

**CARF
Survey Report
for
The Arc
Fresno/Madera
Counties**

Organization

The Arc Fresno/Madera Counties
4490 East Ashlan Avenue
Fresno, CA 93726

Organizational Leadership

Cameron J. St. Clair, Program Manager
Lori S. Ramirez, Executive Director

Survey Dates

March 13-14, 2017

Survey Team

Marcy Nelson, M.S., Administrative Surveyor
Linda Clouse, Program Surveyor
James Murphy, Program Surveyor

Programs/Services Surveyed

Community Employment Services: Employment Supports
Community Employment Services: Job Development
Organizational Employment Services

Previous Survey

July 24-25, 2014
Three-Year Accreditation

Survey Outcome

Three-Year Accreditation
Expiration: April 30, 2020



Three-Year Accreditation

SURVEY SUMMARY

The Arc Fresno/Madera Counties has strengths in many areas.

- The Arc Fresno/Madera Counties has demonstrated its commitment to the dignity of persons with disabilities in many areas.
- The building on Ashlan Avenue was recently acquired and renovated. It provides a clean and attractive location that values the staff and clients.
- The longevity of key staff members demonstrates longtime commitment by qualified and caring administrative staff members. They understand that, by doing a good job, they support the direct line staff in ways that move the organization toward the mission.
- The Arc Fresno/Madera Counties is creative in finding solutions to barriers that prevent it from meeting its mission. It is appreciated by funders for this creativity and has established a very positive local presence in the community.
- The Arc Fresno/Madera Counties understands the value of planning rather than just responding to problems. This can be seen in the effort expended in strategic planning. Daily the mission is lived and the planning updated.
- The executive director of The Arc Fresno/Madera Counties enjoys the full support of her staff and board members. They see her as innovative, creative, yet supportive of their individual needs. She has been willing to take risks, in measured ways. She supports staff members who find innovative solutions.
- The Arc Fresno/Madera Counties is rapidly moving toward a fully paperless system in all areas of its operation; case management has adopted useful software as has finance and payroll, file sharing is common, previously printed brochures are now exclusively on video, clients are trained to use technology, iPad® devices and smartboards are in evidence, and the organization is working toward developing client training through apps.
- The finance department has done an excellent job of improving systems so that errors are minimized, information is available in real time, and procedures are efficient and effective.
- Staff members in every area are valued. Spirit wear and casual company uniforms provide a professional look that supports direct care staff as being important to the organization. Staff members enjoy gift cards, attendance incentives, frequent training, and increases when budget allows. Although employee retention is always an issue, there are direct care staff members with tenures of 20 to 30 years within the organization. The top leadership team members have generally long employment.
- The Arc Fresno/Madera Counties has very nice facilities that meet the needs of the clients.
- Community connections have ensured that there is work available in the production centers. The clients are kept busy with work and curriculum, and are engaged in social opportunities.
- The organization takes a creative approach to finding ways of helping the clients achieve their goals.
- There is a variety of work available in the production centers. This gives the clients choices in the types of work they can complete based on both ability and desire.
- The direct care staff members are attentive to the clients and seem to be truly interested in encouraging them to grow and learn.

- Employees treat clients with dignity and respect. Clients are very satisfied with the services received and of their relationships with the staff.
- Advocacy is encouraged among the clients. The organization has utilized consumer advocacy representatives for peer advocacy and lends to leadership building among its peers.
- The supported employment enclaves that provide lawn maintenance services utilize commercial lawn care equipment. The job coaches ensure that all of the clients using the equipment are trained in safety procedures when handling any of the equipment.
- The supported employment enclave that is done at a retail setting provides information and training to persons to be successful in that type of employment.
- The job coaches are well trained in how to work with persons as well as the requirements of the individual job. Most of the job coaches have longevity with the organization.
- Persons served in the community employment program are very happy with the program and all expressed a high level of satisfaction. Some of the individual placements have been employed for many years.
- Funders expressed a high level of satisfaction with the services the organization provides.
- Employers expressed a very high level of satisfaction with the employees. All employers stated that, if more openings occurred, they would call the The Arc Fresno/Madera Counties to see if more clients were available for employment.

