



DETROIT AT WORKSM

**YOUR JOB SEARCH
STARTS HERE**

Work Readiness Handbook

www.detroitatwork.com

HELLO!

Welcome to the Detroit At WorkSM **Work Readiness Handbook**. We are happy to help you find and get ready for a job. This handbook will help you develop key skills needed to prepare for, find, and keep a job. Before we start, we would like to tell you about Detroit at Work.



ABOUT DETROIT AT WORK

Detroit at Work started in 2017 to give Detroiters one place to go for help in finding a job. Detroit at Work has connections to jobs and training programs in growing career areas like healthcare, technology, manufacturing and logistics, construction, utilities and small business.

At Detroit at Work, we know it can be hard finding a job, or even getting to a job. We are here to help you. If you need help with any of these services, let us know:

- ▶ Transportation
- ▶ Childcare
- ▶ Utility Assistance
- ▶ Legal Aid
- ▶ Housing and Emergency Shelter Support
- ▶ Food
- ▶ Applying for state benefits through MiBridges
- ▶ Criminal record expungement

From connections to training programs, assistance with your job search or connections to partner organizations, Detroit at Work staff is here to get the help you need!

Visit our website to learn more:

www.DetroitAtWork.com



CONTACT US

On-line

Access workshops, find training programs, apply to jobs and more through the Detroit at Work Online Community. Sign up or Login in at www.detroitatwork.com

In-Person

Detroit at Work has nine locations throughout Detroit. Call to make an appointment at the Career Center closest to you: 313-962-WORK(9675)

Over the Phone

Our Call Center staff is ready and able to answer any questions you may have about Detroit at Work and our services: 313-962-WORK(9675)

We also post information on jobs and training on our social media channels.



INSTAGRAM

<https://www.instagram.com/detroitatwork/>



FACEBOOK

<https://www.facebook.com/DetroitAtWork/>



YOUTUBE

<https://www.youtube.com/c/DetroitatWork>



TWITTER

<https://twitter.com/detroitatwork>



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INTRODUCTION

Congratulations! If you are reading this guide, you have begun thinking about job searching, which means you have taken the first step in your journey. We are excited that you are taking this step to ready yourself for work! This guide is designed to help you prepare for entering the workforce and a career you enjoy.

WHAT IS WORK READINESS?

A “work ready” individual is someone who has the skills and knowledge to gain and maintain employment. Being work ready also means that you have a plan in place to get and keep a job. This plan may include arranging reliable transportation to a job or childcare for your children while you work.

WHAT THIS GUIDE COVERS

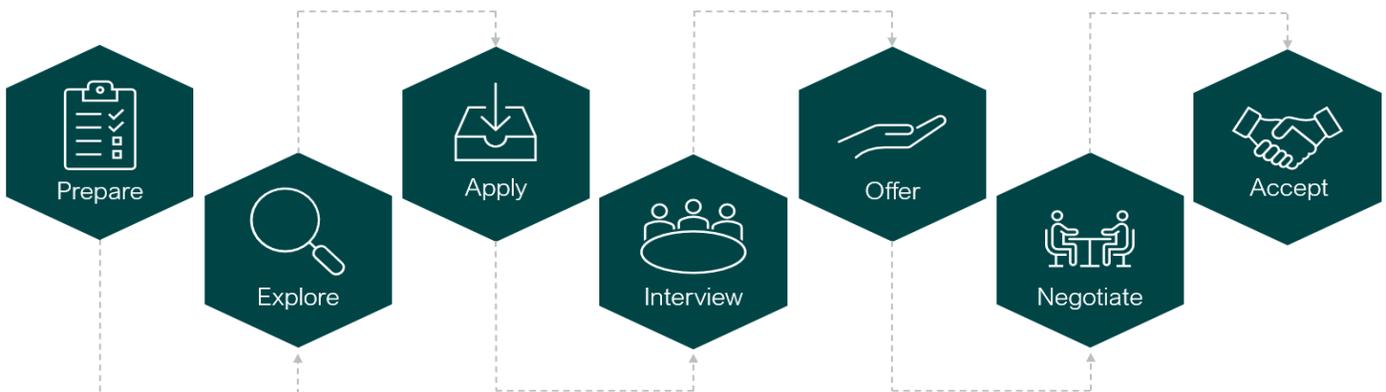
This guide offers many resources and information on essential elements of work readiness, including:

- ▶ A job is much more than a paycheck!
- ▶ Setting goals
- ▶ The application process, including application-related documents
- ▶ Interview tips and tricks
- ▶ Recommended workshops and training sessions

If you see this icon  on a page, you will find optional activities to complete on your own or with your Career Coach that will help you strengthen your skills.

UNDERSTANDING THE PROCESS

Getting a job can be broken down into specific steps including:



- ▶ **Prepare** yourself and your documentation
- ▶ **Explore** available jobs and hiring agencies
- ▶ **Apply** for positions
- ▶ Attend an **interview**
- ▶ Receive a job **offer**
- ▶ **Negotiate** your salary and total benefits (if applicable)
- ▶ **Accept** a position

This handbook covers each of these steps in detail under **Getting Started** and provides information to help you succeed.

INVESTING IN YOURSELF

A good job also helps you invest in yourself...and you are worth it!

