



Is Self-Employment Right
for Me?
Micro-Enterprises
and Entrepreneurship

Meet Your Employment and Day Services Team

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Agenda

Introductions

SUDS.biz

Stephen & Marjorie

Mountain Laurel Artisan Chocolate

Ted & Darlene

Quiz Game!

Emma's Pearlz

Emma & Donna

Happy Velas Candles

Marilyn & Darlene

Self-Employment Overview

Kat's Café

Kat & Amy

Middletown Secret Sauce

Steven & Darlene

MENTI

- In self-employment we often hear the term “Micro-Enterprise”. What’s another way of saying micro-enterprise?
- Can you name any examples of a micro-enterprise / potential opportunity for one?
- Self-Employment means you work for yourself, but it doesn’t mean you work alone. True – no matter what you’re doing, you will have some type of community interaction (buying materials, talking to customers, etc.)
- According to an April 2024 report from the Bureau of Labor statistics, about how many workers were self-employed as of March 2024? 16.75 million workers
- This statistic amounts to ____% of the workforce. 10%
- According to the Center for Economic and Policy Research, the share of self-employed workers has trended up since 2022. Can you guess why that might be?
Covid-19 (pandemic shutdowns)
- DDS eligible individuals can request \$_____ in grant funding to start or expand a
~~small business enterprise. How much funding may be available?~~

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Self-Employment

- Micro-enterprise funding
- **\$5,000 per individual** to act on a small business idea and establish a micro-enterprise

NEW!

Individual Supported Employment (ISE)

- assisting individuals find and apply for jobs
- supports to help individuals in competitive work settings
- job coaching support once work is secured
- **Who is a good candidate?**
 - Any DDS eligible individual interested in competitive integrated employment (CIE) regardless of their current service type.

Group Supported Employment (GSE)

- a group of participants are working under the supervision of a permanent employment specialist (job coach) in a competitive work environment
- focus on developing meaningful skills in the areas of:
 - Work
 - Socialization
 - Community participation.

Customized Employment (CE)

- an alternative method of finding **competitive integrated employment** for individuals with significant disabilities.
- CE focuses on the strengths, skills and abilities of the individuals and the unmet needs of employers.
- It is a highly structured, person-centered process, **carried out over time.**

SELF-EMPLOYMENT

Why choose self-employment?

- Self-employment can offer flexibility and allows an individual to be their own boss.
- Self-employment options can be very rewarding and allow individuals to have a job related to their interests.
- Some individuals have tried traditional employment service options but haven't achieved their employment goal.

SELF-EMPLOYMENT

What types of supports are available?

Qualified Provider

A DDS qualified provider agency provides your services.

Self-Direction

You hire and manage staff who provide your services.

Service options individuals may use for supports at their business:

1. Individual Supported Employment (ISE)
2. Individualized Day Vocational (IDV)

MICRO-ENTERPRISE Funding

Micro-Enterprise Funding – *Ongoing opportunity*

\$5,000 per individual to act on an entrepreneurial idea and establish a small business enterprise.

Funds may be used toward costs associated with micro-enterprise start-up. This includes, but is not limited to:



Equipment



Training



Research



Marketing

Funds cannot be used to pay wages.

MICRO-ENTERPRISE FUNDING

 **Individuals may request 1X funds (up to \$5,000) to act on a business idea/establish a small business!**

Funds may be used toward micro-enterprise start-up costs such as:



Equipment



Training



Research



Marketing

Funds cannot be used to pay wages.

Funding will be subject to approval by the DDS Micro-Enterprise Review Team and is dependent on the availability of resources. More information can be found in the [Micro-Enterprise Memo](#).

HOW DO I APPLY?

1. Talk to your Case Manager and support team
2. Plan your business idea
3. Submit an online application for funds below!

[Click here to apply!](#)

Questions? DDS.microenterprise@ct.gov

HOW DO INDIVIDUALS APPLY?

1. Discuss with Case Manager & Service Delivery team
2. Plan business idea and plan for supports
3. Submit online application

PRE-APPLICATION CHECKLIST

What should you consider before applying for a grant?

The Pre-Application Checklist reviews some things individuals and their team should consider before applying for Micro-Enterprise funding.

- Plan for Supports
- Community Inclusion
- Administrative Items
- Plan for Funds



Micro-Enterprise Funding: Pre-Application Checklist

To support individuals who choose self-employment, DDS launched Micro-Enterprise IX Funding for DDS qualified individuals who transitioned to waived services/supports. More information about these funds can be found [here](#). Individuals are **encouraged to use this checklist of considerations** before applying for Micro-Enterprise funding.