The Arc Fresno/Madera Counties should seek improvement in the area(s) identified by the recommendation(s) in the report. Any consultation given does not indicate nonconformance to standards but is offered as a suggestion for further quality improvement.

On balance, The Arc Fresno/Madera Counties provides highly effective employment services that benefit the clients and have earned a high level of satisfaction and regard among its stakeholders. The organization's competent leadership supports innovative approaches to service delivery and the increased use of technology to optimize the effectiveness and efficiency of business functions and service delivery practices. Stakeholders, such as the clients served, community employers, and funding sources, are supportive of the growth and quality of service provided by the organization. The organization embraces the use of planning to chart a path toward meeting the adopted mission. Staff members work daily toward the Five (now three) Bold Goals that unify the staff in this effort. Services are individualized, and go beyond what meets the expectation of the funders. Advocacy efforts are evident throughout the organization. The leadership of The Arc Fresno/Madera Counties has embraced a paperless environment. There is every evidence that the current operation is likely to be maintained or expanded in the future. The Arc Fresno/Madera Counties demonstrates substantial conformance to the CARF International standards. Key areas for improvement include the consistent documentation of the annual review of the organization's policies and job descriptions, the development of a formal complaint or grievance system for employees, development of individual annual performance goals for employees, and the identification and communication of barriers to productivity for clients in the organizational employment. The receptivity of the leadership and staff members to the consultation and other feedback provided during this survey instills confidence that The Arc Fresno/Madera Counties possesses the understanding and commitment to bring it into full conformance to the CARF standards.

The Arc Fresno/Madera Counties has earned a Three-Year Accreditation. The leadership and staff members are recognized for their efforts in pursuit of international accreditation. They are encouraged to use their resources to address the opportunities for improvement noted in this report and to continue to utilize the CARF standards on an ongoing basis as guidelines for continuous quality improvement.

SECTION 1. ASPIRE TO EXCELLENCE®

A. Leadership

Description

CARF-accredited organizations identify leadership that embraces the values of accountability and responsibility to the individual organization's stated mission. The leadership demonstrates corporate social responsibility.

Key Areas Addressed

- Leadership structure
- Leadership guidance
- Commitment to diversity
- Corporate responsibility
- Corporate compliance

Recommendations

A.3.k.

It is recommended that The Arc Fresno/Madera Counties document the annual review of organizational policy. Several policies were found undated, such as the policy on Cultural Competence. This might be accomplished by consistently documenting the date on each policy to reflect the most recent review.

A.5.c.

It is recommended that the cultural competency and diversity plan be reviewed at least annually for relevance. It is suggested that the outcome of the cultural competency and diversity plan in terms of achievable goals be reported in the annual performance outcomes report.

C. Strategic Planning

Description

CARF-accredited organizations establish a foundation for success through strategic planning focused on taking advantage of strengths and opportunities and addressing weaknesses and threats.

Key Areas Addressed

- Strategic planning considers stakeholder expectations and environmental impacts
 - Written strategic plan sets goals
 - Plan is implemented, shared, and kept relevant
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Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

Consultation

- It is suggested that The Arc Fresno/Madera Counties consider broadening stakeholder input into strategic planning. Focus groups consisting of community members, employers, board members, politicians, and family members could be used to garner other useful information for the planning process.
 - It is suggested that The Arc Fresno/Madera Counties share the strategic plan with its stakeholders in a simplified manner. It is provided on the website embedded in a lengthy report. This can be done in a very simplified way, with information relevant to the three main goals of the plan. It could be posted on the website, emailed to funders, mailed to family members, discussed at family meetings, included as taglines on promotional information, included in the organizational video, or any relevant way to disseminate the information to funders, board members, potential referral sources, and other stakeholders.
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D. Input from Persons Served and Other Stakeholders

Description

CARF-accredited organizations continually focus on the expectations of the persons served and other stakeholders. The standards in this subsection direct the organization's focus to soliciting, collecting, analyzing, and using input from all stakeholders to create services that meet or exceed the expectations of the persons served, the community, and other stakeholders.

