

# Module 7: Self-Employment and Public Benefit Work Supports



Welcome! Module 7, **Self-Employment and Public Benefit Work Supports**, introduces participants to employment opportunities, including self-employment and public benefit work supports.

## Objectives

- Learn about rights and responsibilities.
- Learn about small business development.
- Review Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program SNAP / Food Stamps and Housing and Urban Development (HUD) work supports.
- Review PESS: Property Essential to Self-Support.
- Discuss the Alternative Finance Project and Assistive Technology loans.
- Learn how to purchase a reliable vehicle.
- Learn about local success stories.

## Value of This Module

**Myth:** People with disabilities cannot own their own business.

**Reality:** People who have a disability can own a business. Self-employment for people with disabilities can be an employment option that helps the person work to their fullest capacity and reach financial wellness.

# MODULE 7: SELF-EMPLOYMENT AND PUBLIC BENEFIT WORK SUPPORTS

## FACILITATOR PREPARATION



### Facilitator Preparation

Prior to this workshop, the facilitator should review the following:

- **Social Security Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) Information for 2022**
- **Illinois Department of Human Services Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) SNAP Benefits**
- **Illinois Department of Human Services SNAP Eligibility Calculator**
- **Social Security Code Of Federal Regulations**
- **Social Security Program Operations Manual System (POMS)**
- **Property Essential to Self-Support (PESS)**
- **Quick Reference Guide: Entrepreneurship**
- **Illinois Small Business Development Centers (SBDC)**
- **Illinois Assistive Technology Program**
- **Choosework.SSA.Gov**
- **Job Accommodation Network entrepreneurship hub for people with disabilities**

Complete all activities in Module 7 to familiarize yourself with each activity. Please note: Items marked with an \* indicate this is an annual figure that could change each year, as announced by SSA.

### Gather

- Laptop and LCD projector
- Sign-in sheet
- Easel pad and easel
- Markers
- PowerPoint presentation (*Make copies\* if you would like to distribute to attendees.*)
- Agenda (*Make copies if you would like to distribute to attendees.*)
- Activities (*Make copies of activity handouts.*)
- Homework assignment (*Make copies.*)
- Evaluation (*Make copies.*)

*\*Don't forget large print copies, in size 20 font, if requested.*

# MODULE 7: SELF-EMPLOYMENT AND PUBLIC BENEFIT WORK SUPPORTS

## PRE- AND POST-TEST EVALUATION



Location of session: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of session: \_\_\_\_\_










Trainers: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

Participant type (please check one):  
 Person with a developmental disability  
 Parent  
 Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

Participant name (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

**Please complete this section BEFORE the beginning of this training session.**










### 1. How much do you know about the following topics?

	I don't know anything about this.	I know a little about this.	I know a lot about this.
a. Small business help			
b. Help with food and housing			
c. Business tools			












**The remainder of the form will be completed at the end of this training.**

2. How much do you know about the following topics?

	I don't know anything about this.	I know a little about this.	I know a lot about this.
a. Small business help			
b. Help with food and housing			
c. Business tools			

3. Please tell us how you felt about the following parts of the training.

	It was OK.	It was really good.	It was great.
a. The information that I learned			
b. The way the training was organized			
c. The activities			

What is one thing you learned today?

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Based on what you learned today, what is one thing that you are going to do to take more control of your money? \_\_\_\_\_

I would recommend this training to others. \_\_\_ yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_ maybe

**Thank you for your feedback!**

# MODULE 7: SELF-EMPLOYMENT AND PUBLIC BENEFIT WORK SUPPORTS

## AGENDA



Introduction .....	10 Minutes
PowerPoint Presentation.....	30 Minutes
• Rights and Responsibilities	
• Micro Enterprise / Self Employment	
• SSA Self-Employment Work Supports	
• Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Work Supports	
• Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Work Supports	
• Property Essential to Self-Support (PESS)	
• Reporting Earnings	
• Assistive Technology and the Illinois Alternative Finance Project	
• Vehicle Purchase	
BREAK.....	15 Minutes
Making Connections in Your Community.....	30 Minutes
Homework Assignment and Wrap-up.....	10 Minutes
Evaluation and Closing.....	5 Minutes

**REMINDER:** Please distribute part one of the Module 7 evaluation now during the introduction. Be sure to have the participants complete the second half of the evaluation at the end of the session.