✓	Checklist – things to consider before applying:
Administrative	
☐	Do you have a business name? Did you make sure this name isn't already taken by another business with the CT Business Name Checker ?
☐	How will you receive the funds? <i>For example</i> , do you have a business bank account, or will you be working with a provider agency to manage funds?
☐	Have you explored how the Micro-Enterprise funds may affect your taxes with a tax professional? State Tax Resources Federal Tax Resources
☐	Have you reviewed the process for registering a business in the State of CT?
Product/Service Description	
☐	Can you describe what you do? Why does your idea demonstrate creativity or innovation? Can you describe why you are passionate about this service/product?
☐	Have you identified a product and/or service you are creating, marketing, and/or selling? Can you describe what makes your business idea stand out?
☐	Have you consulted with a Small Business Association (SCORE CT SBDC) to review your business concept?
Community Inclusion	
☐	Where will you sell your product/service? Local events? Online?
☐	How will you interact with the community? What is your plan for community events and interaction?
Plan for Support	
☐	How will you be supported with your micro-enterprise? Who is available to assist you (<i>for example</i> , family, staff, friends, or professionals such as an accountant)?
☐	Have you had a team discussion about the funding opportunity (have you talked with your family/guardian, Case Manager, Provider)?
Plan for Funds	
☐	Can you provide a detailed proposal for how you will use award funds in the next year?
☐	Have you had a team discussion about how these funds may impact benefits? Have you met with a Benefits Counselor to explore how your Micro-Enterprise and any awarded funds may impact benefits?

Questions? Reach out to DDS.Microenterprise@ct.gov

SELF-EMPLOYMENT GUIDE

Federal, state, and local self-employment resources all in one place!

- Overview
- Business Planning
- DDS Funding: Micro-Enterprise Grant
- Micro-Enterprise Grant Reporting
- Business Resources
 - **Start a New Business Checklist**
 - **Online Business Search**
- FAQ

Suggestions? Feel free to share.

Get a personalized new business checklist

Time to Complete: 8-10 minutes

[START NOW >](#)

Everything you need to start a new business in Connecticut.

In less than ten minutes, you'll have a powerful customized checklist that will cut through the confusion and guide you through the process of starting a business in Connecticut.



Can I save my checklist?

YES - simply create an account (it's free!) and you can email, print, and share your checklist however you choose.

[Create an account / log in](#)

What you'll get

- ✓ Step-by-step instructions
- ✓ Links to the forms you need
- ✓ Contact information for help from real people

Connecticut
Business
Services

MICRO-ENTERPRISE 1X FUNDING

How do individuals get their funds?

Qualified Provider

- Distributed through 1X Request
(Attachment A)

Self-Direction

- Distributed through Individual & Family Grant process
(does **not** affect Family Grants)

PLEASE NOTE: It is **your responsibility** to ensure tax advice, benefits counseling, and other small business support are obtained **prior to accepting** a Micro-Enterprise Grant.

PROVIDER FISCAL ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT (MIC)

Micro-Enterprise Supports

DDS Qualified POS provider agencies are eligible to receive funding for Fiscal Account Management support including, but is not limited to:

- Management of administrative operations such as legal, tax, and compliance filings as well as payroll, expenditure reports, etc.
- Grant/revenue disbursement and associated record/bookkeeping.

Services billed via WebResDay monthly per individual. More information can be found in [Ops Center Memo 25-14](#). MIC services do not affect an individual's budget and are not taken from their Micro-Enterprise Award.

QUESTIONS?

Individuals & Families: Contact your Case Manager

Provider Agencies: Contact your Resource Manager

Case Managers & DDS Staff: Contact the [EDS Team](#)

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CONNECT TO SUCCESS

STEPHEN

2025
SUCCESS TIP
*It's never too
late to try!*

Top 10 Entrepreneur
Stephen has transformed his
love of Legos into a way to
connect with his community.

SUDS
Stephen's
Unique
De-Itchifying
Soaps
Formulated for
sensitive skin.

SUDS.biz

Stephen & Marjorie

DOWN **to** BUSINESS

What is a Honeycake?

It's a beehive-shaped cake that comes in various delicious flavors like lemon, chocolate zucchini, traditional honey, and seasonal varieties.

Emma Tuttle

2025 Success Tip

Get out in the community and make your business known!

Signature Pearls

A gift from Emma's Grandmother that have now become her signature style.

Emma's Pearlz

Top 10 Entrepreneur

Emma has a keen eye for business and is expanding to include more products.



Find me on Facebook and Instagram!



