



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the GROWTH Project?

The GROWTH Project is a training and employment program designed to provide you with the opportunity to build knowledge and skills in gardening, horticulture, and landscaping through classroom and hands-on training. This project is a collaboration of Citywide Employment Services, the San Francisco Study Center, and the BHSA (Behavioral Health Services Act).

What are the goals of the GROWTH Project?

- **Growing** recovery and work opportunities through horticulture and landscaping
- **Facilitate** theoretical and hands-on learning of employable gardening/landscaping skills
- **Empower** students to lead, make decisions, and gain meaningful employment
- **Create** space for personal and social transformation
- **Nurture** our connection and relationship with nature

What are the eligibility requirements for the GROWTH Project?

1. 18+ years of age
2. Must be a San Francisco resident
3. Must have proof of Covid -19 Vaccination and booster(s), if applicable
4. Must have ID and proof of hiring documents
5. Have a mental health diagnosis signed off by a licensed clinician; referrer or co-signer must have one of these professional credentials: LPCC, LCSW, MFT, NP, RN, MD, PsyD, or PhD (in Psychology)

How can the GROWTH Project benefit you?

By participating in this program, you will gain skills necessary for a career in the gardening/landscaping field, as well as on-the-job training, 6-months of paid employment, and current employment experience to put on your resume. You will also work with an employment specialist to find a job after you complete the GROWTH Project. In addition, you will receive a certificate that verifies the 9-month training course. The skills and knowledge that you will gain are also personally fulfilling and can be used on projects in your own home or neighborhood. Being outdoors and working with plants has been shown to have a positive influence on the physical, emotional, and mental health of most people.

How does it work?

If you are accepted into the program, you will complete 3-months of non-paid classroom training with a professional instructor whose teaching methods include hands-on learning through individual and group projects, guest lecturers, field trips, workshops, and more. The class will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:00 am – 3:00 pm. Those who successfully complete the classroom training will have an opportunity to be hired for 6-months (8 hours per week, \$23 per hour) to work on-site at indoor and outdoor gardens at public buildings in San Francisco. The 6 months' on-site paid training will entail commuting to worksites, installing or maintaining gardens, and beautifying public spaces.

When will all of this happen?

In-person orientations will be conducted each Tuesday starting in the last two weeks of July 2025 and the first two weeks of August 2025 at 11:00 am at 1234 Indiana Street. Referral forms are due no later than Friday, August 22, 2025. Once you have attended an orientation and we have received your referral form, you will be invited in for a one-on-one interview with the GROWTH Project staff.

For those who get into the program, the classroom training will begin in late September, 2025. Participants who successfully complete the 3-month non-paid classroom training will have the opportunity to be hired for the 6-month paid work experience, which will begin in January 2026 and last until the end of June 2026.

What will you learn in the training?

You will learn to install and maintain beautiful indoor and outdoor gardens that have been designed using environmental principles that promote beauty, diversity, and functionality. More specifically, you will gain knowledge and will attain basic to intermediate skill levels in most of the following topics and much more:

Reading the garden	Soil building and mulching	Being mindful
Water and landscape	Forests and ecology	Indoor gardening
Plant care and knowledge	Weeds and their uses	Diversity and companion planting
Garden maintenance	Pests and pollinators	Small hardware installation
Seasonal garden care	Nurturing nature	Self-nurturance
Ecosystems and elements	Hand/power tools use & safety	Growing food/ vegetable gardens
Garden design	Collaborating and teamwork	Asking for help and accepting it

What happens after you complete the GROWTH Project?

While you are working in the GROWTH Project, you will also be working with an employment specialist to look for permanent work, so that you can make a smooth transition into a permanent job after you complete the GROWTH Project.

How do you enroll in the GROWTH Project?

If you are interested, ***complete an application, have your case manager or clinician complete their part, and email it to CW_GP@LISTSRV.UCSF.EDU, attention Christine Ericksen*** (Note: this is a HIPPA secure email address). The application must be received by Friday, August 22, and signed by you and by a licensed clinician; the referrer or co-signer must have one of these professional credentials: **LPCC, LCSW, MFT, NP, RN, MD, PsyD, or PhD (in Psychology)**. You will need to attend one orientation, submit a complete referral form, and complete an individual interview with the GROWTH Project staff to be considered for the training.

**For further questions, please contact Christine Ericksen at (415) 314-0528 or CW_GP@LISTSRV.UCSF.EDU,
Visit citywide.ucsf.edu/growth for more information**