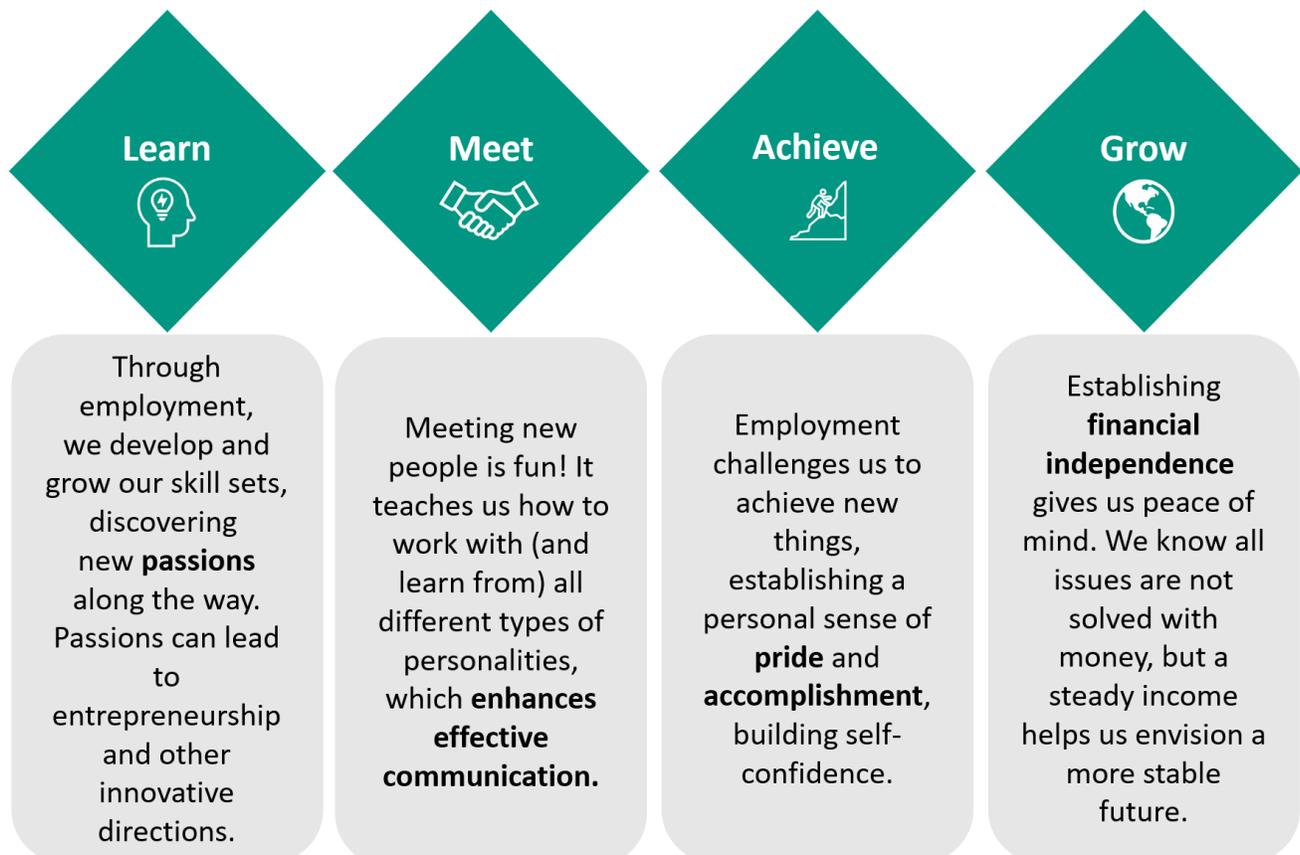
What does it mean to invest in yourself? Review the following suggestions:

- ▶ Set aside time for self-reflection. There are several exercises in this guide that provide opportunities for you to reflect on what you can and like to do for work.
- ▶ Create a resume that outlines your experience, skills, and accomplishments. [Refer to [Resume Building](#) on page 12 for guidance.]
- ▶ Write a cover letter that describes why YOU are the right person for the job. [Refer to [Cover Letter](#) on page 16 for guidance.]
- ▶ Draft personal and professional goals to help you determine your next action steps. [Refer to [Goal Action Planning](#) on page 9 and [Appendix 1](#) on page 24 for guidance.]
- ▶ Learn a new skill that will prepare you up for success in your next position, like through our occupational training programs – www.detroitatwork.com/training.
- ▶ Connect with [Detroit At Work](#). Let our Career Coaches help you through this process!

A JOB IS MUCH MORE THAN A PAYCHECK

THERE ARE BENEFITS OF EMPLOYMENT (AT THE ENTRY LEVEL AND BEYOND)

Looking for a job can be stressful. But you are not alone! The Detroit At Work staff are here to guide you along the way – because **the process is worth it**. There are many benefits of having a job. Employment helps us to:



GOAL SETTING

DEFINING CAREER GOALS

A career goal is a clear statement that describes what you would like to achieve in your career. The purpose of a career goal is to help you determine what to do next. **The possibilities are endless!** Having clear goals in mind will help you to plan your next steps in your employment journey.

Examples of Career Goals

- ▶ Manage a retail store
- ▶ Work from home
- ▶ Work in health care
- ▶ Work in customer service

Goals may be short-term (things you would like to accomplish within the next few months) or long-term (things you would like to accomplish in the next five years).

You may already have several career goals in mind. If so, that is great! If you do not know where to start, that is OK too. Detroit At Work can help.

Workshops Available!

Be sure to visit the Detroit at Work Online Community and go to the Workshops or Skill Building tab to find an upcoming online **free Goal Setting workshop**. You can also watch other workshops on resume writing, interviewing skills and more at the Detroit at Work Online Community – sign up or log-in today at www.detroitatwork.com.

 **Activity.** Here is an opportunity for you to self-reflect before you start your goal setting process. Begin by asking yourself the following questions:

How do I enjoy spending my time?	<i>Response:</i> <div style="background-color: #e0e0e0; height: 40px; width: 100%;"></div>
What things am I good at?	<i>Response:</i> <div style="background-color: #e0e0e0; height: 40px; width: 100%;"></div>
What type of work is meaningful to me?	<i>Response:</i> <div style="background-color: #e0e0e0; height: 40px; width: 100%;"></div>
Do I prefer to work alone, or do I enjoy working with a team?	<i>Response:</i> <div style="background-color: #e0e0e0; height: 40px; width: 100%;"></div>

What would I like my career to look like one year from now? Five years from now?	<i>One year</i>	<i>Five years</i>

IDENTIFYING PERSONAL GOALS

Starting a new job will affect your personal life and schedule. When you are applying for a job, think about how your potential work schedule will affect your personal activities. Consider the following questions:

Childcare	Do you have children who will need childcare while you are at work?
Meals	Would it be helpful to plan out and prepare your weekly meals on a day when you will not be working?
Hobbies	What hobbies or interests are important for you to maintain within your new schedule?
Self-care	How will your self-care routine need to be adjusted when your schedule changes?

From your answers, you may begin setting a few personal goals. Examples of personal goals include:

- ▶ I will set aside time to spend with my kids after work.
- ▶ I will prepare my lunches ahead of time, so they are easy to grab in the morning before work.
- ▶ I will adjust my exercise routine to a virtual workout video to maximize schedule flexibility.

The **Goal Action Planning** section on page 9 of this guide will provide a framework to assist you in both personal and employment goal planning.

