



*Easy Read Edition*

**Crisis In Our  
Communities:  
Racial Disparities in  
Community Living**

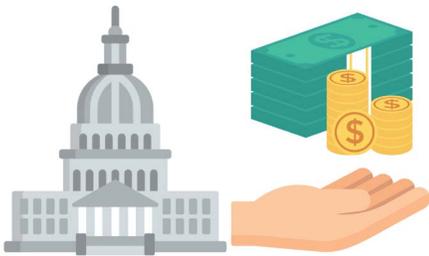
**Part 2: Getting Employment**

# Words to Know in Part 2



## Employment

Employment is when you have a job that you are paid for.



## Public Benefits

Public Benefits are when the government helps us pay for something that we need. People usually get public benefits if they don't have enough money to afford these things on their own.



## Unemployment

Unemployment is when someone wants to have employment, but isn't working.



## Vocational Rehabilitation

Vocational Rehabilitation is a support provided by the state government to help people with disabilities get jobs. It is sometimes called VR for short. The supports VR gives depends on what each person needs.

## 2. Getting Employment

### What is employment?



For many people with disabilities, employment is an important part of living in a community.



Employment means having a job that you are paid for.



For most people a job is important because it is a way to get money.



A job can help us have enough money.



It can help us pay for a good place to live.

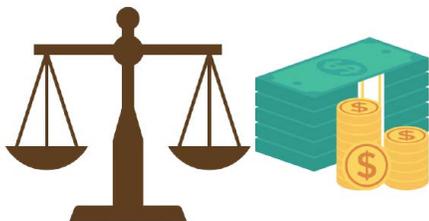


It can help us pay for food and medicine.



A job helps us be part of our community.

For most people, a good job is a job that:



- Pays a fair amount of money.



- Is safe.



- Matches their skills.



- Fits their interests and what they like doing.



- Connects them to coworkers and the community.



Most people who do not have jobs don't have a lot of money.

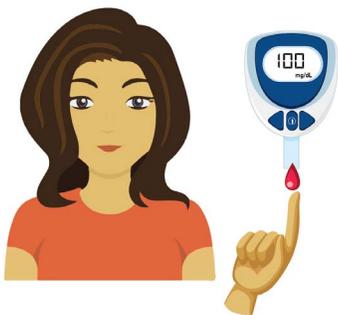


Not having a lot of money can make people's health worse.



Sometimes, this can cause disability.

For example:



Juanita has diabetes.



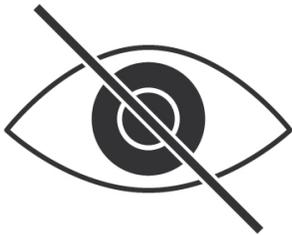
Juanita doesn't have enough money.



She can't afford her diabetes medicine.



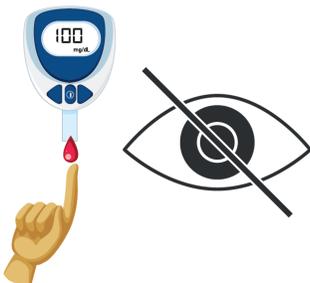
So she gets more sick.



She stops being able to see.



Now Juanita has two disabilities.



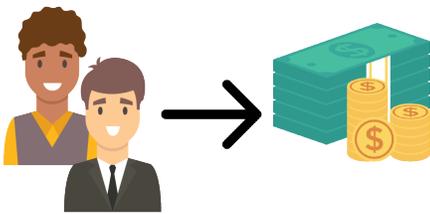
She has diabetes, and she is blind.



Having a disability can make it harder to have some jobs.



It can make it harder to make enough money.



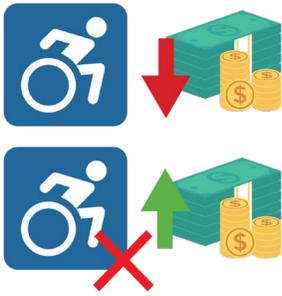
Race has a big effect on how much money we have.



People of color usually have much less money than white people.



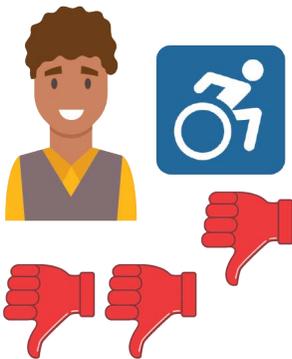
People of color also have higher rates of disability than white people.



People with disabilities also make a lot less money than people without disabilities.

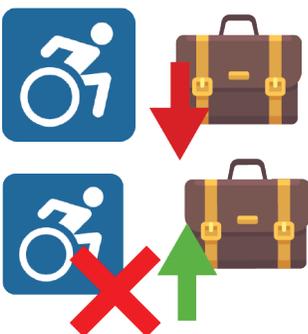


A lot of times people experience both of these things.



