

DELAWARE / M O R R O W

Center of Vocational Alternatives

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Delaware, OH 43015
(740) 363-5562

www.cova.org



Business Hours

Scheduled appointment with
COVA staff.

For more information

Contact Elizabeth Cowan by phone
at 614-291-0316 or e-mail at
ecowan@cova.org.

COVA's Mission

COVA is the central Ohio region's leader in vocational rehabilitation services for people with mental illnesses and other disabilities that pose a barrier to employment. We serve nearly 3,300 clients and 250 employers each year.

A private, nonprofit agency founded in 1982, COVA's mission is to assist and support the community in overcoming mental, emotional and other challenges to a productive life, focusing on employment, economic stability and life skills.

COVA Staff

Our highly trained, multi-disciplinary team is composed of about 60 staff members, including certified rehabilitation counselors, licensed professional counselors, licensed social workers and a dedicated administrative team.

Employment Services

COVA career developers assist program participants to explore, secure and retain meaningful employment through job readiness, career development and job placement services.

Our participants come from all walks of life, with widely varying levels of experience and expertise, and are placed in many diverse types of positions, including professional, skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled jobs.

Employers

Employers are integral to COVA's success. In addition to hiring participants, employers throughout the region provide mock job interviews, mentoring relationships, sites for job shadowing and job tryouts, volunteer positions and offer opportunities for advancement.

COVA also provides services for employers, including assistance with psychiatric disability management, return-to-work programs and employee retention.

National Recognition

COVA's innovative programs are recognized nationally. Recent awards include: 2006 and 2007 Lilly Reintegration Award: Eli Lilly and Company recognized COVA's Careers for the Future technology initiative for its role in helping individuals with mental illness develop the skills necessary to find and keep meaningful employment.

2007 Organization of the Year: Selected by the Ohio Rehabilitation Association.

2005 New Freedom Initiative Award: U.S. Secretary of Labor New Freedom Initiative Award is given annually to only seven organizations for exemplary and innovative efforts in furthering the employment and workplace environment for people with disabilities.

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FAST FACTS

COVA Services

Services can be divided among three categories: career preparation, career initiation and career advancement. Most COVA services are paid through public funding. If a person does not qualify for funding by an external source, options are available for COVA's services through self-pay.

Adult Employment – COVA offers job readiness programs for those in the early stages of returning to work or securing their first job, and career development and job placement services for those ready to work. Job readiness sessions focus on managing mental illness and stress in the workplace, goal setting, social skills and networking. Job placement services include matching skills and needs with the right job, application and interview skills development, screened job leads and job-site coaching.

Transition Youth Services – COVA's experienced professionals work with youth ages 16 to 22 to achieve independent living. Program participants come to us via many avenues – public schools, child welfare, juvenile justice, school counselors and families. Our programs include Aftercare (to help youth transitioning from foster care), CHOICE (vocational training for high schoolers with barriers to successful transition into work) and Independent Living Skills Assessment (evaluations of youths' ability to live on their own).

Benefits Application and Consultation Services – COVA provides assistance to those who want to become or stay employed by determining how benefits will be affected by earned income. We also assist people not ready for immediate employment. The goal is to enable individuals to maximize their current or potential benefits from sources such as Social Security, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, Medicaid, Medicare and others, while becoming or staying employed.

Services for Employers – COVA's expertise brings qualified, skilled employees to the work force with the support of COVA training and staff. COVA also offers employers special services for psychiatric disability management, linkage to tax incentives, added diversity and disability management seminars.

Computer Equipment Contribution Program – Community and business partners can donate used computers that are less than three years old to be repaired and given to COVA program participants for home use.

Funding Partners

COVA's budget exceeds \$4.4 million annually, operating with both public and private funding. Sources of funding include: ADAMH — Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health boards of Franklin and Fairfield counties, Aetna and Prudential foundations, American Recovery and Reinvestment Tax Act of 2009, Columbus Foundation, Columbus Public Schools, Delaware-Morrow County Mental Health & Recovery Services Board, Franklin County Children Services, Ohio Department of Mental Health, Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission, Social Security Administration, United Way of Central Ohio, U.S. Bureau of Justice Administration, U.S. Department Labor, YMCA of Central Ohio, contracts with private industry and self-paying clients. COVA receives charitable donations from corporations and individuals.