Key Areas Addressed

- Ongoing collection of information from a variety of sources
- Analysis and integration into business practices
- Leadership response to information collected

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

E. Legal Requirements

Description

CARF-accredited organizations comply with all legal and regulatory requirements.

Key Areas Addressed

- Compliance with all legal/regulatory requirements
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Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

F. Financial Planning and Management

Description

CARF-accredited organizations strive to be financially responsible and solvent, conducting fiscal management in a manner that supports their mission, values, and annual performance objectives. Fiscal practices adhere to established accounting principles and business practices. Fiscal management covers daily operational cost management and incorporates plans for long-term solvency.

Key Areas Addressed

- Budget(s) prepared, shared, and reflective of strategic planning
- Financial results reported/compared to budgeted performance
- Organization review
- Fiscal policies and procedures
- Review of service billing records and fee structure
- Financial review/audit
- Safeguarding funds of persons served

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

G. Risk Management

Description

CARF-accredited organizations engage in a coordinated set of activities designed to control threats to their people, property, income, goodwill, and ability to accomplish goals.

Key Areas Addressed

- Identification of loss exposures
 - Development of risk management plan
 - Adequate insurance coverage
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Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

H. Health and Safety

Description

CARF-accredited organizations maintain healthy, safe, and clean environments that support quality services and minimize risk of harm to persons served, personnel, and other stakeholders.

Key Areas Addressed

- Inspections
- Emergency procedures
- Access to emergency first aid
- Competency of personnel in safety procedures
- Reporting/reviewing critical incidents
- Infection control

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

I. Human Resources

Description

CARF-accredited organizations demonstrate that they value their human resources. It should be evident that personnel are involved and engaged in the success of the organization and the persons they serve.

Key Areas Addressed

- Adequate staffing
 - Verification of background/credentials
 - Recruitment/retention efforts
 - Personnel skills/characteristics
 - Annual review of job descriptions/performance
 - Policies regarding students/volunteers, if applicable
-

Recommendations

I.6.a.(1)

I.6.b.(4)(a)

I.6.b.(4)(b)

It is recommended that the organization ensure that the job descriptions are reviewed annually. This might be accomplished by documenting the annual revisions in policy or on the job description. It is recommended that The Arc Fresno/Madera Counties assess performance related to measurable objectives at least annually and that the performance be evaluated at the next performance review.

I.8.b.(1)(a)

It is recommended that The Arc Fresno/Madera Counties establish a grievance and appeal procedure for personnel. It does not have to be titled with this name, but should allow staff members an internal mechanism to express concern and ask for resolution.

Consultation

- It is suggested that policy reflect actual practice in verifying credentials. Degrees are not required in programs surveyed, although many staff members do have degrees. The current policy does indicate that credentials are checked.

- It is suggested that the organization continue with the plans to provide job evaluations that were provided in the past; i.e., that evaluate performance on specific job functions. These are in evidence, but were modified for a short while.
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J. Technology

Description

CARF-accredited organizations plan for the use of technology to support and advance effective and efficient service and business practices.

Key Areas Addressed

- Written technology and system plan
 - Written procedures for the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in service delivery, if applicable
 - Training for personnel, persons served, and others on ICT equipment, if applicable
 - Provision of information relevant to the ICT session, if applicable
 - Maintenance of ICT equipment in accordance with manufacturer recommendations, if applicable
 - Emergency procedures that address unique aspects of service delivery via ICT, if applicable
-

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

K. Rights of Persons Served

Description

CARF-accredited organizations protect and promote the rights of all persons served. This commitment guides the delivery of services and ongoing interactions with the persons served.

Key Areas Addressed

- Communication of rights
- Policies that promote rights
- Complaint, grievance, and appeals policy
- Annual review of complaints

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

Consultation

- The organization has in a policy that, if a client files a grievance, no retaliation or barriers to services will occur. It is suggested that the statement be included in the client handbook that is given to the clients.
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L. Accessibility

Description

CARF-accredited organizations promote accessibility and the removal of barriers for the persons served and other stakeholders.

