Position Title:	Employment and Independent Living Specialist
Reports To:	EM/IL Operations Manager
Location:	Community-based Salem area; travel varies
Classification:	Full-Time, Non-Exempt (Hourly)
Schedule:	40 hours per week; flexible schedule may include evenings and weekends based on service needs
Compensation Range:	$24.00 - $30.00 per hour
Benefits:	Paid holidays, paid time off, health insurance, employee assistance program, short- and long-term disability coverage, life insurance, retirement benefits, and professional development opportunities

Application Deadline: Open Until Filled

A cover letter, resume, completed application and list of three names for references and their contact information must all be received to be considered. If any of the three application materials are missing or incomplete, your submission may not be considered. Please email all materials to apply@bridgesoregon.org.

Organization Summary:

Established in 2017, Bridges Oregon is a linguistically and culturally specific and responsive statewide nonprofit organization serving Oregonians who are Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing, late-deafened, and people with additional disabilities or hearing loss. Our mission is to facilitate equity and inclusion and to provide a bridge to opportunities through advocacy, education, communication, and community-based services.

Position Summary:

The Employment and Independent Living Specialist provides individualized employment and independent living services that help people pursue meaningful work, greater independence, and full participation in their communities. Specialists facilitate, educate, advocate, problem-solve, and coordinate services while maintaining person-centered, culturally responsive, and professionally accountable practices.

Bridges Oregon Employment/IL Specialist Duties and Responsibilities:

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Analyze, plan, implement, and coordinate services for individuals receiving Employment and/or Independent Living services.
- Develop and maintain relationships with employers, community partners, state and local agencies, and other systems that support participant goals.
- Support individuals in identifying and pursuing employment and independent living goals through person-centered planning, skill development, advocacy, and access to community resources.
- Promote self-advocacy and support individuals in making informed choices rather than making decisions for them.
- Maintain required documentation, data tracking, service records, billing records, reports, and other program documentation accurately and on time.
- Monitor assigned caseloads, service authorizations, schedules, progress, and support needs and promptly communicate significant changes to the appropriate parties.
- Follow individual emergency procedures, health protocols, safety plans, and service-specific requirements.
- Protect privacy, confidentiality, dignity, and rights of individuals receiving services.
- Review, complete, and submit incident-related documentation within required timelines.
- Maintain confidential participant files and ensure required records are current and organized.
- Identify service barriers, problem-solve concerns, and coordinate with employers, community partners, residential providers, case managers, VR counselors, brokerages, and other stakeholders as appropriate.
- Maintain professional boundaries, sound judgment, and effective communication in remote, community, and employment settings.

- Participate in ongoing training and professional development to maintain required competencies and stay current with system changes.
- Assist with monthly, quarterly, and annual statistical and narrative reports as assigned by the Operations Manager

Employment Services:

Assessment and Career Exploration

- Conduct or support authorized assessments, work experiences, and career exploration in competitive integrated employment settings.
- Identify and develop appropriate community-based assessment or exploration sites.
- Document observations, strengths, interests, support needs, and employment-related outcomes in required formats.

Marketing and Job Development

- Assist individuals with identifying skills, interests, employment goals, and potential job opportunities.
- Engage businesses to identify opportunities for assessments, work experiences, job development, and competitive integrated employment.
- Support resumes, applications, interviews, workplace communication, accommodations, and employment-related skill development.

Job Coaching and Retention

- Provide orientation, training, and job coaching in competitive integrated employment settings.
- Use systematic instruction and individualized support strategies with the goal of increasing independence and appropriately fading supports.
- Facilitate communication with employers and coworkers when authorized and appropriate.
- Support job retention, workplace problem-solving, accommodations, and ongoing employment success.

Independent Living Services:

- Assist individuals with accessing community and public resources, including transportation, Social Security, housing, benefits, emergency and non-emergency services, and other community supports.
- Provide instruction and support related to banking, budgeting, wage reporting, bill payment, and other authorized financial skill-building activities.
- Provide self-advocacy training related to accommodations, interpreters, communication access, employment, appointments, and other community interactions.
- Provide or coordinate assistive technology assessment and training related to work, home, communication, and independent living.
- Provide social and community participation skill development appropriate to the individual's goals.
- Provide authorized daily living and independent living skill training, including housekeeping, laundry, shopping, meal preparation, scheduling, organization, and community navigation.