They can have more problems because of race and disability together.

## Race and Disability Inequality in Employment



People with disabilities have jobs less often than people without disabilities.



People of color with disabilities have jobs even less often.



When someone doesn't have a job we say that they are **unemployed**.



Three quarters of people without disabilities have jobs



But less than a third of people with disabilities have jobs.



Black people with disabilities have jobs even less often.



Only a quarter of Black people with disabilities have jobs.



This means people of color with disabilities have much less money.



Having less money means people of color with disabilities can lose their homes.



They lose their homes more often than white people without disabilities.



It means people of color with disabilities have trouble getting decent food.



It means people of color with disabilities have trouble staying healthy.

## Having to Choose Between Work and Benefits.



One of the most important reasons to work is to have enough money.



Having enough money is important to keep us healthy.



We need money for food.



We need money for medicine.



We need money to have a place to live.



People with disabilities often need to spend more money to stay healthy.



Some things people with disabilities need cost too much to pay for on our own.



A lot of jobs don't pay enough to help us afford these things.



A lot of people with disabilities need to use public benefits to afford these things.



Public benefits are when the government helps us pay for something we need.

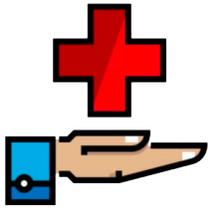
Some types of public benefits include:



- Rent vouchers to help pay for an apartment to live in.



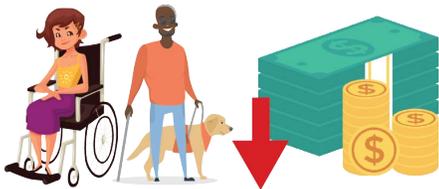
- Food assistance to help pay for enough food to stay healthy.



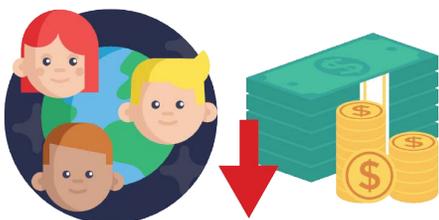
- Medicaid to help us get health care and pay for disability supports we need.



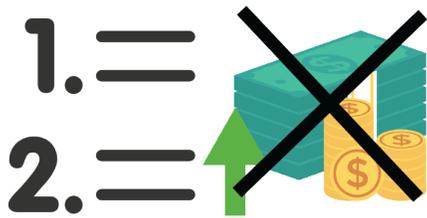
- SSI and SSDI which give us money for other things we need.



Some public benefits are made for people with disabilities who don't have a lot of money to use.



Others are made for anyone who doesn't have a lot of money.



But most of them have rules that say you can't use them if you have too much money.



Some of them even have rules that say you can't save much of your money.



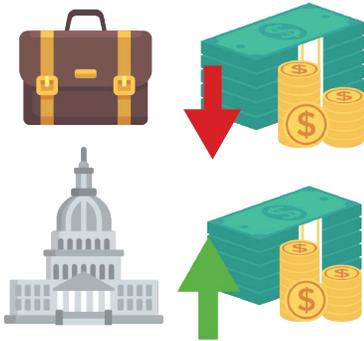
This can be a big problem for people with disabilities who want to work.



A lot of times we need these public benefits.



They help with a lot of things we need.



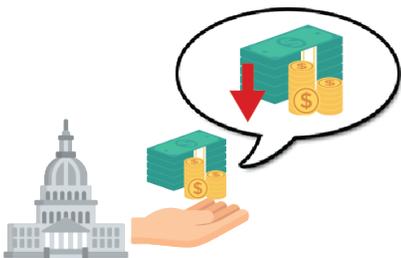
A lot of jobs don't pay enough money to pay for what public benefits help us with.



It can take a long time to get public benefits.



It can be hard to get them back if you lose them.



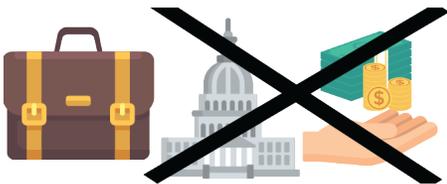
But public benefits have rules that say you can't keep them if you have too much money.



The amount of money public benefits say is too much is very low.



It is usually a lot less than people need to have to stay healthy.



So a lot of people who start to work even a little can lose all of their public benefits.



This can make it very hard for us to work when we want to.



Sometimes it means we have to work a lot less than we want to.

# Unequal Job Opportunities Caused By School and Policing.



School is important for finding jobs.