# MODULE 7: SELF-EMPLOYMENT AND PUBLIC BENEFIT WORK SUPPORTS

## SCRIPT FOR TRAINER



### Introduction (10 Minutes)

Script for Trainer (corresponding PowerPoint Presentation attached)

My name is \_\_\_\_\_. Welcome to Financial Wellness Training.

Today's session will focus on self-employment and public benefit work supports, assistive technology and accommodations, the Illinois Alternative Financing Program and vehicle purchase. When starting and growing a small business, it is important to be aware of special income reporting requirements and supports that will help you save money to meet your goals. Many people who have a disability find that by working for themselves, they can earn more money and work hours that accommodate their needs.

### PowerPoint Presentation (30 Minutes)

Script for Trainer (*Continue corresponding PowerPoint Presentation Module 7.*)

#### Rights and Responsibilities

It is everyone's right and responsibility to work in an effort to provide more options for saving money and owning assets that have value and provide security. SSA disability beneficiaries can work for a business or start their own business. By using the work supports available through the SSA and public benefits, people can take steps to plan, fully save money and successfully leave benefits when and if they are ready. Accommodations and assistive technology (AT) can help people improve the quality of their lives. [askjan.org/index.cfm](http://askjan.org/index.cfm).

**Microenterprise Development Self-Employment:** The definition of microenterprise is a business having five or fewer employees and start-up capital typically of less than \$35,000.

Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) provide help to people who want to start or grow their own business. Help includes business consulting, education, training, and information systems that deliver resources, tools and management structure. People who work closely with an instructor can learn how their business idea can help them earn money, pay business expenses and save money for the future.

**Entrepreneurship/Self-Employment/Small Business Ownership:** It is exciting for people with disabilities to realize their full potential while becoming financially self-supporting. Some benefits of self-employment may include working from home, controlling work schedules, allowing accommodations to meet the person's needs, the possibility of reducing transportation costs and freedom to make decisions. Many people decide that working for an employer as an employee, on a regular pay schedule with regular income, is a better choice. You can ask for help to decide what might work best for you given your interest, ability and community supports.

SBDCs and local Chamber of Commerce offices sponsor small business training that helps people explore options, become aware of competitors, network with partners, set market strategies and develop sound business plans. Business plans are essential to know how much is needed to survive and how much income the business will produce. Business plans are also necessary requirements when applying for a business loan, a grant or for a Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS), as covered in Module 6.

**The Illinois Small Business Development Centers** offer:

- One-on-one business advice and management assistance.
- Assistance with the development of business plans.
- Help with accessing market information and the development of marketing plans.
- Assistance with accessing business financing programs.
- Assistance with financial analysis and planning.
- Access to business education and training opportunities.
- Specialized services in technology, innovation and entrepreneurial development.

Education, including small business training, is seen as an asset that can help people qualify for financial products to start or grow a business to reach goals.

For those who receive SSI and/or SSDI benefits, there are specific work supports that can help people increase their earnings and develop their business while continuing to receive disability benefits. Beneficiaries are encouraged to work closely with a benefits counselor, a Community Work Incentives Coordinator (CWIC) or Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) to become aware of help available and how to report their income to Social Security. Employment Networks (EN) usually have benefits counselors on staff or they can refer you. You can find a local benefits counselor or employment network at [choosework.ssa.gov](http://choosework.ssa.gov).

The **Chicagoland Entrepreneurship Education for People with Disabilities (CEED)** project is an interdisciplinary effort to help and support people with disabilities in pursuing entrepreneurship as a pathway to employment.

For self-employment resources and more information, visit **National Disability Institute's Quick Reference Guide: Entrepreneurship** and the **Job Accommodation Network's entrepreneurship hub for people with disabilities**.