GOAL ACTION PLANNING (SHORT AND LONG TERM)

What is Goal Action Planning?

Goal action planning is the process of making goals and developing action steps to reach those goals. The first step is to establish effective short- and long-term goals that follow the S.M.A.R.T. goal setting framework.¹

What does S.M.A.R.T. mean?

S.M.A.R.T. is a way of setting goals that improves our ability to achieve them. See [Appendix 1](#) on page 24 for more information and an activity to set your own S.M.A.R.T. goal!



Specific

Make your goal specific, allowing you to plan precise steps you can take to achieve it.



Measurable

Define how you will know whether you have met your goal.



Attainable

Ensure your goal is realistic to achieve within the timeframe you have set to achieve it.



Relevant

Ensure your goal aligns with your values and interests.



Timely

Set a clear time frame within which you aim to reach your goal.

GETTING STARTED

This section provides you with actionable steps to prepare for the job search and application process. It also provides tips and best practices for accepting and beginning a new position. If you'd like some tips for job searching during the pandemic see [Appendix 7](#) on page 33.

WHAT TYPE OF JOB IS SUITABLE FOR YOU?



Activity. If you're not sure what job or career you want, that's OK! You are not alone. There are a few steps you can take to start thinking about what job is suitable for you.²

Take a career assessment

A career assessment is an important early step to better understand what careers might be a good fit for you.

There are hundreds of career assessment options available online. We don't want you to be overwhelmed, so we recommend these three free options:

- ▶ [O*NET Interest Profiler](http://www.mynextmove.org/explore/ip) [www.mynextmove.org/explore/ip]
- ▶ [123Test Career Aptitude Test](http://www.123test.com/career-test/) [www.123test.com/career-test/]
- ▶ [My Next Move](http://www.mynextmove.org) [www.mynextmove.org]
- ▶ [What Career Is Right For Me: Career Aptitude Test](http://www.whatcareerisrightforme.com/career-aptitude-test.php) [www.whatcareerisrightforme.com/career-aptitude-test.php]

Jot down notes from your career assessment outcomes in the space below:

Jobs and careers that might be a good fit for me

Add any additional job ideas that you'd like to explore:

NOTE A job and career path are different. A job is work you perform to earn money like working as a grocery store clerk. A career path is a long-term professional journey which requires more specialized training and responsibility over time. An example of a career path is starting as a store clerk and working toward retail management.

Once you finish your list, reread it and start crossing out options that don't feel exactly right. This will help you narrow your list. Try ranking your options or combining things that are similar.

Follow Up Activity. Be sure to take a look at [Appendix 2: Exploring Careers and Finding Job Matches](#) on page 26 for more opportunities to expand on the career list you created above.

Look for overlap

What are you good at?

Use the space below to brainstorm your skills. See the [Skills Identification](#) section on page 17 for more guidance.

What did you enjoy and dislike about your previous jobs, companies, or work experiences?

(Feel free to jot them down now in the grey space below)

Likes	Dislikes

What talent and skills do companies need?

See available jobs at DetroitAtWork.com/Jobs, and jot down a few positions that interest you below:

Job:	Skills Required:

Identify your boundaries

Think about what you can and can't accommodate. For example:

- ▶ Do you need a job in a specific location?
- ▶ What hours are you available to work?
- ▶ Are there certain days of the week you can't work?
- ▶ Can you work full time or part time?

Can Accommodate	Cannot Accommodate
<i>Example: Weekend hours</i>	<i>Example: Working outside of Detroit</i>

Network

Networking is a great way to dip your toes in the water and provides you with the opportunity to meet people and hear about their career experiences. The more people you meet, the more information you will have to make the right decisions for you.

Networking can be done on professional websites, such as LinkedIn, or through Detroit At Work workshops and forums.

Check out the Detroit at Work Events Page for details on upcoming events where you can begin networking: <https://detroitatwork.com/events>

Ask a mentor

Never underestimate the value of a good mentor!

Mentors come in many forms. Mentors can be:

- ▶ Professionals paid to be mentors
- ▶ People who are experts in their field
- ▶ The person who's just done it all
- ▶ A close friend or former colleague

If you're not sure who to turn to, Detroit at Work is here to help you! Our staff is happy to provide you with a Career Coach who can assist you in your journey.

Visit our website to learn more. You can also visit one of our Career Centers or call or call 313-962-WORK (9675), and we will be happy to assist! See the [Contact Us](#) section on page 36 of this guide.

RESUME BUILDING



One of the most important documents in your job search is your **resume** because it shows employers a first impression of you. You never get a second chance to make a first impression, so make sure it looks complete and professional.

Resume Content

Resumes typically include the following information:³

1. **Name**
2. **Contact information**
3. **Summary or objective**
4. **Professional history**
 - a. Company name
 - b. Dates of employment
 - c. Description of roles and responsibilities
5. **Education**
6. **Skills**
7. **Optional (Awards & Achievements, Hobbies & Interests)**

Let's walk through each of these together and start building your resume!

Workshops Available!

Be sure to visit the Detroit at Work Online Community and go to the Workshops or Skill Building tab to find the next **free online Resume Workshop**. You can also watch workshops on resume writing, interviewing skills and – log-in today at www.detroitatwork.com.

Name

Let's start with your name. Simple, right? Well, yes and no. There are a few things to remember when determining how to put your name on your resume. Here are some tips to think through:

- ▶ Nicknames are perfectly acceptable if they are not too informal, unclear, or inappropriate. Avoid unprofessional nicknames or nicknames that will not identify you.
- ▶ **You can provide pronunciation, as needed:** For longer names or names that are difficult to pronounce, you can add phonetic spelling. For example, Marcellius (Mar-cell-us).
- ▶ **You can use your “preferred” name:** If your name is “William,” you may go by “Bill.”
- ▶ **Consistency is key:** Look at your social media and professional profile accounts. What name(s) do you use?

Let's hear from Cassandra about her experience choosing how to list her name on her resume.

Kassandra's Resume

My name is Kassandra Kualitz. My friends call me KK and my family calls me Kassy.

I chose to put my full, formal name on my resume because my full name is on my social media accounts and my email. My last name is often mispronounced, so I added phonetic spelling to my resume. It looked like this:

Kassandra Kualitz (Kwah-leets)

When I was called for a phone interview, the recruiter asked if I preferred Ms. Kualitz or Kassandra. I told her Kassandra or Kassy is fine.