The more school we have, the more jobs  
we can do.



We're more likely to find work that fits our  
skills.



We're more likely to find work that pays  
enough money.



The government thinks that everyone should finish high school.



Everyone has a right to this much school



It is important to at least finish high school to find work.



Not having a high school diploma makes it harder to find work.



People who don't finish high school are less likely to have a job.



They are unemployed more often.



When they do find jobs, they are often not very good.



These jobs pay less money.



These jobs are often only for a short time.



Or they are hard to keep.



People are more likely to get sick or injured doing these jobs.



People with disabilities often don't finish school.



More than 1 in 5 disabled adults haven't finished high school.



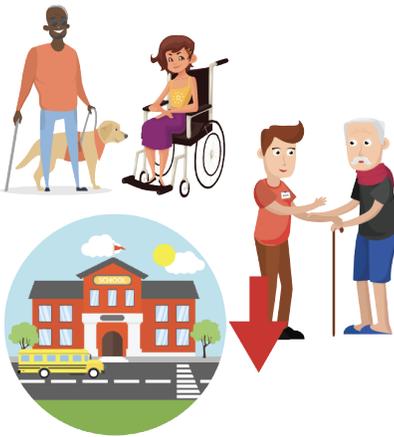
It is worse for many people of color with disabilities.



One out four of Black adults with disabilities haven't finished high school.



Over a third of Hispanic adults with disabilities haven't finished high school.



Many people with disabilities do not get the supports they need in school.



For people of color with disabilities, this problem is even worse.



Many students of color do not get their disabilities recognized.



Schools with a lot of students of color do not get as much money for supports.



Students of color are more likely to get suspended or expelled for their behavior.



As a result, many people of color with disabilities do not get as much school as they have a right to.



Another thing that makes it hard to find work is when people are put in prison.



A lot of jobs do not want to hire people who have been in prison.



Many jobs try to find out if someone has been in prison when they apply.



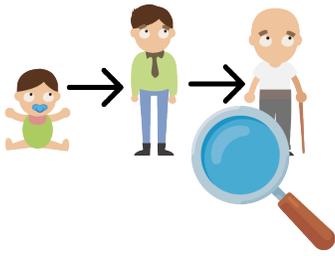
Jobs use a number of ways to find this out.



People of color are often more likely to be put in prison.



This means that people of color can have a harder time getting jobs.



A study in 1997 looked at people over a long time and how their life went.



It found that nearly half of Black men were arrested by the age of 23.



For white men, the number is closer to 1/3.



People of color with disabilities are even more likely to get arrested and put in prison.



People of color with disabilities are less likely to get diagnosed.



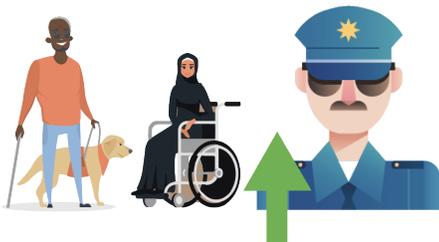
They are less likely to get the supports they need.



They are more likely to be in communities that are heavily policed.



This includes police in schools.



People of color with disabilities without support are more likely to come in contact with police.



They are more likely to get arrested.



They are more likely to get sent to prison.



This makes it much harder to find employment.

## Disparities in Job Supports: Vocational Rehabilitation



Employment supports are important for people with disabilities.



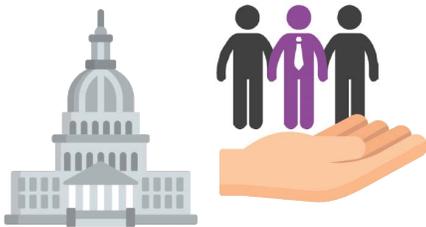
Employment supports help people with disabilities find and keep work.



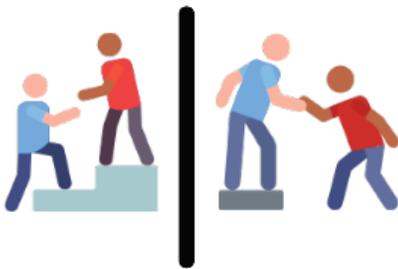
One important employment support is Vocational Rehabilitation, or VR for short.



Vocational Rehabilitation is a support to help people with disabilities get jobs.



It is provided by the state government.



The supports VR gives depends on what each person needs.

Some of the things VR can do are:



- Tests to identify job skills, strengths, challenges, and how ready we are for work.



- Job skills training before work.



- Job skills training during work.



- Help deciding what kind of job someone wants.



- Help finding a job.



- Working with employers to get accommodations.