## Activity # 1: Success Story

*[Trainer should disseminate the case example “A Wheelchair and an Ice Cream Cart – A Winning Combination” and ask for participant comments.]*

### Case Example: “A Wheelchair and an Ice Cream Cart—Winning Combination”

Lacey Jean is not just a valuable member of the workforce -- she is now an entrepreneur! She has started her own ice cream stand.

Lacey is considered to be someone with significant disabilities. She has cerebral palsy which affects her ability to speak and walk. She relies on body language to communicate, and she uses a wheelchair to move from one place to another. The 23-year-old, who weighs in at around 70 pounds, also has an optimistic attitude.

At first, Lacey’s mother, Dee, was upset when she learned the State wanted her daughter to develop a plan to enter the workforce. But now she supports the plan: “She shows me every day that she is a lot more capable than I thought.”

Lacey owns a very successful Italian ice pushcart business. During her first three months of operation beginning in July 2007, and working weekends only, she grossed \$12,000.

“We learned a lot, fast,” states Larry, her step-dad. “We’ll do a lot better next year, but we even paid our employees a few bonuses this summer.”

Lacey’s goal? To be debt-free by the end of her second season.

From her wheelchair, Lacey works hard at fairs and events, offering free samples. Using a simple color cue — red Mylar balloons on her sample tray, and red Mylar balloons at her Italian ice cart — she draws customers. At the cart, employees scoop the super popular frozen treat, which she purchases from Little Jimmy’s Italian Ices ([italianice.net](http://italianice.net)) in Washington. After a taste, the Italian ice product sells itself — it’s non-fat, non-dairy and has no high fructose corn syrup.

“The flavor’s intense, and this is something you can’t get in stores,” says Larry. “It’s the kind of treat people look for next year when they come to the fair again.”

In the van she purchased to transport her business, Lacey has room for a therapy table, where she can stretch out every few hours. As her budget permits, she is adding her own branding to the van, labeling it with the Lacey Jean Enterprises logo.

How did Lacey find the pushcart business?

“There was an ad in a local business paper, and I had been looking for something that would connect our daughter with a lot of people,” Larry recalls. This successful business is a perfect fit for Lacey, who is friendly and outgoing, and she plans to hire others who are disabled as her business grows. Lacey joined the local Chamber of Commerce and plans to sell Italian ice year-round now, at openings, festivals and concerts.”



“Little Jimmy’s is a great partner,” says Larry. “They make suggestions about ways to market, send us lists of shows and they’re always there for us when we have questions.”

Lacey’s first real signs of success came this summer at a Fourth of July fair. For two hours, Lacey Jean Enterprises had a solid line of customers. Total sales were over \$1,700 for five to six hours of work.

At one festival, the crowd was so large, Lacey ran out of ice, and the crew had to run for more. The company has two high school seniors, Britta and Kaila, who work for \$8.50 per hour, scooping and taking cash.

To help her business, the state connected Lacey with a nonprofit training and technical assistance organization. James Corey, of WISE, says the innovative partnership has won national recognition from the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) as a leader in employment of people with disabilities. The organization is part of a network of training and support, both public and private, across the country.

Lacey Jean Enterprises, and other businesses owned by people with disabilities, are part of the microenterprise movement. Self-employment is growing over 20 percent annually across America, with an estimated 20 million Americans owning home-based businesses. Between 1990 and 1994, microenterprise generated 43 percent of all new jobs in the United States. Over the last decade, 60 percent were founded by women. In fact, these businesses created more jobs than all the companies listed in Fortune 500.

Cary Griffin, Senior partner at Griffin-Hammis Associates, a consultancy for networking business opportunity, says, “There is a cultural and economic shift of taking individual responsibility and turning it into individual opportunity, and it appears to be largely unaffected by swings in the larger economy.”

Companies such as Griffin-Hammis Associates offer training and support programs for individuals with disabilities seeking to start a business or get into the workforce. The company networks clients who are individuals with disabilities with government agencies and private specialists to find ways to make entrepreneurship possible.

Experience has taught them that there are no tests or professional evaluations that can tell them who will succeed in business. Rather, personal commitment and a strong support group can be the best indicators that a person with a disability will succeed.

