IV. INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT (IPE) SERVICES

Title	Page
Policy	IV-1
Informed Choice – IPE Development	IV-3
Informed Choice - Procedures	IV-4

IV. INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT (IPE)

DCRSA will conduct a thorough assessment for determining VR needs for each eligible individual. The purpose of this assessment is to determine the specific employment outcome, the criteria for evaluation of progress toward an employment outcome, and the nature and scope of VR services to be included in the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). The term employment outcome means with respect to the individual, (A) entering or retaining full-time, or if appropriate, part-time competitive employment in the integrated labor market, (B) satisfying the vocational outcome that is determined appropriate, including self-employment, telecommuting, or business ownership.

The IPE may be developed jointly between the VR counselor and the individual, or the individual may develop all or part of the plan independently, or with the technical assistance from another source. The completed plan must be approved and signed by the DCRSA counselor and the individual, or if appropriate, the individual's representative, within the framework of a counseling and guidance relationship. Assistance in completing the IPE form, if requested by the consumer will be provided by DCRSA.

The IPE must be designed to achieve the specific employment outcome, which is chosen by the individual consistent with the individual's unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, career interest, and informed choice. The documentation should show that there is a labor market demand to support the employment outcome. If relocation is required, the individual should consider relocation to the area where there is a labor market demand for the chosen employment outcome. The individual should acknowledge that he or she is familiar with the entry-level wages that are common in the chosen employment goal.

For supported employment services, an employment outcome should include a description of the extended services needed and the source of extended services. If it is not possible to identify the source of extended services at the time the IPE is developed, a statement must be included explaining the reasonable expectation that extended services will become available prior to closure.

The IPE will be developed concurrently or within 90 days after a Certificate of Eligibility for VR Services or a Certificate of Eligibility for a Trial Work Experience or EE Services has been completed. **A copy of the signed IPE will be provided to the individual at the time the IPE is executed; i.e., when signatures are affixed to the IPE by the client or representative, and the counselor.**

The IPE will be amended each time a substantial change or annual (12 months) periodic review (Status 06, every 90 days) is completed in the individual's rehabilitation program. A substantial change could include: 1) a vocational goal change which may require a change in the evaluation criteria or intermediate objective; 2) deletion or addition of services; 3) the cost of services; 4) termination of the cost; and 5) an extension of an expired IPE. **A copy of all signed**

Amendments will be provided to the individual at the time the Amendment is executed; i.e., when signatures are affixed to the IPE by the client or representative, and the counselor, 34 C.F.R. §§ 361.45 and 361.46.

Note: A new IPE must be completed when an individual is moved from Trial Work Experience or EE services to an accepted status for VR Services.

Counselor's Role:

Provide information, tools, and resources to encourage decision making skills;

Facilitate the decision making process;

Support decision implementation; and

Provide the consumer with information about the parameters that may affect the range of available career goals or service options.

The mandatory components that the IPE must contain:

A specific employment outcome consistent with informed choice;

Criteria for evaluation of progress toward employment outcome;

Specific rehabilitation services;

Projected timelines for initiation and duration of services;

Schedule for periodic reviews and evaluations;

Entity to provide services and methods for procurement;

Responsibilities of the individual;

Need for post-employment services, and

Need for supported employment services, 34 C.F.R. § 361.45 and

34 C.F.R. § 361.46.

THE SERVICES, SERVICE PROVIDERS, AND ALL ACTIVITIES SELECTED BY THE INDIVIDUAL MUST BE NECESSARY TO MEET THE EMPLOYMENT OUTCOME GOAL.

THE INDIVIDUAL OR REPRESENTATIVE MUST SIGN AND DATE THE IPE. THE INDIVIDUAL OR REPRESENTATIVE MUST BE GIVEN A COPY OF THE SIGNED IPE.

THE DCRSA COUNSELOR IS THE APPROVING AUTHORITY; THEREFORE, THE COUNSELOR'S SIGNATURE INDICATES APPROVAL OF THE INDIVIDUAL'S IPE.

THE IPE FOR TRIAL WORK/EXTENDED EVALUATION (STATUS 06) IS TO BE REVIEWED EVERY 90 DAYS. The counselor and the individual must complete a periodic review of the rehabilitation plan every 90 days to assess the individual's progress. The Amendment (form DPD) will be completed to document the periodic review. (See Appendix E form DPD.)

THE IPE IS TO BE REVIEWED ANNUALLY. The counselor and the individual must review the rehabilitation plan annually to assess the individual's progress toward an employment outcome. The Amendment (form DPD) will be completed as appropriate to document the annual review in the case file. (See Appendix E form DPD.)

THE IPE CAN BE AMENDED AT ANY TIME UTILIZING INFORMED CHOICE.

AMENDMENTS DO NOT TAKE EFFECT UNTIL AGREED TO AND SIGNED BY THE DCRSA COUNSELOR AND INDIVIDUAL OR REPRESENTATIVE.

INFORMED CHOICE – IPE DEVELOPMENT

DCRSA will ensure the eligible individual or their representatives are provided information and support services to assist them in exercising informed choice throughout the rehabilitation process. The counselor will inform each eligible individual through appropriate modes of communication about the availability of and opportunities to exercise informed choice, including the availability of support services for individuals with cognitive or other disabilities who require assistance in exercising informed choice in decisions related to the development of an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

Eligible individuals will be given information, or assistance in acquiring the information to make an informed choice with respect to the selection of the employment outcome, specific vocational rehabilitation services needed to achieve the employment outcome, the vendors that can provide the services, employment setting and the settings in which the services will be provided, and the methods available for procuring the services. Counselors will provide information or assistance in acquiring the information to enable the individual to make an informed choice regarding the development of the IPE and program of services. The information provided by the counselor considers the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, and interests of the individual that are needed to achieve the individual's employment outcome.

To ensure that the availability and scope of informed choice is consistent, the information must include, at a **minimum**, information relating to the following:

Cost, accessibility, and duration of potential services;

To the extent available, consumer satisfaction with services;

Qualifications of potential service providers;

Types of services offered by the potential providers;

The degree to which services are provided in integrated settings; and

To the extent available, outcomes achieved by individuals working with service providers; 34 C.F.R. § 361.52.

PROCEDURES – INFORMED CHOICE – IPE DEVELOPMENT

The counselor will maintain a regional and citywide list of vendors that provide services that lead to an employment outcome.

To the extent available, the counselor will provide, or assist the individual in acquiring, consumer satisfaction surveys and reports regarding the service providers.

The counselor will provide, or assist the individual in acquiring, accreditation, certification, or other information relating to the qualifications of the providers.

When appropriate, the counselor will make referrals to other consumers, local consumer groups, or disability advisory councils qualified to discuss the services or service providers.

The counselor will document in the case notes the specific action taken in the above procedures using the **informed choice heading** to assure that informed choice was provided.