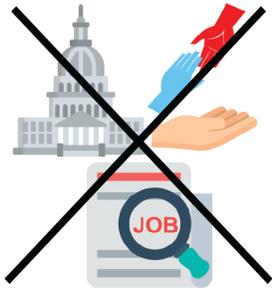
Vocational rehabilitation can help us find work in our communities.



It can help us find jobs that fit our skills and interests.



It can help us succeed in these jobs.



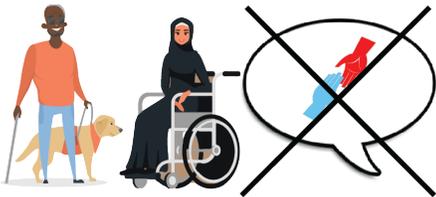
But vocational rehabilitation isn't working for everyone.



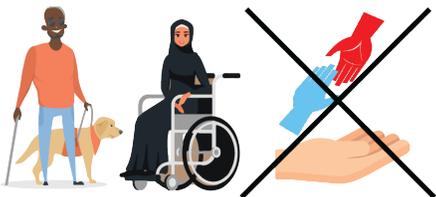
There are big racial disparities.



Black people don't get vocational rehabilitation as often as white people.



They don't get told about vocational rehabilitation as often.



Black people are less likely to get vocational rehabilitation services.



When they get services, Black people are less likely to have good outcomes.



They're less likely to have jobs or be ready to work after vocational rehabilitation.



When they do get jobs after VR, they don't pay as well as white people who get VR.



Black people who receive VR often do not feel it works well for them.



Black people say they don't get the support they need.



Black people say that VR doesn't match them to jobs that fit their skills.



VR providers often do not know enough about racism in workplaces to help about it.



Vocational Rehabilitation does not work as well for Black people.



Other racial minority groups also have challenges with VR.



We know that Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders also get less VR service.



We don't know a lot about why.



A lot of times we don't ask the right questions to understand their experiences.



There are a lot of Asian-American and Pacific Islander communities but they are often treated like one group.



This makes it hard to know what problems they have getting VR.

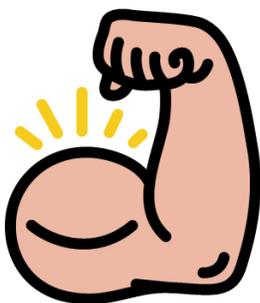


It makes it hard to know how to make sure VR is working for everyone.

## Hiring Discrimination



Everyone deserves to have good work.



Good work should be work that fits your strengths.



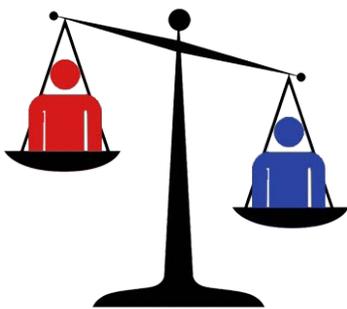
It should be work that you want to do.



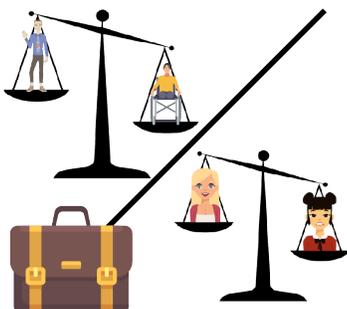
It can be very hard for people of color with disabilities to find good work.



One thing that can make it hard to find good work is discrimination.



Discrimination is when people are treated unfairly because of who they are.



There are many different types of discrimination.



People of color with disabilities can experience discrimination because of their race.



They can experience discrimination because of their disability.



Sometimes people can experience discrimination over something else because of their race or disability.



Employers should not discriminate.



It is illegal to discriminate against someone when you are hiring them.



It is illegal to discriminate against someone in their job.



But it is hard to prove when discrimination happens.



Some types of discrimination make it hard to tell if discrimination happened.



Sometimes employers look for other reasons to not hire or to fire someone.



They may do this so it doesn't look like discrimination.



For example, many employers will ask if people have been to jail or prison..



Most of the time, this doesn't matter for your job.



But employers ask anyway.



They decide not to hire people who have been to jail.



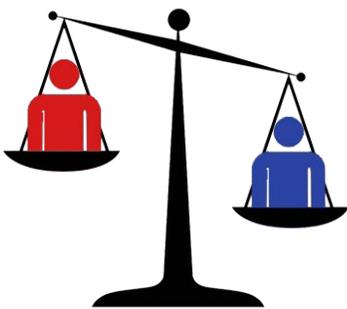
People of color are more likely to go to jail than white people.



This is because of racism.



If an employer doesn't hire people who have been to jail, they are more likely not to hire people of color.



That can be discrimination.



