

Dutchess Community College
Think Ahead
FAQ's

Think Ahead is a two-year program (four 15 week semesters) leading toward earning a certificate at graduation. Think Ahead is a work readiness training program that prepares people to enter the work force or supported employment so they can be competitively employed. Think Ahead is offered through collaboration with Abilities First Inc, Arc of Dutchess, Community Based Services, Dutchess Community College, the Dutchess County Executive Marcus Molinaro's ThinkDIFFERENTLY initiative, Maplebrook School and Taconic Resources for Independence.

- **Is there an age limit for participation?**
 - Yes - At least 18 years old

- **Do I have to be a Dutchess County resident?**
 - Yes

- **How do I apply?**
 - Go on-line to [Dutchess Community College – Think Ahead](#) to complete an application.
 - Send the completed application and supporting documentation to Sandi Pearson - spierson@dutchessny.gov with T/A Fall 2020 in subject line.

- **Admission requirements:**
 - Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waiver eligible at time of admission to the program;
 - Have a life plan or Individual Educational Plan (IEP) with goals that support job readiness skill building and vocational aspirations;
 - Have a vocational evaluation such as school to work program or pre-vocational assessment;
 - Achieved minimum of one hour of unsupervised time;
 - Graduated, or separated from secondary school program.

- **Provide two letters of recommendation:**
 - One letter from an HCBS provider (i.e.; agency service provider)
 - One letter from an employer volunteer supervisor, job coach or teacher (specific to work ethic).

- **What is next in the application process?**
 - Completed applications will be reviewed by the Think Ahead admission committee and evaluated for potential success in the Think Ahead program.
 - Supported applications will be selected and interviews will be set in July.
 - Students will interview with the Think Ahead admission committee;
 - Family members and/or service providers can accompany them to/at the interview with the consent of the potential student.
 - Selected students will receive their acceptance letters no later than August 3rd, 2020.
 - Acceptance letters will have information on the required Orientation Day and first day of classes.
 - Students must accept the DCC code of conduct and sign an attendance/conduct contract.

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- **Is Transportation Provided?**

- No - students must have access to transportation; or
- Be able or willing to learn to use the Dutchess County Transit system. All college students are provided with a bus system pass; or
- Discuss transportation options with agency that supports you.

- **What costs and/or supplies are needed?**

- Dutchess Community College provides classroom supplies currently;
- Tuition is currently supported by Dutchess County, Dutchess Community College Foundation and the College. Applicants should anticipate tuition expenses beginning with the fall semesters 2021-2022;
- Participants should provide their own meals, or
- Meal plans can be purchased for use at the Dining Hall

- **What does the day look like?**

Class is held MWF from 9 – 12 and is required to complete the certificate. Activities may continue on campus until 2:00 pending transportation and agency support if needed. Work experiences are unpaid, and held on campus for the first year with options for off campus experiences the second year. An optional summer program is also available on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 – 12 during the months of June and July. **Remote participation may be required pending COVID-19 protocol which would substantially limit work experiences and would require internet access with an electronic device.**

- Optional activities on T/Th from 9 – 2 that are offered:
 - work experience,
 - audit credit bearing courses,
 - campus clubs,
 - campus fitness center,
 - Library & writing center,
 - create connections with college students

- **What does the curriculum include?**

- Daily living skills;
- Job readiness skills for employment;
- Improving communication and interpersonal skills;
- Strengthening basic reading & writing;
- Developing lifelong learning and study skills;
- Stress management;

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- Career exploration and internships;
- Vocational development

- **Is there support on campus?**
 - Yes:
 - [Office of Accommodative Services](#)
 - [Campus Counseling Services](#)
 - [DCC Cares](#)
 - Campus Academic Support Centers

If I audit a class, what can I expect?

A course audit allows a student to participate in a classroom experience without earning a grade or credit for the course. Think Ahead students are not required to cover the tuition cost for these courses, and may enroll in one credit bearing course each semester. Registration is facilitated by the Director of Accommodative Services.

- Students auditing a class may purchase the text book, however this is not required. Textbooks for each course are available in the DCC Library.
- You may take exams and submit assignments for practice and the experience, this is not required.
- Students auditing credit courses should be ready to attend the first class when the credit bearing courses begin, usually a week before the Think Ahead program begins.
- The Office of Accommodative Services is available to provide classroom accommodations and assist with assignments.

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