpartisan political activity, or work to promote a specific religious belief, during their training time.
- Participants may not train more than eight (8) hours in a 24-hour period or 40 hours in a week. Ensure that the participant only trains the total number of hours authorized by their career coach and prohibit the participant from training overtime or volunteer hours. SCSEP will not pay any hours trained in excess of those authorized.
- Participants may never be the only individual present at their assigned worksite, and they may never be given responsibility to open or close your facility.
- Federal regulations forbid a person who works in a decision-making capacity (whether compensated or not) to supervise immediate family members. This policy applies to National Able staff, Participants, and any other individuals receiving wages (directly or indirectly) from the program.
- Prohibit participants from supervising staff, including other participants.
- Enforce the provisions of the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988.
- Recognize that the participant is not a volunteer, but is a trainee paid by National Able Network.
- Immediately report any problems with the participant with their career coach.

TRAINING SCHEDULE

The participant's host agency site supervisor will work with the career coach to develop a training schedule for the participant. A typical training week for a participant consists of a 10-25-hour week and periodic hours adjustments by the career coach to ensure equivalent hours per two-week pay period.

SCSEP encourages innovative training environments that provide more flexibility for participants than may otherwise be expected of the host agency's staff. This includes time flexibility to ensure that the participant has opportunity to attend supplemental training and enrichment programs authorized by the career coach. Participants and site supervisors must consult with the career coach prior to making any changes to the training assignment schedule or activities to ensure ongoing alignment with the participant's goals, skills and abilities. Federal, state and local rules regarding breaks must be followed, and break time may not be considered paid training time.

TRAINING ASSIGNMENT SITE ROTATION

All training assignments at host agencies are temporary skill-building activities for the participant designed to prepare them for greater self-sufficiency. SCSEP may rotate Participants to other host agencies to enable them to receive training for additional skills. Such a rotation is likely when the participant has completed their learning objectives and opportunities within the CSA, or when IEP goals may not be achieved through the training assignment.

MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT AGREEMENT

Host agencies cannot use SCSEP participants to reduce or supplant their efforts to maintain current operational level. Participants may be given training assignments that constitute new or expanded services and is not a violation of maintenance of effort regulations of the U.S. Department of Labor.

- Training activities of SCSEP participants may not replace those of staff responsibilities required for the organization to function and, therefore, should be performed by host agency personnel.
- Participants are trainees and they may only perform in a capacity that supports or enhances the activities of existing host agency personnel. Participants may not be assigned to regularly-scheduled activities that are critical to your operations.
- Onboarding the participant must not result in the displacement of currently employed workers, including partial displacement such as reduction in hours of non-overtime work, wages or employment benefits.
- The host agency may not employ or continue to employ a trainee to perform work the same or substantially the same as that performed by any other person who is on layoff.
- Positions funded by SCSEP must result in an increase in employment opportunities over those which would otherwise be available.
- Participant's activities may not impair existing contracts for service or result in the substitution of federal funds for other funds in connection with work that would otherwise be performed.
- Host agencies may not substitute program jobs for existing federally-assisted jobs.

TRAINEES ARE NOT EMPLOYEES

It is important to remember that SCSEP participants are trainees on a community service assignment. At times, it can become difficult to distinguish between a job and training, but participants are not employees of any organization – they are trainees obtaining job skills. Be mindful when using terms such as “staff” or “boss” when referring to participants. We rely on you to reinforce the trainer / trainee relationship as much as possible with the SCSEP participant and your team.

HOST AGENCY JOB OPENINGS

We request that SCSEP participants be considered for all job openings for which they are qualified. Subject to the host agency’s hiring procedures, if a position becomes available for which the participant is qualified, the host agency must provide the participant the opportunity for hire. Failure to consider a SCSEP participant for an appropriate opening will result in termination of the host agency agreement. Should a position become available, the site supervisor must assist the SCSEP Participant in completing documentation to apply for the open position.

TIME SHEETS AND PAYROLL

Once completed by the participant, the site supervisor is required to accurately approve community service hours on the time sheet. Supervisors must include in-kind supervisory hours - typically 10-20 percent of the participant’s hours. Timesheets must be reviewed and approved via our Paycom® system (www.paycom.com). We also require that all host agencies provide an actual or average hourly host agency supervisor wage. Department of Labor regulations require that SCSEP providers obtain this information.