Contact information

You should list, at minimum, your phone number and your email address. Here are some things to consider:



Phone number:

- ▶ The phone number you list should be a personal number that you have regular access to.
- ▶ Make sure your voicemail greeting is professional and your voicemail box is not full.
- ▶ When answering unknown numbers, be sure to answer professionally and politely (*example: Hi, this is Kassy. How can I help you?*).



Email address:

- ▶ The email address you list should be a personal account that you are able to check regularly.
- ▶ Your email address should be professional. We recommend a combination of your first and last name.
- ▶ Keep an eye on your spam and junk folders as some recruiters use software that may send automatic emails, which may go into your spam or junk folders

Below, we have provided examples of professional and unprofessional email addresses and voicemail greetings. See if you agree!

	Professional ✓	Unprofessional ✗
Voicemail Greeting	Hello, you have reached the voicemail of Monique Sullivan. Please leave a message, and I will return your call. Thank you.	Hey, I didn't answer the phone. I might call you back if I have the time. Leave a message if you want.
Email Address	Jane.Doe@gmail.com M_Sullivan@gmail.com	JaneLoveCats@gmail.com Orangefan1990@gmail.com

Summary or objective

A resume objective, sometimes called a summary, is a one or two sentence overview of your short-term professional goals and an explanation of why you're seeking employment.⁴ Your objective should set the stage for your resume. A few tips for writing a resume objective are:

Be concise

A short and direct objective is best. The objective is meant to grab the reader's attention. The remaining resume content should hold their attention.

Tailor it to the position

It is best to make your objective relate directly to the position you're applying for. Using words from the job description that match with your experience is a great way to start.

Lead with your strongest attributes

Think about your strengths, especially those that relate to the role you are applying for.

Note any licenses, certifications, degrees, or credentials that are relevant to the position

It's important to list your credentials in your objective so employers can quickly see your experience and eligibility.

Note how your employment will add value to the company

What can you bring to their organization? You can note your work ethic, ambition, prior successes, and more in this section to increase your chances of moving forward.

Here are a few examples of resume objectives:

Seasoned hostess with 3 years of experience and a ServSafe certification in the restaurant business seeking an opportunity to apply strong communication and customer service skills to provide the best dining experience for customers.

Recent graduate seeking an opportunity to contribute time management and organization skills to benefit a company and team.

Below, there is an activity for you to begin creating your own objective.



Activity. Use the space below to begin drafting your resume objective.

Professional history

Your professional history should include any relevant job you've held in the past. If you've held a lot of jobs, be sure to highlight the positions that are most recent and most related to the job you want.

Always include the **company name**, **dates of employment**, and the **role(s) and responsibilities** you had while employed.

Example:

ABC's Child Care

January 2014 – August 2017

Teacher's Assistant:

- ▶ Assisted in the classroom management of a preschool classroom of 20 children
- ▶ Wrote curriculum, taught lessons and conducted assessments of student's learning
- ▶ Supported teachers in the classroom, including behavior management and preparing lesson materials

Education

You'll want to list any completed degrees, certificates, credentials, and/or licenses under your education section. You may also list any classes, trainings, or workshops you've completed. This includes specialty classes taken in high school.

Example:

**Child Development Associate (CDA)
Credential – Infants and Toddlers**

**Received October 2019
Expires October 2022**

Skills

List your key skills and be sure to call attention to the skills that are most relevant to the job you are applying for. Be sure to visit the [Skills Identification](#) section on page 17 for more information.

Example:

Skills:

- ▶ Patient
- ▶ Caring
- ▶ Time Management
- ▶ Organization
- ▶ Creative

COVER LETTER

Some applications require you to submit a cover letter with your resume. Even if a cover letter is not required, it is a best practice to prepare and submit a cover letter. The extra effort shows your interest in the position and is meant to be a more detailed introduction to you, your strengths and work experience.



Detroit At Work offers cover letter writing support in their workshops. Here are a few tips to writing a successful cover letter:

- ▶ Introduce yourself and the position you are applying for.
- ▶ Express your enthusiasm for wanting the position.
- ▶ Talk about what value you bring to the company.
- ▶ Keep it short and stick to the facts.
- ▶ Share an accomplishment that relates to the position you are applying for.

Tip!

Sometimes online applications ask for you to list your strengths, skills, and other information in an open-text box. We recommend you paste your cover letter in the box if it has enough space there.

To read a sample cover letter, check out [Appendix 3: Sample Cover Letter](#) on page 27.

REFERENCES

Most employers ask for a list of references who they may call to ask about your prior experiences, skills, and personality. References provide “an accurate, third-party assessment of your strengths and weaknesses so managers can hire knowing full information.”⁵ References are often asked about your work ethic – did you show up on time, work well with others or stay professional?

Always ask permission to list someone as a reference **before** doing so. Otherwise, they may be caught off guard when a potential employer calls. Also, be sure to update your references frequently.

Check out the table on the next page that provides examples of professional versus unprofessional references.

Who should be a reference and who should not be a reference?

Professional References



- ▶ Employers
- ▶ Colleagues
- ▶ Teachers
- ▶ Mentors/advisors
- ▶ Former customers
- ▶ Detroit at Work Career Coach

Unprofessional References



- ▶ Close friends
- ▶ Family members
- ▶ Roommates
- ▶ Significant other
- ▶ Anyone who's not expecting a call



Activity. Use the space below to jot down a few people who you think would be good references to use based on the information above. Think about those who can speak to the quality of your work and your work ethic.

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Some employers prefer to obtain a letter of recommendation. If they do, letters of recommendation are typically sent directly to the employer. Your recommender may offer you the chance to review the letter, but they are not required to do so. While a letter of recommendation may not be required, it is a valuable piece of documentation that highlights your experience and qualities directly.



Be sure to request a letter of recommendation from someone who:

- ▶ Knows and feels positively about your work
- ▶ Has the time to write a strong letter
- ▶ Is or was in a position of authority during your previous employment, a class you took, or a volunteer opportunity you were involved in
- ▶ Has no direct familial or personal relationship or ties with you

OTHER DOCUMENTATION

The process of applying for a job may require other documentation, such as:

- ▶ Valid driver's license or photo ID
- ▶ Social Security number/Card
- ▶ Birth certificate
- ▶ Work permits
- ▶ School/education records, such as a diploma, certificate, transcripts, etc.
- ▶ Proof of credentialing such as a certificate or license



Check out the Checklist in [Appendix 4](#) on page 28 which you can use to prepare for the application process.