Emma's Pearlz

Emma's Pearlz

Emma & Donna

Emma's Pearlz



Kat's Café

Kat & Amy

FUTURES MICRO-BUSINESS PROGRAM

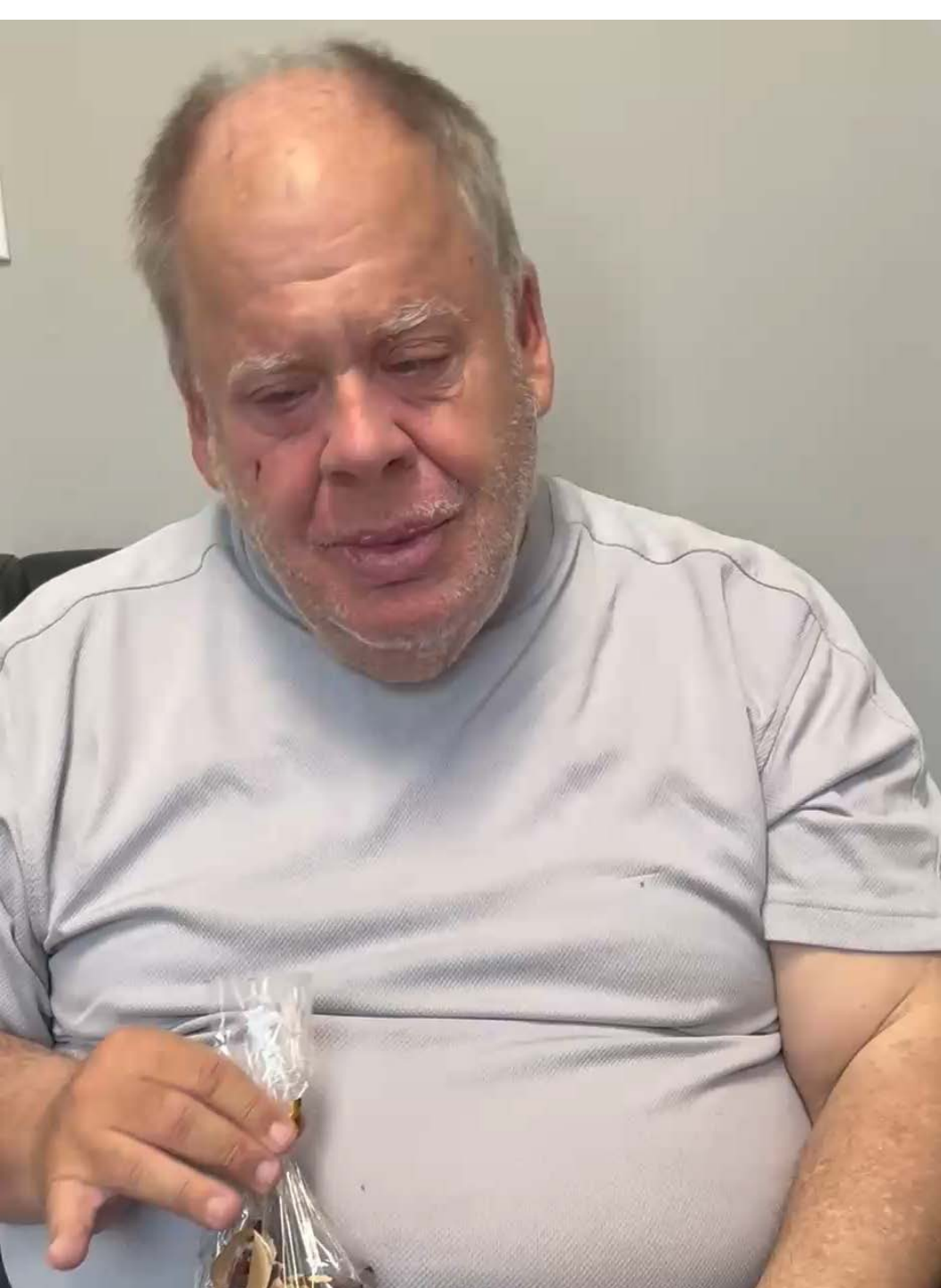
Interviews with Ted, Marilyn, & Steven led by Darlene Borre



Mountain Laurel Artisan Chocolate



Mountain Laurel Artisan Chocolate



Happy Velas Candles



Hello
I'm Marilyn.

My business is...
Happy Velas

My product is...
Iced Coffee Velas (candles)

I made it because...
Velas soothe me and I love the smell of coffee.
I hope you like them as much as I do!

Fun fact...
The artwork used in my business is artwork that I created at The Art Center at Futures Inc.

learn more about Marilyn's business and Futures Inc. at futures-ct.org



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Middletown Secret Sauce





Middletown Secret Sauce



RESOURCES

Website, Brochures

Employment and Day Services Webpage

- Employment and Day Services (EDS) Pathways Brochure (Spanish)
- Group Supported Employment (GSE) Brochure
- Self-Employment Brochure
- Customized Employment (CE) Brochure
- Individual Supported Employment (ISE) Brochure
- Employment Transition Services (ETS) Brochure
- Project SEARCH Brochure
- Transportation Brochure

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