Key Areas Addressed

- Written accessibility plan(s)
 - Requests for reasonable accommodations
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Recommendations

L.1.b.(3)

L.1.b.(7)

It is recommended that the area of attitudinal barriers be expanded and added to the accessibility plan report. This can go beyond the statement that people within the organization have treated people with disabilities with respect and kindness. It should reach toward the community as a whole and include activities that the organization promotes or initiates that will change the community members' views. Examples might be disability awareness events such as movies, integrated social events, recruitment of community volunteers, or media publicity that enhance the status of people with disabilities. It is recommended that technology barriers be included within the accessibility plan. Although the organization does use technology such as iPad devices and computers with the clients, there are no goals or priorities related to technology barriers in the accessibility plan.

Consultation

- It is suggested that The Arc Fresno/Madera Counties look at barriers to persons with disabilities in terms of their full life. Several areas in which the organization is doing very good work was not included in the accessibility report and could provide a greater depth to the report as well as celebrate the fine work being done by the organization.
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M. Performance Measurement and Management

Description

CARF-accredited organizations are committed to continually improving their organizations and service delivery to the persons served. Data are collected and analyzed, and information is used to manage and improve service delivery.

Key Areas Addressed

- Information collection, use, and management
 - Setting and measuring performance indicators
-

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

N. Performance Improvement

Description

The dynamic nature of continuous improvement in a CARF-accredited organization sets it apart from other organizations providing similar services. CARF-accredited organizations share and provide the persons served and other interested stakeholders with ongoing information about their actual performance as a business entity and their ability to achieve optimal outcomes for the persons served through their programs and services.

Key Areas Addressed

- Proactive performance improvement
 - Performance information shared with all stakeholders
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Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

SECTION 2. QUALITY INDIVIDUALIZED SERVICES AND SUPPORTS

A. Program/Service Structure

Description

A fundamental responsibility of the organization is to provide a comprehensive program structure. The staffing is designed to maximize opportunities for the persons served to obtain and participate in the services provided.

Key Areas Addressed

- Services are person centered and individualized
 - Persons are given information about the organization's purposes and ability to address desired outcomes
 - Documented scope of services shared with stakeholders
 - Service delivery based on accepted field practices
 - Communication for effective service delivery
 - Entrance/exit/transition criteria
-

Recommendations

A.4.a.

A.4.b.(1)

It is recommended that the Client Placement Procedure be updated to include informing the client and the family/support system as to the reasons that the client is found ineligible for services.

B. Individual-Centered Service Planning, Design, and Delivery

Description

Improvement of the quality of an individual's services/supports requires a focus on the person and/or family served and their identified strengths, abilities, needs, and preferences. The organization's services are designed around the identified needs and desires of the persons served, are responsive to their expectations and desired outcomes from services, and are relevant to their maximum participation in the environments of their choice.

The person served participates in decision making, directing, and planning that affects his or her life. Efforts to include the person served in the direction or delivery of those services/supports are evident.

Key Areas Addressed

- Services are person centered and individualized
 - Persons are given information about the organization's purposes and ability to address desired outcomes
-

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

C. Medication Monitoring and Management

Key Areas Addressed

- Current, complete records of medications used by persons served
 - Written procedures for storage and safe handling of medications
 - Educational resources and advocacy for persons served in decision making
 - Physician review of medication use
 - Training and education for persons served regarding medications
-

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

Consultation

- The organization may want to consider updating the medication monitoring policy to include procedures to address the storage of controlled medications to ensure the safety of the clients.
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D. Employment Services Principle Standards

Description

An organization seeking CARF accreditation in the area of employment services provides individualized services and supports to achieve identified employment outcomes. The array of services and supports may include:

- Identification of employment opportunities and resources in the local job market.
- Development of viable work skills that match workforce needs within the geographic area.
- Development of realistic employment goals.

- Establishment of service plans to achieve employment outcomes.
- Identification of resources and supports to achieve and maintain employment.
- Coordination of and referral to employment-related services and supports.

The organization maintains its strategic positioning in the employment sector of the community by designing and continually improving its services based on input from the persons served and from employers in the local job market, and managing results of the organization's outcomes management system. The provision of quality employment services requires a continuous focus on the persons served and the personnel needs of employers in the organization's local job market.