SKILLS IDENTIFICATION

Even though you may not have held a certain position or had a specific title, you have a skill set. Things such as planning a party, taking care of children, shopping on a budget, running a household, etc. all require skills that are valuable to employers. Let's hear from Hector about his experience identifying his skills.

Identifying Hector's Skills



I was a stay-at-home dad prior to entering the workforce. When I sat down to write my resume, I felt like I didn't have any skills.

My **Detroit At Work** coaches and mentors helped me realize the skills I used to be successful as a stay-at-home dad. They helped me list out what I did and what skills I used each day. It was really helpful!

Skills Identification Name: Hector

Task: Grocery shopping on a budget

Skills: Inventory
Budgeting

Task: Plan & host a birthday party

Skills: Project management
Budgeting
Organization
Communication



Activity. Just like Hector, you have many skills that you've used in your prior jobs, roles, and responsibilities – inside and outside of the workforce.

Take a moment to jot down a few of your skills or responsibilities you have had in the space below. Think about your role at home, hobbies, or prior classes and workshops you have participated in and use these as a starting point. For more help on identifying your skills see [Appendix 5](#) on page 29.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Recruiters and hiring managers will often check your social media account(s) during the interview process.



Because social media is a portrayal of your public presence, it is important to review your social media accounts prior to applying for a job.

- ▶ Make sure the images on your page are appropriate.
- ▶ Eliminate any language that is not appropriate.
- ▶ Ensure your job and education experience is up to date.

Workshops Available!

Be sure to visit the Detroit at Work Online Community and go to the Workshops or Skill Building tab to attend the next **Social Media or Virtual Learning workshop**. You can also watch workshops on a lot of different work-related topics at the Detroit at Work Online Community – log-in today at

www.detroitatwork.com.

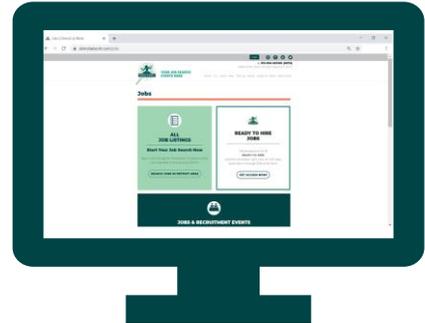
JOB SEARCH

With your resume in order, your references lined up, and your social media and online presence representing you at your best, you are ready to apply for a job!

Detroit At Work is here to help make job searching easy! Visit [the Detroit at Work Online Community](#) and go to the [Job Search tab to view](#) thousands of job listings and to learn about job and recruitment events. www.detroitatwork.com

Other ways to find job postings are:

- ▶ [MI Talent](#)
- ▶ Company websites
- ▶ [LinkedIn.com](#), [Indeed.com](#), [Monster.com](#), and other job search websites



Workshops Available!

Be sure to visit the Detroit at Work Online Community and go to the Workshops or Skill Building tab to attend the next **free Job Search workshop** at your local Detroit at Work Career Center. You can also watch workshops on a lot of different work-related topics at the Detroit at Work Online Community – log-in today at www.detroitatwork.com.

ONLINE APPLICATIONS

Most companies prefer or require applicants to submit their applications online. Here are a few tips for submitting a strong online application that stands out:⁶

- ▶ Read the job description thoroughly.
- ▶ Modify the documents you submit match the job posting.
- ▶ Your **resume** should include related experience.
- ▶ Your **cover letter** should highlight your interest in the job, company and your relevant skills.
- ▶ Complete all fields in the application process. If you don't have an answer, enter "N/A."
- ▶ Some online applications require you to answer questions in their own form. Be sure to complete all fields.
- ▶ Make sure all fields completed in an online form match what's written on your resume.
- ▶ Review all your information thoroughly prior to submitting. **Avoid spelling mistakes!**
- ▶ Lastly, have someone review your application. Detroit At Work is here to help you succeed!

Workshops Available!

Not a computer expert? Not a problem! Be sure to visit the Detroit at Work Online Community and go to the Workshops or Skill Building tab to attend the next **Computers Workshop**, like Intro to Microsoft Office. You can also watch workshops on a lot of different work-related topics at the Detroit at Work Online Community – log-in today at www.detroitatwork.com.

INTERVIEWING

The key to a successful interview is **preparation**. Invest the time to help you prepare and get organized.

There are several different types of interviews:

- ▶ **Phone**– Phone interviews are often the first step in the interview process. You may speak with a hiring manager or a recruiter during this interview, depending on the company.
- ▶ **Online/Virtual**– During virtual interviews, you should expect to speak with a representative of the company on camera through your computer or phone. Be sure to test out the technology ahead of time and in some cases, download the appropriate software onto your computer or phone.
- ▶ **In-person**– In-person interviews are still most common today, as companies recognize the value in meeting someone in person and speaking face to face.

For **all** types of interviews, consider the following:

What should I say?

In most cases, interviewers will be prepared with questions they would like to ask you during the interview, so you do not have to worry about leading the conversation. However, there are a few common interview questions which you should be prepared to answer. They include:

- ▶ Tell me about yourself.
- ▶ Why do you want this job?
- ▶ Tell us about your work experience.
- ▶ What interests you about our company?
- ▶ What strengths can you bring to our company? Why should we hire you?

See [Appendix 6](#) on page 30 for additional common interview questions and examples of how to answer them.

What questions should I ask?

Many interviewers will ask if you have questions about the company or the job. Questions are not a bad thing! Well thought out questions show your interviewer that you are truly interested in the job.

Before your interview, spend time brainstorming questions about the company in case you have an opportunity to ask them during your interview. This preparation will let the interviewer know that you came prepared and organized. See [Appendix 6](#) on page 30 for examples of questions you may consider asking the employer during your interview.

For **in-person** or **virtual** interviews, also ask yourself:

What should I wear to my interview?