Minimum Qualifications:

- Must be at least 18 years of age.
- High school diploma or equivalent required.
- Three or more years of combined experience working with Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing, and/or I/DD communities preferred or an equivalent combination of relevant education and experience.
- Excellent interpersonal, sign language/verbal, written communication, and organizational skills.
- Ability to work independently and remotely using video platforms, telephone, email, text, and in-person meetings.
- Ability to problem-solve, organize, prioritize, and complete work with limited supervision.
- Ability to maintain appropriate professional boundaries and good judgment.
- Ability to work effectively with individuals from diverse backgrounds and lived experiences.
- Knowledge of community resources and systems or the ability to learn them quickly.
- Ability to represent Bridges Oregon's mission and values professionally with participants, employers, partners, and community members.
- Proficiency with Google Workspace and common office/data systems and ability to learn agency-specific documentation and billing platforms.

Transportation and Physical Requirements:

- Dependable transportation, a valid driver's license, and proof of required automobile insurance when driving is part of assigned duties.

- Ability to travel within assigned service areas and occasionally statewide as required.
- Ability to communicate frequently with colleagues, participants, employers, and community partners.
- Ability to occasionally work outdoors in cold or high temperatures.
- Ability to occasionally lift or carry up to 20 pounds.

Required Training and Professional Certification:

- Maintain current CPR and First Aid certification as required by applicable program standards.
- Complete required pre-service training, mandatory abuse-reporting training, service-plan orientation, and other required training before independently providing services when applicable.
- Complete Department-approved competency-based supported-employment training within required timelines.
- Complete applicable Core Competencies within required timelines.
- Complete continuing education and job-related training required by ODDS and VR, other applicable program standards, contracts, funding sources, or Bridges Oregon policy.
- Obtain an Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators (ACRE), Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP), or other Bridges Oregon-approved professional employment certification within one year of hire. This is a Bridges Oregon professional standard and applies even when a specific external rule does not independently require certification for every EM/IL Specialist
- Maintain professional certification in good standing and complete continuing education needed to maintain the credential.
- Complete individual-specific training, emergency procedures, behavior/support-plan training, and health or safety training before providing supports when applicable.

Required Professional Competencies:

- Ability to build positive, respectful relationships with participants, families, colleagues, employers, and community partners.
- Demonstrated cultural responsiveness and commitment to accessible, person-centered services.
- Ability to advocate effectively while respecting individual choice and self-determination.
- Strong critical-thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making skills.
- High level of organization, follow-through, and documentation accuracy.
- Ability to remain professional and composed in challenging or rapidly changing situations.
- Strong work ethic, reliability, flexibility, and willingness to learn new approaches and systems.

Compensation Administration:

Individual rates of pay are established by Bridges Oregon within the approved compensation range based on lawful and relevant factors such as experience, education, training, qualifications, seniority, and organizational compensation practices. The compensation range may be periodically reviewed and adjusted by Bridges Oregon. Individual wage changes, including cost-of-living or merit adjustments, are documented separately and do not require a new job description unless the position classification, essential functions, or approved compensation structure changes.

Equal Opportunity:

Bridges Oregon is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We are committed to building an inclusive workforce that reflects and respects the communities we serve. Qualified applicants from historically underrepresented and marginalized communities are encouraged to apply.

Employee Acknowledgment:

I acknowledge that I have received and reviewed this position description and understand the essential duties, professional standards, training requirements, and expectations of the Employment and Independent Living Specialist position. I understand that this position is hourly and non-exempt and that my individual rate of pay is documented separately by Bridges Oregon. I understand that this position description may be updated as program, regulatory, contractual, funding, or organizational requirements change.

Employee Name: _____

Employee Signature: _____

Supervisor Signature: _____

Effective Date: _____