Lacey is outstanding and she has an outstanding family.

“Not everyone who comes to us for help goes this far. Our goal is to put individuals with disabilities on a path to employment, getting them out of sheltered workshops and integrated into the community. Lacey is someone everyone should meet.”

## **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Work Supports**

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), or what used to be referred to as Food Stamps, provides work supports.

When determining SNAP eligibility, all unearned and earned income, including cash assistance, unemployment, child support and Social Security payments are calculated. Most SNAP recipients work.

SNAP allows for special considerations when people work. For example, when a person works, the SNAP eligibility calculation considers income, work expenses, cost of child care when needed to work and a 20 percent deduction for earned income. It is important to remember that an Income Tax Refund and Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) do not count toward income when determining SNAP eligibility.

Use the [Application for Benefits Eligibility \(ABE\)](#) to apply for SNAP, cash or medical assistance - online, anytime.

As a result of the SNAP benefit calculation rules, SNAP households are financially better off if they are able to work and increase their earnings. When a person works, their SNAP amount may change; but overall, they have more money to reach their goals.

Many other public benefit work supports utilize SNAP eligibility as the determining factor for continued eligibility. These public benefits include the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) for utility assistance; Child Care Subsidy or Dependent care subsidy to help cover child-care or adult day care; WIC for nutrition supplement for women, infants and children; and Weatherization and Home modification. Ask your case manager or reach out to SNAP to help determine if you are eligible for these programs.

[Online SNAP Eligibility Calculator.](#)

Illinois even offers a [SNAP Employment and Training Program](#). The program is designed to provide short-term training, work assignments, resume writing and interview classes and can help people obtain their GED.

Supportive Service Payments - You may qualify for supportive service payments when you take part in SNAP employment and training program activities. Supportive service payments help people with work-related expenses such as transportation or special clothing expenses.

## **Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Work Supports**

In Module 5, we had a chance to learn about how HUD can help people rent or purchase a home. As a review, when a person's income goes up, there are savings programs available through the Family Self-sufficiency (FSS) program that allow the person to save the increase in rent payment in a savings account. Some programs allow for a 1:1 match to assist people in meeting their financial independence goals in the future. There are also Supportive Housing and Home Buyer Programs with 4:1 match savings accounts and housing opportunities for people with disabilities. These savings accounts do not count towards Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Medicaid eligibility until the month the person is given their savings/disbursement.

**Please note:** It is very important to let your housing counselor know when you get a job, as soon as possible. You may be able to sign up for the FSS program at that time and put any additional rent toward your goals in a FSS account. The person can have their savings when their goals are met, as agreed upon in their plan.

You may be eligible to receive help to rent an apartment or purchase a home. You can sign up for housing assistance now or at any time. There may be a long waiting list. When it is your turn, be ready to explore your options for housing assistance. To find our local HUD office, go to [hud.gov/states/Illinois](http://hud.gov/states/Illinois).

Another thing to remember is that as an SSI beneficiary earns SSA quarters of coverage, for each \$1,510\* they earn a quarter, they could become eligible for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits and SSDI work supports in the future.

**HUD or Foster Grandparent Service Positions:** People who live in HUD housing may wish to apply for service positions with their HUD housing facility and qualify for stipend payments. HUD service position availability varies from office to office. It may be a good way to test the ability to work. A stipend of less than \$200 per month does not count towards income related to rent subsidy, SSI and/or SSDI benefits. You can ask your HUD worker or the local Office for the Aging if you are interested in learning what type of positions may be available.

## Social Security Administration Work Supports

### Property Essential to Self-Support (PESS) and Self-Employment

Property Essential to Self-Support (PESS) is an SSI work incentive. It can be approved to help a person own tools and equipment needed for a business. The business items are not included in the resource limit of \$2,000 for an individual. This helps the person stay eligible for their SSI. Therefore, PESS becomes an important strategy that can help advance self-sufficiency. SSA provides information regarding PESS at:

[disability-benefits-help.org/glossary/property-essential-to-self-support](http://disability-benefits-help.org/glossary/property-essential-to-self-support).