But it's harder to catch.



Another example is, many jobs will ask people to have a driver's license.



Some jobs do need people who drive.



But for a lot of jobs that ask this, it doesn't matter at all.



A lot of employers will ask people to have one anyway.



A lot of people with disabilities don't have a driver's license.



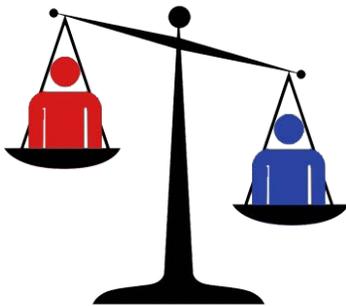
A lot of us have to find other ways to get around.



A lot of people who aren't born in America have a hard time getting a driver's license.



But many jobs will ask for a driver's license even though this is not part of the work.



Asking for a driver's license when a job does not need one can be a way to discriminate too.



A lot of employers use computers to help decide who to hire.



But this can just be a new way to discriminate.



Discrimination can happen even without a person choosing to discriminate.



Sometimes computer programs are used to decide which applicants to hire.



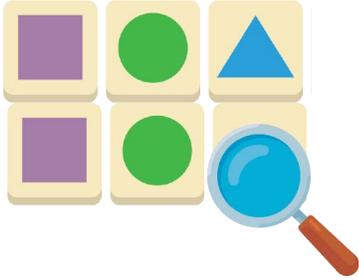
These programs can look at writing.



These programs can look at resumes or work history.



These programs can look at videos of interviews.



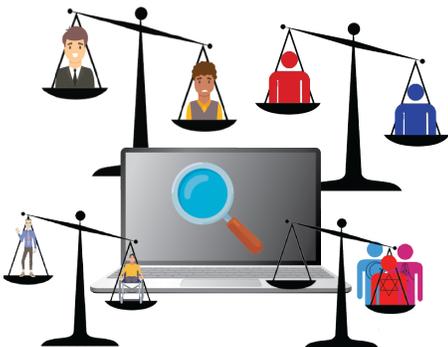
These programs look for patterns.



They find patterns that successful people had in the past.



They find patterns that unsuccessful people had in the past.



But computer programs can cause discrimination in many ways.



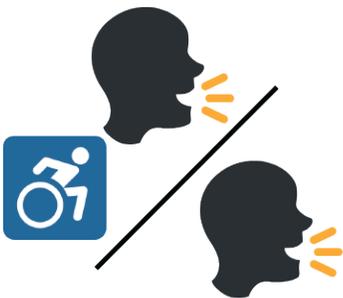
Computer programs may not have seen a lot of people with disabilities.



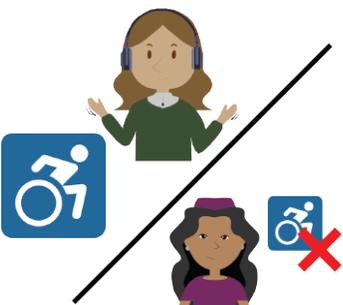
They might not have seen a lot of people of color.



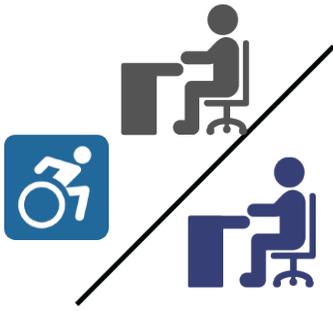
So the programs don't understand what is normal for us.



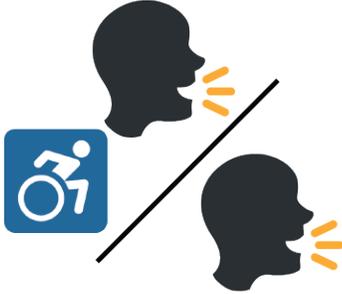
A lot of times our disabilities mean the way we talk is different than people expect.



The way we look might be different too.



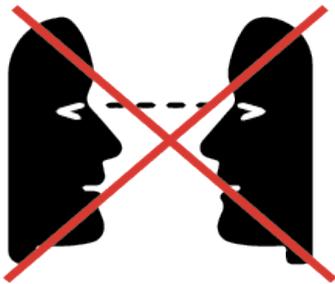
We might not be able to sit in a chair the same way as other people.



Our voices might sound different.



We might move differently



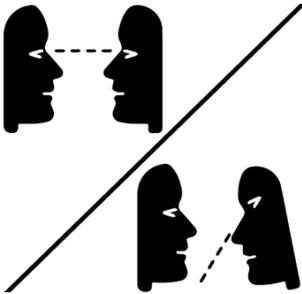
When we talk we might not look where people expect us to look.



