

Nationwide Employment Networks with NTI@Home

Helping Individuals with
Disabilities Gain Work-from-
Home Jobs



NTI
@HOME

www.ntiathome.org



Introduction

- Michael Sanders, Head of Partnership Programs at NTI@Home
- TEDx Speaker and Disability Advocate
- Recruiting, eLearning, Business Development, and Marketing



What is NTI@Home?

- Non-Profit Organization
- Helps Individuals with Disabilities Find Remote Work
- Advocates of Individuals with Disabilities
- Services Nationwide
- Employment Network

NTI@HOME





Misconceptions of Employment Networks

- Fraud / Scam
- People Don't Understand What an Employment Network Does
- Not Sure of the Services Offered
- Individuals Have to Do all the Work Themselves



Polling Question

(Multiple Choice)

What job services do you wish providers offered to the people you serve?

Efforts of Employment Networks



- Provides Social Security Disability Recipients Assistance In Returning To The Workforce
- Career Counseling, Job Placement, And Ongoing Support Once A Disability Recipient Begins Working
- Individuals Test Their Ability To Work Without Losing Their Benefits
- Help An Individual With A Disability To Obtain Or Maintain Employment



Expanding Our Mission



All Individuals with Disabilities



Family Caregivers



Open Doors to Advocate for Individuals with Disabilities

Right People

- Core Employees

Right Timing

- COVID-19
- Work-at-Home Transition
- Societal Circumstances

Right Place

- 25 Years of Work-at-Home

Featured Story: The New York Times

Swamped Call Centers Find Eager Workers Among People With Disabilities

By JACLYN PEISER

A workplace injury two decades ago when she was newly pregnant left Robin Irvin with neuropathy in her left leg and without a functioning bowel or bladder. She has been living on disability benefits since.

Now as the coronavirus pandemic upends the economy, Ms. Irvin, 48, has found a way to get back into the work force: She is answering customer service calls for a regional retail chain.

Call centers have had to adapt swiftly because the pandemic has dealt them a double blow. They are fielding more calls from customers inquiring about online orders or seeking refunds or forbearance. But many of the people who would normally answer those calls either can't get to work or are not equipped to work from home.

The transition has been messy; industry executives say they are struggling to ship computers, headsets and other equipment to employees. Many customer service representatives, who earned a median income of \$34,710 last year, also don't have internet connections fast enough to take calls and log in to corporate computer systems. In addition, companies said, they have had to shut down



BOB MILLER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Only a handful of ASK telemarketing employees still work in the Montgomery, Ala., office. Robin Irvin, right, found call center work in March.



LIBBY MARSH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

tration to fill telecommuting jobs with people who have disabilities, has been approached by nearly a dozen additional companies seeking workers in the last three weeks. The institute has handled 30 percent more job postings over the past month than it did a year ago, and the numbers could be much higher in the next month, said Alan Hubbard, the institute's chief operating officer.

Founded in 1995, the tele-

Pa., found the telecommuting institute two years ago but didn't secure a job until March. She is now taking customer service calls for Meijer, a supermarket chain that operates in the Midwest and has worked with the institute since 2005.

"I feel like I have some self-worth back," she said. Many of the calls she is fielding deal with online orders, which have spiked as people avoid shopping in stores.

"Since the Covid-19 crisis, N.T.I.

Shelter-in-place orders and curfews have prevented workers in those countries from going to work, and many can't work from home because they do not have computers and broadband internet connections.

The company's U.S. operation is having to pick up that slack, said Colleen Beers, the president of North American and European operations. The company is trying to hire 8,000 people to keep up with demand.

Call center work can be grueling, and some companies that

ability," said Mr. Cargile, who lives in Morrisville, N.C., and has received disability benefits since 2013 because of agoraphobia and other mental health issues. "You want to be able to support yourself."

Workers like Mr. Cargile and Ms. Irvin were ready to start working because they already had the equipment and internet connections that call centers expect. That wasn't true of many people who already had call center jobs, Ms. Rowan said.

Before the coronavirus, about 80 percent of call centers let some

said. The transition was slow at first because the company had to coordinate with corporate customers to figure out what kind of equipment and internet access workers would need. In some cases, telecom companies couldn't get installers to homes fast enough to set up new connections. "We didn't have the opportunity for nine weeks to figure this out," Ms. Beers said.

Some companies were able to move faster. ASK, a smaller call center operator based in Montgomery, Ala., told its agents to do speed tests on their home internet connections on March 9 and now has 430 of its roughly 450 employees telecommuting, said Rick Burley, the company's president.

The rest either prefer to work in the office or don't have broadband at home. Mr. Burley said ASK's office, a former bowling alley, allows the few employees still coming in to sit 30 to several hundred feet apart.

Industry executives said they had noticed benefits from having employees work from home. For example, fewer employees are missing shifts, Ms. Beers said.

Ms. Rowan said employers could allow as many as half their workers to continue working from home once government officials lifted stay-at-home orders. That could provide more opportunities for people with disabilities, make it easier for employees to pick up extra hours and attract people who need part-time work.



The People We Serve

How Does This Help the People We Serve?

- Chance to Come Back
- Sustainable
- Equal Pay
- Benefits
- Trial Work Period

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Polling Question

(Yes/No)

Are the people you serve looking for flexible, part-time employment?

Partner-Employers

- Legitimate Customer Service Jobs
- Fortune 500 Companies, Start-ups, and Government Agencies
 - Answering Tax Questions
 - Product Selection
 - Roadside Assistance
 - Guidance on Pharmaceuticals
- Part-time & Full-Time Shifts
 - Day, Evening, and Night



Enrolling in the NTI@Home Program



Register at <https://ndrn.NTlatHome.org>



Polling Question

(Multiple Choice)

What would make it easier for service providers to share information about employment opportunities to those you serve?



How Can Your Organization Partner with NTI@Home?

Advocate - The Time is Now

Let's Find a Solution Together

We May Be Able to Provide a Unique Solution for the People You Serve

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Feel Free to Connect



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