### Examples of PESS

- Property you own and use in a business such as a farm, a machine shop, or a beauty parlor
- Personal property you use for work such as tools, uniforms or safety equipment
- Property you use to produce the product that you sell

### PESS Plans

SSI will not count up to \$6,000 of equity value of non-business property which is used to produce goods or services (Example: Land used to provide food for personal use).

SSI will not count up to \$6,000 of equity value of non-business income producing property if the property yields an annual rate of return of at least six percent.

**Example:** Sharon owns a loom to make rugs. The equipment is valued at \$7,000. Her equity is \$5,000 since she still owes \$2,000 on the loom. Her net earnings from self-employment are \$400. Sharon's equity is under the \$6,000 limit for property essential to

self-support, and her income (\$400) is greater than six percent of her equity. Her income-producing property, the loom, is excluded from her resource limit.

If you had a business raising chickens, what tools and things would you need? A shovel, a watering bucket, a rake, a wheel barrel and a chicken coop. A person could purchase these things and own them with the PESS work support.

## **Social Security Administration (SSA) Self-Employment Work Supports and Reporting Earnings**

### **SSA Self-Employment Work Supports and Reporting Earnings**

SSA has other supports in place which allow for deductions from net earnings from self-employment (NESE) for unpaid help and unincurred business expenses. Although these deductions are “not incurred” or paid for by the individual with the disability and are not allowable expenses from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), they would nevertheless decrease the NESE if paid. A brief description and examples are as follows:

- Unpaid Help: Help which is provided by family members, friends or others who work without being paid. SSA generally determines the value of the uncompensated services by using prevailing wages as shown at <https://www.bls.gov/oes/>.
- Unincurred Business Expenses are contributions by others to the business effort and includes items or services which would be allowable by the IRS as a legitimate business expense if paid. Examples include the following:
  - Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) pays for a computer or other equipment used in the business
  - A local organization pays for start-up equipment for a business
  - Free rent provided by an organization, friend or more commonly by VR

Both unpaid help and unincurred business expenses are used when the SSA makes substantial gainful activity determinations. It is important that an SSI and/or SSDI beneficiary report this type of unpaid help to SSA so they are aware of this. This is another work support that can allow a person to stay eligible for their SSI and or SSDI benefits longer and helps the person pay for items and save money.

### **Activity #2**

*[Trainer asks the group ...]*

1. Have you ever met with a CWIC/WIPA/Benefits Counselor to learn about what work supports can help you?
2. If you receive SSI and own a business, what tools or equipment would you need to own or purchase to complete your work?
3. What did you learn?

After the break, we are going to hear a presentation from a Benefits Counselor and learn more about the services available to you.

## Assistive Technology / Accommodations

Assistive technology (AT) is technology used by individuals with disabilities to accomplish daily activities that might otherwise be difficult or impossible. Examples include a smart phone, computer, modified vehicle, hearing aid, glasses, vision aid and smart home technology to set the heat or air conditioner. What AT do you use? Is there AT that could help you at home or on a job?

The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) provides information regarding AT and accommodations that may help individuals with disabilities function more independently with activities of daily living, education and work, significantly increasing their quality of life. For example, a person may use a smart phone as a guide to completing job tasks in a timely manner. Another person may benefit from a screen reader to help them to understand information on their computer. Someone else may need a home modification for an accessible bathroom to make it easier for them to shower. A modified kitchen may make it easier for a person to prepare meals. A wheelchair ramp may help a person enter and exit their home and get to their job.

JAN lists examples of communication devices, personal assistance services, product listings to help with cognitive impairments, deaf/hard of hearing impairments, motor impairment devices, vision aids, service animals, speech recognition, two-way radios and other items at [askjan.org/a-to-z.cfm](http://askjan.org/a-to-z.cfm). Additional information is available at: [atpdc.wordpress.com](http://atpdc.wordpress.com).