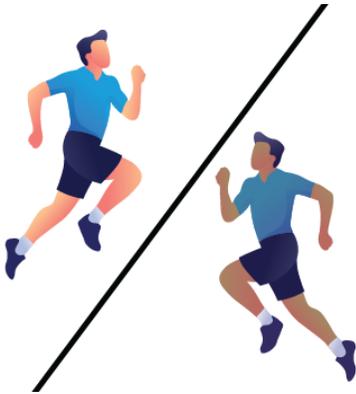
Most of the time this has nothing to do with the jobs we want.



People from different cultures expect people to do different things too.



Different cultures expect people to look in different places when talking.



They can expect people to move in different ways when talking.



People can speak English differently if they learned it when they were older.



Most of the time these also don't have anything to do with the jobs we want.



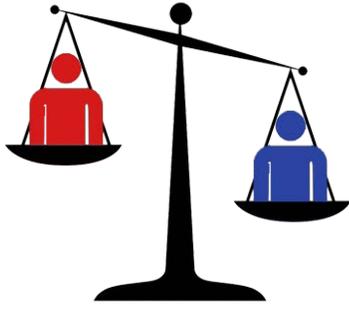
But a computer program might not know that.



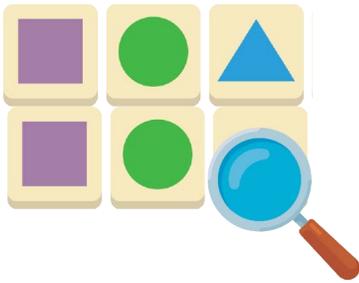
If people sit or speak a certain way, a program may think it means they will be unsuccessful.



The program might not be good at knowing whether they will be successful.



Even when programs know about people of color with disabilities, discrimination can still happen.



Programs use patterns to decide who will be good at a job.



Sometimes, there will be a pattern where people with disabilities had problems with a job.



Or, there will be a pattern where people of color had problems with a job.



But that might be for reasons the program doesn't know about.



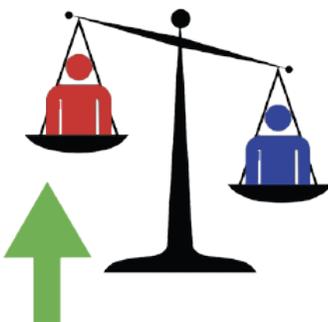
Sometimes people have problems with a job because of discrimination.



The computer program doesn't know this.



It might still say someone will be bad at a job.



It could keep the discrimination going.

# What can we do?

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## Let Us Earn Enough Money To Be Healthy Without Losing Benefits



People should be able to do the jobs that are best for them.



Many people cannot work how they want.



They worry about losing benefits.



A lot of benefits we need say that we can't have much money or we lose them.



The government should let us keep more money.



People with disabilities should be able to make at least enough to stay healthy.



This will let us look for jobs that we want without worrying it will harm us.



People should not lose the benefits they rely on.



Many jobs do not pay enough to pay for our needs on our own.



Many jobs do not help us pay for doctors or supports.



Many people with disabilities rely on our doctors and supports to be able to work.



If we lose these supports, we won't be able to work.



Making sure we don't lose these supports when we start to work is important.

# Make Sure Everyone Gets A Good Education



Education is important for employment.



It is hard to get a good job without enough school.



But not everyone has a fair chance to get enough school.



People with disabilities don't get enough school.



People of color don't get enough school.



People of color with disabilities especially don't get enough school.



This means we have more problems getting good jobs.



It is important to address inequality in education.



Inequality hurts students of color with disabilities



A lot of students of color with disabilities do not get the support they need.



Every student with a disability needs to be able to get support.



Schools need to know which students have disabilities.



Schools need to provide the supports their students with disabilities need.



Schools need to make sure they are doing this for every student with disabilities.



They need to make sure students of color with disabilities aren't left out.



They need to make sure students of color with disabilities aren't treated unfairly.



Schools can have different problems that keep them from doing this.



Some schools need more money.



Schools in poorer communities have less money.



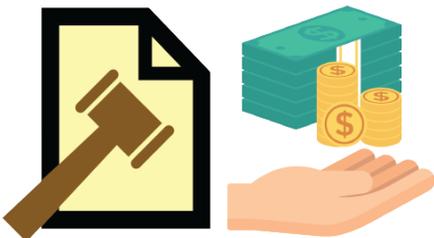
Schools in communities of color have less money.



A lot of time policies kept these communities from getting money.