It is important to look and feel your best on the day of your interview. A best practice is to wear business casual clothing to an interview. Be sure to practice proper hygiene the day of your interview (such as wearing freshly ironed clothes, not having too strong of fragrances or smells). See the following guidance:

	Professional Attire ✓	Unprofessional Attire ✗
Business Casual Attire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Pants (not jeans) or skirt ▶ Short or long-sleeved blouse ▶ Sweater ▶ Heels or closed-toed shoes ▶ Modest accessories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Graphic Tees ▶ Yoga/Stretch Pants/Leggings ▶ Athletic attire or shorts ▶ Flip Flops ▶ Large accessories (earrings, rings)

What time do I need to arrive for my interview?

Using your professional email address, make sure to email your interviewer to find out where and when the interview will take place.

TIP!

The morning of your interview set an alarm to give yourself plenty of time to get dressed and ready. **Allow extra time for traffic or delayed buses!**

If you can, **practice your route to the interview location a few days before your interview** to get a good sense of timing and direction.

What should I bring?



A printed copy of your resume - Ideally, your interviewer will have reviewed your resume prior to your interview; however, it is best to be bringing an additional copy in case they ask to see it again.



A pen and a pad of paper - You want your interviewer to know that you are **interested** in the job! Taking a pen and paper shows that you are interested, prepared, and ready to take notes if you need to.

FOLLOW UP

Congratulations! You have completed your interview. What next?

FIRST - Be sure to send a thank you note to your interviewer to let them know that you appreciate them taking time to meet with you, and to reiterate your interest in the position. Handwritten thank you notes are preferable; however, emails work well too. If you send an email, be sure to send it within 24 hours of your interview. Your quick acknowledgement demonstrates your character and understanding of follow up.

EXAMPLE:

Dear Ms. Smith,

Thank you for the opportunity to interview for the assistant teacher position at ABC 123 Day Care. It was a pleasure to meet you and see your school.

If you have any questions or wish to speak with me further, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,
Katja Evans

NEXT - If you have not heard back from the company within one week of your interview, it is appropriate to send a follow up email. Check out this resource for guidance on writing a follow up email or letter:

<https://www.thebalancecareers.com/what-to-include-in-an-interview-follow-up-email-2060429>



THE FIRST 90 DAYS OF EMPLOYMENT

Congratulations! You've landed the job. Your hard work up to this point has paid off. But that doesn't mean the work stops.



The first 90 days of employment are important for both you and your employer, as these 90 days are the time when you really learn your job, and your boss learns about you.



Here are some key points to remember for your First 90 Days of Employment:

Preparation

Create an actionable plan for your first day of work that includes:

- ▶ Logistics (transportation, childcare, scheduling, lunch, etc.)
- ▶ Emergencies (if something happens requiring you to leave work early or arrive late)
- ▶ Work attire
- ▶ Gathering your documentation, like ID or Social Security Card

**WE ARE HERE
FOR YOU!**

Detroit at Work staff can help you with this! Your Career Coach can help you prepare for your new job and even has resources, like transportation supports, to make for a smooth start.

Expectations

- ▶ Connect with your employer to clearly understand what is expected of you on your first day, week, month, and so on.
- ▶ You are your best advocate! Don't be afraid to ask for feedback to learn about your performance so far.

Professionalism

- ▶ Being on time is critical, as it demonstrates your responsibility and dependability. Being on time means you are at your workstation and ready to begin working at the start of your shift.
- ▶ Learn and abide by the dress code.
- ▶ Maintain a positive attitude and show a desire to learn.

New Hire Paperwork

- ▶ New hire paperwork can be lengthy and tedious. Ask your employer what documents you will need to bring on your first day to complete the paperwork. Check out [Appendix 4](#) on page 28, which has a list of common documents you may need to bring when you start a new job.

Knowing Your Rights

Detroit At Work can help you learn what is protected in terms of:

- ▶ Religious and cultural preferences
- ▶ Wage and hours laws
- ▶ Discrimination on the job
- ▶ Health and safety of employees

WORK ETHIC

Work ethic is the idea that hard work strengthens character and deserves reward. Your work ethic is among the most essential factors to your success in the workforce. Work ethic is driven by your internal values, principles, morals, and/or beliefs as they relate to work.

While your work ethic is driven internally, it is experienced and viewed externally by your colleagues, peers, and supervisors through your work performance. When in doubt, think of yourself as an employer. If you are paying someone money to do something, how would you want them to behave on the job?

Here are some key points about Work Ethic for you to begin thinking through:

Attendance

Attendance includes when you arrive, leave, and take breaks from work. Take lunch breaks for the allotted time, punch in or record work time accurately, and strive for good attendance. Prioritize days off and only call out for emergencies.

Productivity and Quality of Work

Going above and beyond demonstrates a strong work ethic and dedication to the role and company.

If you complete your tasks, ask for more work or ask how you can support other areas of the company. This demonstrates your willingness to grow, learn, and contribute.

Seek out feedback to see how you are doing. Remember, management will observe you and your performance. What they see can impact your ability to get promotions or new opportunities.

Respect

Part of being a successful employee is being respectful. This includes being respectful of your coworkers, your work environment, your supervisor, and the rules of the employer. It also includes good communication skills.

The workplace has a certain set of unwritten rules on how to show respect and be respectful, which include the following:

- ▶ If you want to address a concern to a coworker or supervisor, do so in a confidential space – you don't need an audience to express your concerns or feelings. Also, try to address the concern in factual, unemotional style, and do not go on the offensive or defensive in addressing the coworker or supervisor.
- ▶ Do not feel pressure to do something outside of your scope of work that makes you feel uncomfortable or unsafe.
- ▶ Your manager may ask you to do something you don't want to do or may say something you don't like – it is important to be polite in your response to them (including body language).
- ▶ It is a sign of respect to look a supervisor or colleague in the eye when speaking to them or being spoken to. This is not a challenge to their authority.
- ▶ All of us are affected by stress, but at varying levels. Know your own personal limits. If you feel yourself getting frustrated, go on a brief break or take a moment to take several deep breathes before addressing the problem.

“Your character, integrity, work ethic, and hard work will bring you more in life than anything else.”
- J. Poston



CONCLUSION AND WRAP UP

You've made it through the Work Readiness Handbook – Congratulations! We hope this handbook is a helpful tool for you on your work readiness journey.

In the following pages, we have included additional worksheets and resources that may be helpful to you in writing a resume, preparing for an interview and more.

