

NEWS RELEASE

For Region 5 Distribution



Iowa Workforce Development

For Immediate Release

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New Disability Program Navigator Employed in Fort Dodge

FORT DODGE, IOWA - Iowa Workforce Development, on behalf of a collaborative partnership with state agencies, has received a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor and the Social Security Administration to create new positions for Iowa's Workforce Development Centers.

Known as a disability program navigator, one of these positions has been housed at Fort Dodge's Workforce Development Center, 2700 1st Avenue South, and facilitates access to employment and services for Central Iowa job seekers who have disabilities.

Lisa Hoffmann had served in this position at its inception last fall, has resigned to move with her family to Omaha. Local One-Stop agencies conducted a search for Lisa's replacement, and have offered the position to Gregg Kraemer of Fort Dodge. Kraemer has a B.S. degree in psychology from Iowa State University and a Masters in Public Administration from Drake University. He most recently served in Benefits Administration with Decker Truck Line, Inc. Prior to this, he served as Human Resources Manager with Iowa Industrial Hydraulics, Inc. His previous positions with Iowa Workforce Development included Fort Dodge local office manager, program specialist, management analyst and claims specialist.

Iowans with disabilities have an unemployment rate that exceeds 50%, but most would prefer to be pursuing a career. Disability program navigators will not duplicate services offered by agencies supporting local workforce services, but support job seekers with information and connection with service programs that will provide career enhancement.

"The creation of these positions should not be seen as a new service program," stated Barbara Bobb, Iowa Workforce Development's chief of the Targeted Services Bureau. "They will serve a role within the system designed to enhance the capacity of all of our partners in services designed to fully include Iowans with disabilities in the workforce."

Iowa Workforce Development is meeting with State agency partners, including Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Iowa Department for the Blind, Iowa Division of Persons with Disabilities, the Iowa Governor's Developmental Disabilities Council, Iowa Department of Education, Iowa Department of Human Services and others to plan and support the implementation. Iowa Workforce Development currently works with other state agencies to support sixteen comprehensive Workforce Center Centers statewide.

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