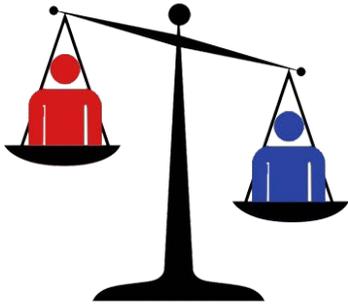
These schools do not get the money they need to give their students support.



These schools should get more money.



This will help them make sure students get the support they deserve.



Some schools have problems with discrimination.



These schools may not treat every student fairly.



They may be more likely to give white students support than students of color.



Sometimes schools punish students of color more harshly than white students.



Sometimes students of color in these schools get much less support.



They get punished instead.



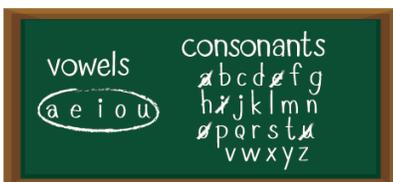
Schools should not discriminate against students.



The government needs to make sure that these schools stop discriminating.



Some students are learning to speak and read English.



These students may take classes to learn English.



Not everyone who is learning English has a disability.



But students with disabilities who are learning English can have trouble getting support.



Some schools can't tell when someone who is learning English has a disability.



A lot of students who are learning English receive the wrong support.



Some students receive support for disabilities they don't have.



But also many people with disabilities who are learning English don't get the support they need.



Schools need to do better at providing the right support for English learners.

## Fixing Problems with Employment Supports



Employment supports are important.



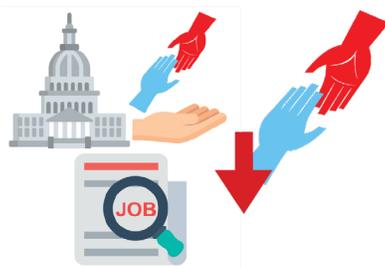
They help people with disabilities who are looking for work.



But they don't work as well as they should for people of color.



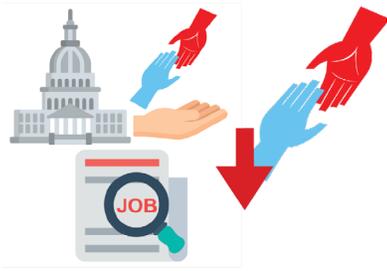
Vocational rehabilitation is an important employment support.



But VR isn't working well for everyone.



It isn't working well for people of color.



People of color with disabilities don't get sent to VR as often.



People of color with disabilities have a harder time getting help from VR.



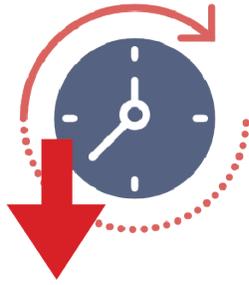
One way we can fix this is to give VR more money.



If VR has enough money, more people can use it.



They can hire more people to help everyone who needs it.



Fewer people will have to wait for services.



Fewer people will be denied.



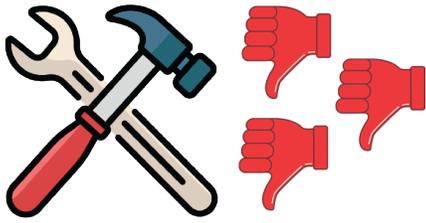
This can help address some problems that keep VR from helping people of color.



But money won't fix all the problems by itself.



We need to do more to help people of color with disabilities get VR.



This means fixing the problems people of color with disabilities have with it.



We need to make sure VR is helpful to people of color.



We should make sure VR is not discriminating.



We should make sure VR helps people of color find jobs that fit their skills and interests.



We should also make sure that VR is trained to help people of color more.



A lot of people of color say that VR doesn't know how to help with racism at work.



VR needs to know how to help people who experience racism at work.



This is a place where VR needs more training to help people of color.



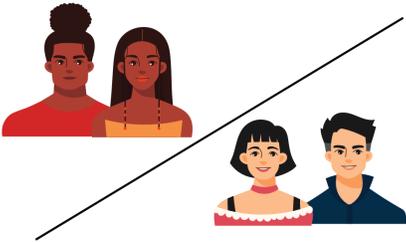
We need to learn more about how VR works for different groups.



We need to be specific about the groups we're looking at.



We need to make sure we understand them correctly.



We can't treat different groups with different experiences like one big group.



We need to ask more questions about specific disabilities.



We need to ask more questions about specific racial groups.



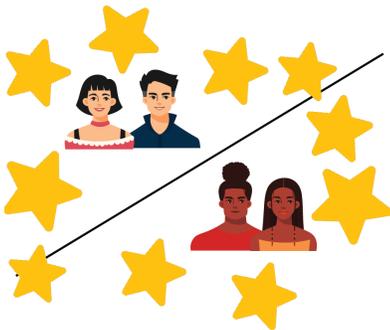
If a group is too big we need to ask if there are different experiences we're missing.