TIME OFF & ABSENCES

Participants are responsible for notifying their site supervisor and career coach if they are going to arrive late or be absent from their assignment. If the participant requires more than three (3) consecutive days off from their assignment, the participant must complete a Time Off Request Form and submit it to their career coach. Any deviation from a participant’s scheduled hours at a host agency requires approval from the career coach.

Please refer to the Participant Handbook for more specific guidance on participant time off.

OVERTIME

Overtime hours are not authorized. Compensation will not be provided training hours in excess of eight (8) hours in a 24-hour period. Host agencies are prohibited from providing any supplemental compensation to the participants. SCSEP Participants may not volunteer at their host agency.

SAFETY AT THE HOST AGENCY

Able prioritizes the safety and welfare of SCSEP participants. No task is so urgent that time cannot be taken to do it safely. Participants and host agency site supervisors must exercise caution and reasonable judgment to prevent accidents. To ensure a safe training environment for SCSEP participants, host agencies are required to assist with the completion of a Safety Checklist and to observe the following:

- Immediately seek first aid for any injuries to the participant, however minor it may appear.
- Within 24 hours, report any injury to the participant's career coach and work with the participant and any applicable witnesses will complete an Accident Report Form. The form can be completed on-site, or over the telephone with a SCSEP Representative.
- Adhere to the participant's assignment training description responsibilities.
- Do not instruct the participant to lift more than 15 lbs, climb ladders, use power tools or operate any vehicle or heavy equipment on behalf of the host agency.
- Participants are not permitted to use their personal vehicle to perform host agency activities.
- Provide appropriate personal protective equipment required for the task being performed
- Encourage the participant to report to you any potentially unsafe conditions, equipment, or practices.
- Invite the participant to attend safety training sessions provided by the host agency.

The participant will exercise good judgment during inclement weather to decide whether it is prudent to travel to the host agency. The fact that the host agency may be open or nearby should never be the determining factor. The participant will notify their site supervisor and career coach when inclement weather will prevent them from arriving to training.

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK

National Able Network does not utilize Criminal Background Checks prior to the enrollment of a Participant into the program or placement at a host agency. Host agencies are encouraged to follow their organizational policies regarding criminal background check requirements. If required, host agencies may request and obtain a background check at the participant's discretion and the host agency's cost. Able is not responsible for the performance or cost associated with criminal background checks or drug screenings.

QUARTERLY AND ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

Upon request, site supervisor must provide quarterly and annual reviews of the participant's performance.

SURVEYS

The host agency may be asked to complete a survey sponsored by National Able Network and/or the Department of Labor. We kindly request that you timely respond and return the survey as instructed.

5 WHEN TO CONTACT NATIONAL ABLE

You must contact the participant's career coach in the event of an emergency or a major change to the host agency or training situation including the following:

- Your organizational class changes (e.g. 501(c)(3) to for-profit)
- The SCSEP participant's site supervisor changes
- There are changes in the hourly wage of supervisors and source of wages (federal vs. non-federal)
- If you need the participant to do a task that is not included on their Tasks & Activities Form
- If you have any disciplinary issues with a participant
- An accident or emergency occurs involving a participant
- You can no longer meet the terms of your Host Agency Agreement

If you are unable to reach the career coach, you may contact our helpdesk at (855) 994-8300 or email us at able@nationalable.org.

NATIONAL ABLE NETWORK, INC.

National Able Network is a nonprofit organization working to serve individuals, families, and communities by bringing together qualified job seekers and businesses. Since its founding in 1977 through a grant from The Chicago Community Trust, Able's experienced, multicultural professionals have provided training, personal skills, and job-search techniques that help people enter or re-enter the workforce as quickly and as easily as possible. Our mission is clear:

**Preparing Today's Communities to Meet Tomorrow's Challenges
through Education, Employment, and Opportunity**

For more information, please visit our website:

www.nationalable.org or call our toll-free number 855.994.8300.



The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) of Illinois is funded by a U.S. Department of Labor grant administered by the Illinois Department on Aging. Services are provided locally by National Able Network. We follow the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity in all aspects of employment, including recruitment and hiring, compensation, benefits, training, promotion, discipline, and all other terms and conditions of employment. It is the intent of Able to follow the letter and spirit of local, state, and federal laws governing Equal Employment Opportunity. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.