APPENDIX 1: S.M.A.R.T. GOALS

As you learned earlier in this guide, S.M.A.R.T. is a framework for goal setting that gives you the best chance of success for achieving your goals. Take a look at the sample S.M.A.R.T. goal below. Then, use the space provided to begin developing your own S.M.A.R.T. goal related to employment.

- 
Specific - Make your goal distinct, allowing you to plan precise steps you can take to achieve it.
- 
Measurable - Define the metrics you will use to evaluate whether you have met your goal.
- 
Attainable- Ensure your goal is realistic to attain within the timeframe you have set to achieve it.
- 
Relevant- Ensure your goal aligns with your values and interests.
- 
Timely- Set a clear time frame within which you aim to reach your goal.

SAMPLE S.M.A.R.T. GOAL

Janay has always loved children and dreams of working with children at a non-profit organization. She is working through her career goal setting process and has used the S.M.A.R.T. framework below to make an effective goal.

Specific



Janay would like to work for a non-profit organization with children.

Measurable



Janay is able to determine whether she's obtained a job in this field or not within the specified time.

Attainable



Janay is confident this goal is realistic. She worked with children in her previous employment. She has invested in herself by developing a strong resume and identifying three job openings in her area. She is currently writing her cover letter to express her interest and explain why she is the right person for the jobs.

Relevant



Janay's goal of working with children is relevant to her interests. It is something she has done previously and has enjoyed.

Timely



Janay would like to obtain employment at a non-profit working with children within 3 months. To do so, she will submit applications to at least 3 open jobs within the next 2 weeks.

MY S.M.A.R.T. GOAL

Utilizing the S.M.A.R.T. framework outlined above, draft an employment goal below. It may be a short-term or a long-term goal.

Specific



Measurable



Attainable



Relevant



Timely

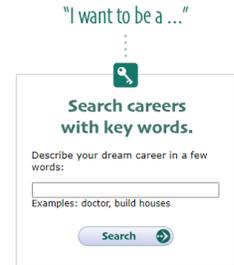




APPENDIX 2: EXPLORING CAREERS AND FINDING JOB MATCHES

For each job listed in the Career Assessment Activity on page 10, answer the questions below.

Use the My Next Move website (www.mynextmove.org) for your research by entering the **job title** in the box under, “I want to be a...”



Q1: What is the job title?	
Q2: What is the salary?	

Next, read the information about the job on the page and watch any videos provided.

Q3: After learning more about this job, am I still interested in it?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
--	------------------------------	-----------------------------

If the answer is yes, continue:

Q4a: What is the required education level for this job?	
Q4b. Do I have the required education level for this job	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

If not, you may want to speak with a career coach about training options.

Q5: Are there many opportunities for this specific job (in other words, what is the “job outlook”?)

The My Next Move tool will provide general information on this question. You may also want to research job opportunities at <https://www.careeronestop.org/ExploreCareers> and talk with a Career Coach about local opportunities.

Q6: Do I have each of the following required for this job? See the specific requirements on the webpage for the job. Check each one as relevant and be honest with yourself.	<input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Skills <input type="checkbox"/> Abilities <input type="checkbox"/> Personality <input type="checkbox"/> Technology skills
--	---

Once you have completed these questions for all the jobs in your Career Assessment list, pull out the jobs that are the best fit for your education and skills levels, interests, and life circumstances. Focus on these as you complete the next steps in your Work Readiness journey.



APPENDIX 3: SAMPLE COVER LETTER

Miranda Bailey
(123) 456-7890
M.Bailey@email.com

August 3, 2020

Dear Hiring Manager,

I am excited to apply for the Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) position at Mercy West Hospital in the Emergency Room (ER). As a CNA with nearly two decades of experience, I am certain that my skillset will be of great use to the team at Mercy West.

As you will see in my resume, I have experience in multiple health care settings, including nursing homes, rehabilitation facilities, and hospitals. I enjoy the hospital setting and feel my quick thinking and seasoned experience will contribute to the ER team.

My time in health care has provided me with ample experience and I hope to obtain a position in which I can support a hard-working team that saves the lives of those in our community.

I appreciate your time reviewing my application and thank you for this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Miranda Bailey



APPENDIX 4: PREPARATION CHECKLIST

Throughout the job searching process, you may need multiple forms of documentation. Use the checklist below as a guide for gathering the documentation you may need. This list is applicable to all phases of the process including job searching, applying for a job, and starting a job.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Updated resume*
<input type="checkbox"/>	Updated cover letter*
<input type="checkbox"/>	Updated references*
<input type="checkbox"/>	Recent letter of recommendation*
<input type="checkbox"/>	Valid driver's license or state photo ID
<input type="checkbox"/>	Social security card/number
<input type="checkbox"/>	Birth certificate
<input type="checkbox"/>	School/education records (diploma, certificate(s), transcripts, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Proof of credentialing (certificate or license)

**If you use this list to prepare for starting a job, be sure to gather the same resume, cover letter, references, and/or letter(s) of recommendation submitted in your application.*

Where can I go to get some of these documents?

Valid driver's license or state photo ID

- ▶ <https://www.michigan.gov/sos/>

Social security card/number

- ▶ <https://www.ssa.gov/>

Birth Certificates:

- ▶ Born after October 1978 in Detroit, Wayne County Clerk - <https://www.waynecounty.com/elected/clerk/birth-certificates.aspx>
- ▶ Born before October 1978 – MDDHS - <https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs>

School/education records:

- ▶ Detroit Public Schools graduates - <https://www.detroitk12.org/resources/students/records/transcripts>
- ▶ WCCCD - http://www.wccd.edu/students/cs_order.htm
- ▶ For transcripts from other schools, please contact them directly

**NEED HELP?
WE'RE HERE!**

If you need help getting some of these documents, Detroit at Work can help.

[Contact us today!](#)

APPENDIX 6: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Common Interview Questions⁷

Use the following guide to brainstorm how to answer common interview questions. There is no need to memorize your answers, but you may want to think of 2-3 “talking points” to cover for each question. This exercise is designed to simply get you thinking about how you would answer these questions during an interview. Check out this resource for guidance on the how to answer these questions:

<https://www.thebalancecareers.com/top-interview-questions-and-best-answers-2061225>

Jot down some ideas in the grey space after each question to start your brainstorming. Feel free to take these notes with you to the interview; it will demonstrate that you are interested in the job and prepared for the interview.