Some examples of the quality results desired by the different stakeholders of these services and supports include:

- Individualized, appropriate accommodations.
- A flexible, interactive process that involves the person.
- Increased independence.
- Increased employment options.
- Timely services and reports.
- Persons served obtain and maintain employment consistent with their preferences, strengths, and needs.
- Person served obtains a job at minimum wage or higher and maintains appropriate benefits.
- Person served maintains the job.

Key Areas Addressed

- Goals of the persons served
- Personnel needs of local employers
- Community resources available
- Economic trends in the local employment sector

Recommendations

D.7.a.

Although the person's disability is documented in the individualized employment program plan (IEPP), it is recommended that the IEPP also address how the person's disability affects his or her productivity.

D.8.b.(2)

Time studies are completed at least semiannually. It is recommended that the clients be assisted to understand ways to improve their earnings. This information could be included on the time study form that is shared with the client.

SECTION 3. EMPLOYMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Description

An organization seeking CARF accreditation in the area of employment and community services assists the persons served through an individualized person-centered process to obtain access to the services, supports, and resources of their choice to achieve their desired outcomes. This may be accomplished by direct service provision, linkages to existing generic opportunities and natural supports in the community, or any combination of these. The persons served are included in their communities to the degree they desire.

The organization provides the persons served with information so that they may make informed choices and decisions. Although we use the phrase *person served*, this may also include *family served*, as appropriate to the service and the individual.

The services and supports are arranged and changed as necessary to meet the identified desires of the persons served. Service designs address identified individual, family, socioeconomic, and cultural preferences.

Depending on the program's scope of services, expected results from these services/supports may include:

- Increased inclusion in community activities.
- Increased or maintained ability to perform activities of daily living.
- Increased self-direction, self-determination, and self-reliance.
- Self-esteem.
- Housing opportunities.
- Community citizenship.
- Increased independence.
- Meaningful activities.
- Increased employment options.
- Employment obtained and maintained.
- Competitive employment.

- Employment at or above minimum wage.
- Economic self-sufficiency.
- Employment with benefits.
- Career advancement.

C. Community Employment Services

Description

Community employment services assist persons to obtain successful community employment opportunities that are responsive to their choices and preferences. Through a strengths-based approach the program provides person-directed services/supports to individuals to choose, achieve, and maintain employment in integrated community employment settings.

Work is a fundamental part of adult life. Individually tailored job development, training, and support recognize each person's employability and potential contribution to the labor market. Persons are supported as needed through an individualized person-centered model of services to choose and obtain a successful employment opportunity consistent with their preferences, keep the employment, and find new employment if necessary or for purposes of career advancement.

Such services may be described as individualized competitive employment, individual placements, contracted temporary personnel services, competitive employment, supported employment, transitional employment, mobile work crews, contracted work groups in the community, community-based SourceAmerica® contracts, and other business-based work groups in community-integrated designs. In Canada, employment in the form of bona fide volunteer placements is possible.

Individuals may be paid by community employers or by the organization. Employment is in the community.

Job Development

Description

Successful job development concurrently uses assessment information about the strengths and interests of the person seeking employment to target the types of jobs available from potential employers in the local labor market. Typical job development activities include reviewing local employment opportunities and developing potential employers/customers through direct and indirect promotional strategies. Job development may include facilitating a hiring agreement between an employer and a person seeking employment. Some persons seeking employment may want assistance at only a basic, informational level, such as support for a self-directed job search.

Some examples of the quality outcomes desired by the different stakeholders of these services include:

- Persons obtain community employment.
- Persons obtain individualized competitive employment.
- Employment matches interests and desires of persons.
- Wages, benefits, and hours of employment achieved as desired.
- Average number of hours worked per week increases.
- Average number of hours worked per week meets the desires of the person served.
- Full-time employment with benefits.
- Transition-age youth move directly from their educational environment into community employment.
- Job retention/length of employment.
- Potential for upward mobility.
- Self-sufficiency.
- Integration.
- Responsive services.
- Safe working conditions.
- Cost-effective for placement achieved.
- Reasonable length of time from referral to placement.
- Employers satisfied with the services.