Sometimes, school systems, VR and American Job Centers (AJC) and Medicaid can provide funding for these needs. If a person has to pay for such items, they may be tax qualified and/or they may qualify as impairment-related work expenses (IRWEs) or mean that there is a subsidy that was used to help the worker. Sometimes a loan may help a person to afford the purchase of AT.

## Alternative Finance Project

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services provides funding for agencies to assist individuals to get AT devices and services through lending, demonstrations and the availability of AT loans.

**Local provider:** Illinois Assistive Technology Program

1020 South Spring Street  
Springfield, IL 62704  
Program Coordinator: Wanda Parbs  
Phone: (800) 852-5110  
Phone: (217) 522-7985  
E-mail:  
[wparbs@iltech.org](mailto:wparbs@iltech.org)  
Web: [iltech.org](http://iltech.org)

There is help to select and/or try out AT devices. Once a person knows what they need, they can apply for a loan to purchase the items(s) if no other funding is available. In order to qualify for an AT loan, the person needs to have enough money to be able to make monthly payments for the term of the loan. Remember: You can build good credit history by having a timely AT loan, utility and rent payments reported to a credit reporting agency.

**Vehicle Purchase and Vehicle Modifications:** The transport section of Disabled World covers businesses and services offering transport for people with disabilities in specially adapted vehicles. Private and public disability transport services that provide group transport for people with disabilities are also listed: [disabled-world.com/disability/transport](http://disabled-world.com/disability/transport).

Often, vehicle ownership is the second largest asset a person owns, with a home being the first and most durable asset. Sometimes, private transportation is the only viable option to reliably get to and from work. So, what is necessary to own a vehicle?

- Good credit to qualify for a vehicle loan at a low interest rate
- Enough disposable income to afford vehicle payments, gasoline, repairs, maintenance and auto insurance each month
- Good credit, a good driving record and participation in a defensive driving class to reduce auto insurance premiums
- Knowledge of how to purchase a good vehicle
- Knowledge of how to negotiate the vehicle purchase price

Illinois offers implied warranty on used vehicles purchased from an auto dealer with less than 150,000 miles and not refurbished from floods. This is not bumper-to-bumper coverage and only covers the cost of repairs, up to the sale price of the vehicle.

[cata.info/under\\_new\\_law\\_illinois\\_dealers\\_must\\_offer\\_implied\\_warranty\\_on\\_used\\_cars](http://cata.info/under_new_law_illinois_dealers_must_offer_implied_warranty_on_used_cars)

In Module 1, participants created a spending plan. Before purchasing a vehicle, a new spending plan can be prepared to include all costs associated with having a vehicle.

Things to consider when creating your spending plan:

- Do you have a good credit score of 700 or better to qualify for a conventional vehicle purchase loan, and can you afford monthly payments, insurance, repairs, gas, etc.?
- Do you have a credit score of less than 700? If so, you may be eligible for an alternative loan program.
- Do you have enough income and savings to afford a vehicle?
- If you don't have enough income currently, by how much would you need to increase your earnings to purchase a vehicle?
- How much do you need to save to purchase a vehicle?

## How can you be more certain that you are selecting a reliable vehicle?

Consumer Reports posts listings of the most reliable and unreliable new or used vehicles each year. Limit your choices to the most reliable vehicles. This will reduce the repairs needed over the life of the vehicle. Often, public libraries have these magazines available.

## What is a vehicle worth?

If a new vehicle is being purchased, it is often possible to purchase it for \$2,000 less than the sticker price. When purchasing a reliable vehicle, there is no need to purchase an extended warranty, undercoating or gap insurance.

For a used vehicle, value quotes are available at National Automobile Dealers Association (NADA) at [nada.com](http://nada.com).

The base price is taken as the value. Be certain to enter your ZIP code and mileage for the vehicle at the website. Sometimes, **CarFax will list an accident in which the vehicle was involved and if there was an insurance claim.**

**Pre-Purchase Evaluation:** When purchasing a used vehicle, it is important to ask the selling dealership if the vehicle you are considering can be transported to your repair shop for a pre-purchase evaluation. If the dealer is not willing to do that or is not willing to do the recommended repairs, shop with another dealer. Pre-purchase inspections may cost about \$150, but they can save you, on average, \$2,000-\$4,000 in repairs within the first year. If you are relying on the vehicle, you do not want to be waiting for months while it is being repaired. That can mean the difference between keeping or losing a job. Regardless, you should always have a backup plan. Who can transport you to work if your vehicle breaks down?