Common Interview Questions

Tell me about yourself.

Don't be afraid to talk yourself up here, particularly about your skills and work experience! In this context it is not bragging; it is simply explaining how your qualifications are a good fit for this job. This is your chance to explain who you are and what you have to offer. Make sure your answers relate to the position you're applying for.

Why do you want this job?

Make sure to explain why you chose to interview for this job or at this particular organization. Of course, it's partly about a paycheck, but the employer wants to hear about the other reasons why you are interested in this particular job or company. You may want to review the section in this guide on the numerous other benefits a job can provide in addition to a paycheck. Take this opportunity to connect with the employer on why you like their company.

**Common
Interview
Questions
Continued**

Why should we hire you?

Again, don't be afraid brag on yourself! What can you bring to the table? What do you have to offer? For example: "I have over 10 years of experience in the restaurant industry"

Why did you leave your previous position?

There are many reasons why you may leave a position, and you must be prepared to answer this question honestly. Stick with the facts, be direct, avoid blaming or complaining, and focus your answer on the future.⁸

Tell me about a challenge you faced in your previous role. How did you resolve it?

Use this question to demonstrate your strengths. Reflect on the challenges you have faced on the job and how you overcame them. Think about how these experiences connect to the position you are applying for. Challenges can include learning a new skill on the job, working on a tight deadline or resolving a problem for a customer. Employers also like to hear what lessons people learned from their challenges or mistakes.

Common Interview Questions Continued

What is your greatest strength?

Employers want to know what you are good at and how your strengths apply to the role you've applied for. Make sure to choose a strength that is relevant to the job description of the role you are interviewing for.

What is your greatest area to strengthen?

Everyone has areas to strengthen – no one is perfect! It is OK to be honest but be sure to explain steps you are taking to improve in this area. For example: "An area I am working on is to learn my limits. I enjoy working and can sometimes put too much on my plate and get overwhelmed. I am working on knowing my limits and communicating my availability better."

Sample Questions to Ask an Interviewer⁹

Questions to Ask an Interviewer

What do you expect from team members in this position?

What is a typical day like in this position at [company name]?

Where do you see [company name] in five years?

What do you enjoy about working at [company name]?

How would you describe the company culture?

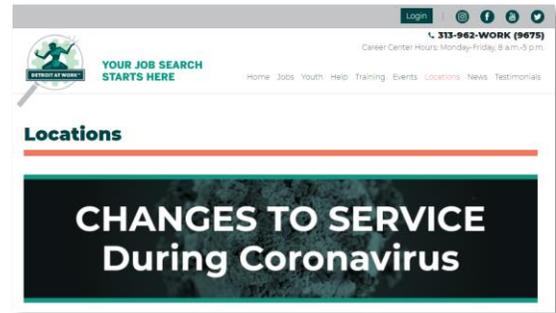
How does [company name] encourage career growth and advancement?

APPENDIX 7: COVID-19 TIP SHEET

Detroit At Work recognizes that these are unprecedented times. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused widespread personal and professional challenges, and we know it has become a barrier for those in search of a job.

We are still here to help you.

Please check our website, <https://detroitatwork.com/>, regularly for updates made to accommodate to state and federal health and safety guidelines and recommendations.



TIPS FOR JOB SEARCHING IN A PANDEMIC

We have compiled a list of tips for you based on the lessons we have learned from supporting job searchers during the pandemic.

Interviews

Interviews are primarily done over the phone or through a video conferencing tool. Be sure to follow the recommendations for virtual interviews in the [Interviews](#) section on page 20. Follow proper etiquette during the call, like muting yourself when you are not talking and staying on video the whole time.

Prepare to be flexible

Now more than ever flexibility is necessary when it comes to job searching. The career you dream of or the job you had your focus on may not be currently available due to the pandemic. While we know this is frustrating, this will require you to be flexible. Explore your skills and broaden your search to positions that need those skills. (See [Skills Identification](#) section on page 17)

Patience is key

Everything is moving slower because of the unknowns and risks associated with the pandemic. It may take companies longer to respond to resumes. Companies may also remove or take down job postings during this time. **It is not you – it is the pandemic.**

Use this time for preparation and organization

As you learned in the Work Readiness Handbook, preparation and organization are essential to setting the stage for your job search. This is the perfect time to prepare a strong resume and cover letter, as well as confirm your references and gather letters of recommendation. Use this time to clean up your social media and, most of all, we hope you use this time to leverage the support of Detroit At Work!

Stay up to date

The job market is changing rapidly. Be sure to keep informed on job postings. Check the Detroit At Work website frequently. If possible, it's worth doing a daily search.

Don't give up!

This is a difficult time for all of us. We completely understand the frustration you are feeling and want to assure you it will pass. **Detroit At Work is here to help you navigate these obstacles.** Be sure to connect with us online or over the phone. If you prefer to visit a Career Center, check our website for information on hours and appointments.

Health and safety always comes first

Whether you are in the very beginning stages of your job search or you have landed the job and are in your first 90 days, your health and safety always come first. Be sure to keep up to date on and abide by the health and safety protocols set by the State, the City, and the employers.



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ABOUT DETROIT AT WORK

Detroit at Work started in 2017 to give Detroiters one place to go for help in finding a job. Detroit at Work has connections to jobs and training programs in growing career areas like healthcare, technology, manufacturing and logistics, construction, utilities and small business.

At Detroit at Work, we know it can be hard finding a job, or even getting to a job. We are here to help you. If you need help with any of these services, let us know:

- ▶ Transportation
- ▶ Childcare
- ▶ Utility Assistance
- ▶ Legal Aid
- ▶ Housing and Emergency Shelter Support
- ▶ Food
- ▶ Applying for state benefits through MiBridges
- ▶ Criminal record expungement

From connections to training programs, assistance with your job search or connections to partner organizations, Detroit at Work staff is here to get the help you need!

Visit our website to learn more:

www.DetroitAtWork.com

CONTACT US

On-line

Access workshops, find training programs, apply to jobs and more through the Detroit at Work Online Community. Sign up or Login in at www.detroitatwork.com

In-Person

Detroit at Work has nine locations throughout Detroit. Call to make an appointment at the Career Center closest to you: 313-962-WORK(9675)

Over the Phone

Our Call Center staff is ready and able to answer any questions you may have about Detroit at Work and our services: 313-962-WORK(9675)



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