Employment Supports

Description

Employment support services are activities that are employment-related to promote successful training of a person to a new job, job adjustment, retention, and advancement. These services are based on the individual employee with a focus on achieving long-term retention of the person in the job.

The level of employment support services is individualized to each employee and the complexity of the job.

Often supports are intensive for the initial orientation and training of an employee with the intent of leading to natural supports and/or reduced external job coaching. However, some persons may not require any employment supports at the job site; others may require intensive initial training with a quick decrease in supports, while some will be most successful when long-term supports are provided.

Supports can include assisting the employee with understanding the job culture, industry practices, and work behaviors expected by the employer. It may also include helping the employer and coworkers to understand the support strategies and accommodations needed by the worker.

Supports are a critical element of the long-term effectiveness of community employment. Support services address issues such as assistance in training a person to complete new tasks, changes in work schedule or work promotion, a decrease in productivity of the person served, adjusting to new supervisors, and managing changes in nonwork environments or other critical life activities that may affect work performance. Routine follow-up with the employer and the employee is crucial to continued job success.

Some examples of the quality outcomes desired by the different stakeholders of these services include:

- Performance level achieved meets requirements of job or position.
- Increase in skills.
- Increase in hours worked independently.
- Increase in productivity.
- Increase in hours worked.
- Increase in pay.
- Employment retention.
- Full-time employment.
- Employment with benefits.
- Increase in natural supports from coworkers.
- Persons served treated with respect.
- Increase in participation in the community.
- Minimize length of time for supports.
- Type and amount of staff interaction meets needs.
- Job/career advancement.
- Employer satisfaction.

- Satisfaction outcomes that reflect needs and expectations of the employee are met.
- Responsiveness to customers.
- Job club to provide a forum for sharing experiences.

Key Areas Addressed

- Integrated employment choice
 - Integrated employment obtainment
 - Employment provided in regular business settings
 - Integrated employment retention
 - Provides career advancement resources
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Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

G. Organizational Employment Services

Description

Organizational employment services are designed to provide paid work to the persons served in locations owned, leased, rented, or managed by the service provider. A critical component and value of organizational employment services is to use the capacity of the organization's employment and training service design to create opportunities for persons to achieve desired employment outcomes in their community of choice, including individualized competitive employment.

Service models are flexible and may include a variety of enterprises and business designs, including organization-owned businesses such as retail stores, restaurants, shops, franchises, etc.

Some examples of the quality outcomes desired by the different stakeholders of these services include:

- Movement to individualized competitive employment.
- Movement to an integrated environment.
- Increased wages.
- Pay at or above minimum wage.
- Increased skills.
- Increased work hours.

- Minimized downtime with meaningful activities available.
- Exposure to and availability of a variety of jobs.
- Increased ability to interact with others as part of a professional team and to resolve interpersonal issues appropriately.

Key Areas Addressed

- Paid work provided by organization
 - Employment goals of persons served
 - Legal guidelines adherence
 - Increased wages and skills
-

Recommendations

G.1.f.(2)

Time studies are completed at least semiannually; however, there is nothing noted on the study that would assist the clients in understanding how they would be able to increase their earnings. It is recommended that the organization share information with the clients on methods to increase earnings. This information might be included on the time studies.

Consultation

- The Fresno Production Center has a large area dedicated to confidential document destruction. The area has very large conveyor and shredding equipment and a baler. Clients are working on all aspects of this job and are using the equipment with limited supervision. It is suggested that the organization consider developing a training program for use of the equipment and maintain a competency checklist in order to ensure safety of the clients and program staff.
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PROGRAMS/SERVICES BY LOCATION

The Arc Fresno/Madera Counties

4490 East Ashlan Avenue
Fresno, CA 93726
US

Community Employment Services: Employment Supports
Community Employment Services: Job Development

Employment Plus/Crews

5645 East Westover Avenue
Fresno, CA 93727
US

Community Employment Services: Employment Supports

Fresno Production Center

5755 East Fountain Way
Fresno, CA 93727
US

Organizational Employment Services

Madera Production Center

2890 Falcon Drive
Madera, CA 93637
US

Organizational Employment Services