**Illinois Lemon Law:** In order to be covered, a vehicle must be newly purchased or leased within the first 12 months, have less than 12,000 miles and ...

- have a problem that both greatly impairs the use, market value or safety of the vehicle and is not repairable by the dealer or manufacturer in at least four attempts for the same repair, or
- be out of service for a total of 30 or more business days. Visit [illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/consumers/lemonlaw.html](http://illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/consumers/lemonlaw.html).

**Trade-In:** If you are planning to trade in your present vehicle, negotiate that trade-in at the close of the deal in order to know how much the newer vehicle is being sold to you and how much is being offered for the trade-in value. You can compare that to the estimated value you research online at [nada.com](http://nada.com). Often, people get more money by simply selling the vehicle themselves. However, that can be a hassle, too.

**Financing:** There are several ways to protect yourself when it comes to financing a vehicle. Ask your bank or credit union about available interest and period of repayment terms. You could get pre-approved before even going to a dealership. If you are purchasing a new vehicle, manufacturers often provide financing with interest rates that are lower than what banks or credit unions offer. Make sure the term of the loan is not

more than 3-5 years. It is important that the retail value is not lost before the payments end.

Use care not to purchase a vehicle based upon monthly payments alone. Sometimes, dealers will stretch the term of the loan out to make payments affordable, but this significantly increases the overall purchase price of the vehicle.

Timely vehicle loan payments help people improve their credit scores over time. Beware of buy-here, pay-here-financing, as those facilities usually do not report timely payments to credit reporting agencies unless a vehicle is repossessed. In addition, people are likely to pay thousands more due to higher interest rates that are common practice at buy-here, pay-here facilities. Prior to purchasing a vehicle, taking steps to improve a credit score and save for a significant down payment can help save money when purchasing a vehicle.

The Loan Savings Calculator shows how FICO® (credit) scores impact the interest you pay on a loan. You can see that working to get your score higher can mean a big savings. For example, if your score is less than 589 now, and it improves to 720-850, you could save an extra \$3,082 during a 48-month term loan of \$12,000. Before applying for a loan, it is important to do whatever you can do to improve your credit score and save your money for something more.

**Automobile Insurance:** Your credit score is also important for your vehicle insurance. Insurance carriers rely more and more on driving records, claim histories and credit scores.



## Making Connections in Your Community: Guest Speaker (30 minutes)

Trainer will introduce a representative of a small business association, small business provider or a small business owner to talk about important information for starting and managing a successful business.

## Homework Assignment and Wrap-Up (10 Minutes)

- If you had to start your own business, what would your business provide?
- Brainstorm: What do you like to buy? Is there a way you could sell that item?
- Who would it be important to discuss your business plans with?
- Who could help guide you in starting your business and managing your work supports?

## Evaluation and Closing (5 minutes)

Trainer should thank the participants for participating in today's training and congratulate them on first steps toward improving their financial wellness.

**REMINDER:** Be sure to have the participants complete the second half of the evaluation and collect.

## MODULE 7: SELF-EMPLOYMENT AND PUBLIC BENEFIT WORK SUPPORTS

### TOOLS AND RESOURCES



The following are additional tools and resources to enhance the knowledge of attendees for Module 7.

Social Security Work Incentives make it easier for people with disabilities to work and still receive medical benefits and, in some cases, cash benefits from Social Security. Learn more at [Working for Yourself with Ticket to Work](#).

**The IRS provides information regarding self-employment and income tax requirements.**

The Small Business Association helps people learn skills around starting and managing a small business. [Find your local representative](#).

JAN consultants handle inquiries related to self-employment and small business development for people with disabilities. To learn more, visit the [Job Accommodation Network entrepreneurship hub for people with disabilities](#).