



*Sedgwick County...  
working for you*

Sedgwick County Developmental  
Disability Organization (SCDDO)

# FACTS & details

about Sedgwick County Government

## Project SEARCH at Sedgwick County

May 2020

### **What is Project SEARCH?**

Project SEARCH is a business/organization-led collaboration that enables young adults with disabilities to gain and maintain employment through training and career exploration during a one-year rotational internship. The goal for each student participant is competitive employment. Project SEARCH has proved successful, with over 70% of graduates attaining employment.

### **Why and how is Sedgwick County involved?**

As one of the largest employers in the community, Sedgwick County government is a logical choice for leadership among local employers. Additionally, the Sedgwick County Developmental Disability Organization (SCDDO) serves as the single point of entry for all intellectual and developmental disability services in the area. Increasing the expectation and incentive to work toward competitive, community-based employment at minimum wage or better has been a driving force behind the SCDDO's employment initiatives. The SCDDO is committed to helping individuals with disabilities access a higher quality of life via employment.

Sedgwick County departments benefit by receiving approximately 20 hours per week of staff time free of charge. Supervisors develop their skills for working with individuals with disabilities. Co-workers gain the benefit of an inclusive work environment. Departments are also able to identify motivated applicants for positions that often experience high turnover.

### **How is the program organized in Sedgwick County?**

Students participate in approximately three unpaid internships led by a USD 259 instructor or para-educator/job coach during the school year. It is the expectation that Sedgwick County directors and/or supervisors manage the Project SEARCH interns in the same manner they would manage other Sedgwick County employees. SCDDO staff is available to assist supervisors and serve as a liaison with Project SEARCH staff.

### **Does Project SEARCH have an office?**

Project SEARCH at Sedgwick County has an employment lab located in the Historic Courthouse. The employment lab serves as a home base for the interns to develop skills and prepare for their internship rotations within various departments.

### **What type of work will the students do?**

Students are matched with a variety of county departments based on previous work history and predetermined interests. Job tasks vary from data input, food service, scanning, janitorial/custodial to general administrative duties.

### **How many internships are available annually with Sedgwick County?**

The size of each year's Project Search class depends upon student interest and ability. SCDDO strives to place 8-9 students each year within Sedgwick County departments. New departments and internship opportunities can be



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added upon request.

### **How long does the internship last?**

Each internship rotation lasts approximately 10 weeks. Each student will commit to three rotations.

### **Can an intern be employed before the school year is over?**

Yes, the goal is competitive employment and an intern can accept a job offer whenever a good match is found.

### **For Additional Information:**

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