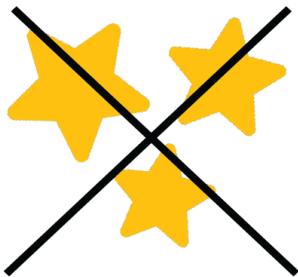
For example, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are treated as one big group.



But they are often a lot of different groups.



They can have important differences.



If we treat them as one big group we can miss those differences.



We might need to look at more specific groups to figure out the problems they have.



Once we do that we can learn who has problems with VR.



We can start to learn why those problems exist

## Stopping job discrimination



Discrimination is unfair.



Discrimination is wrong.



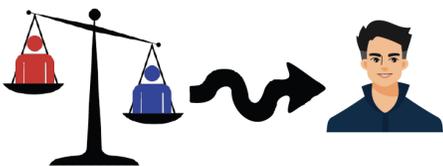
Job discrimination is also against the law.



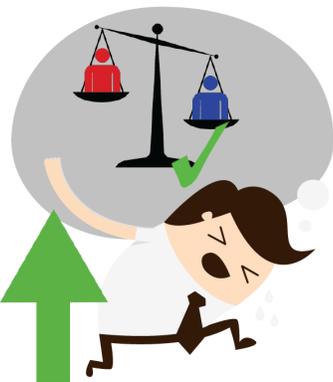
We need to make sure that jobs do not discriminate against people.



When jobs discriminate it can be hard to prove.



Sometimes jobs discriminate indirectly.



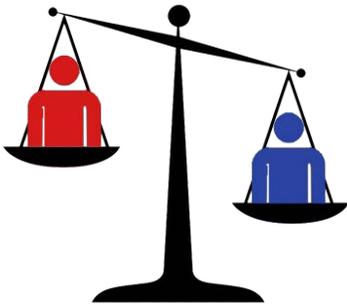
This can make it even harder to prove.



Sometimes jobs say we need to be able to do things that aren't part of the job.



Or they ask questions that don't have anything to do with the job.



Sometimes these types of questions are used to discriminate.



Employers should stop doing this.



Some places have laws to to stop indirect discrimination.



Sometimes they say employers can't ask if someone has been put in prison.



This is an example of how we can stop discrimination.



But sometimes when we tell employers not to discriminate in one way it's not enough.



Employers start discriminating in other ways instead.



It's important to make sure employers aren't discriminating at all.



We need to stop employers from breaking other laws.



This means we have to do better at stopping employers who break the law.



We also should think about changing the law to make it easier to prove discrimination.



Some employers use computer programs to help with hiring decisions.



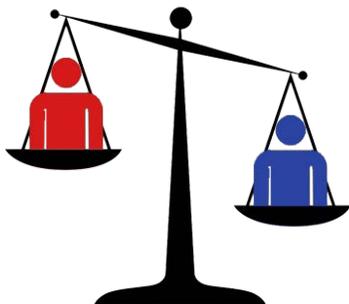
Computer programs also make it hard to tell when discrimination happens.



It is hard to know what information a computer program was given.



It is hard to know how the computer program makes its decisions.



But computer programs that use information based on discrimination will also discriminate.

1.= 

2.=



It is important to make rules so we can be sure that computer programs are not discriminating.

1.=

2.=



These rules should say how computer programs can be made.

1.=

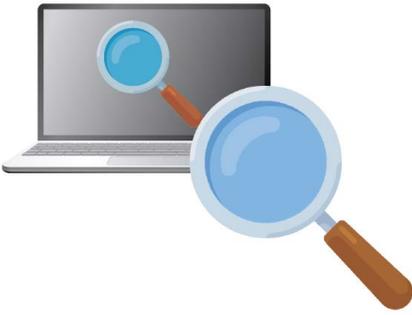
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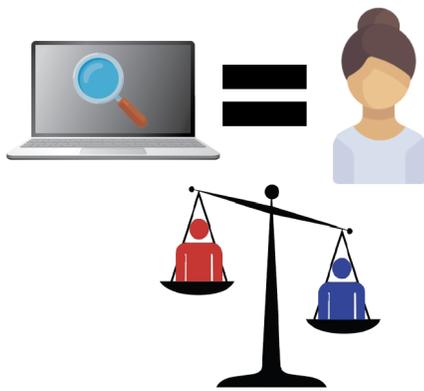
They should say what information they are allowed to use.



They should say that information isn't fair if it doesn't look at different groups of people.



They should have a way to tell if a computer program is discriminating.



They should say that discrimination by a computer program will be treated like discrimination by a person.



