



DEPARTMENT ON DISABILITY SERVICES

POLICY	
Department on Disability Services	Subject: Supported Employment
Responsible Program or Office: Rehabilitation Services Administration	Policy Number: 2019-RSA-POL007
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Supersedes Policy Dated: Supported Employment Policy 2018	
Cross References, Related Policies and Procedures, and Related Documents: The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) enacted on July 22, 2014; Title I of the Act, as amended by WIOA (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.); Supported Employment Program Title VI of the Act (29 U.S.C. 795g et seq.); 29 DCMR 100 et seq, DCRSA Individualized Plan for Employment Policy, and DCRSA Case Closure Policy.	

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance and clarification in the delivery of supported employment services for persons served by the Department on Disability Services (DDS), D.C. Rehabilitation Services Administration (DCRSA) and to maximize employment opportunities for persons with a most significant disability, including youth with a most significant disability, who require long-term support in order to work in competitive integrated employment.

II. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all vocational rehabilitation (VR) Specialists, supervisors, administrators, people whom DCRSA serves and their families and advocates, and stakeholders of the DCRSA.

III. AUTHORITY

The authority for this policy is established in DDS as set forth in D.C. Law 16-264, the “Department on Disability Services Establishment Act of 2006,” effective March 14, 2007 (D.C. Official Code § 7-761.01, et seq.); and establishment of the Rehabilitation Services Program, D.C. Official Code § 32-331.



IV. POLICY

A. Overview

1. It is the policy of DCRSA to provide supported employment services, consistent with the definitions in Section 7 (38), 12 (c), and 602 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; 29 U.S.C. 705 (38), 709 (c), and 795g. or §§ 361.5(c)(53) and 363.1(b), for persons with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities, to enable such persons to achieve and maintain a competitive integrated employment outcome.
2. All supported employment must be in an integrated setting with the additional expectation that persons with most significant disabilities can and will achieve competitive wages.
3. Supported employment should not be automatically considered as the first choice for persons with the most significant disabilities. The Supported Employment program exists to serve and assist persons with the most significant disabilities, who need intensive services and ongoing supports to achieve and maintain an employment outcome, and should be considered only after a comprehensive assessment of the rehabilitation needs of the person.

B. Target Population

1. Supported employment is intended for persons with a most significant disability, including youth with a most significant disability, for whom competitive employment has not traditionally occurred, or has been interrupted or intermittent as a result of a most significant disability, and who, because of the nature and severity of their disabilities, need intensive supported employment services, followed by extended services providing the long term supports needed, in order to perform the work involved.
2. DCRSA may provide supported employment services to any person, including a youth with a disability if:
 - a. The person has been determined eligible for VR services by DCRSA and has been determined to be a person with a most significant disability;
 - b. Supported employment has been identified as the appropriate employment outcome for the person based upon a comprehensive assessment of rehabilitation needs; and
 - c. DCRSA has identified a source of extended services for the person or has a



reasonable expectation that a source will become available (see DCRSA Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) Policy).

C. Provisions

1. In accordance with the VR services portion of the WIOA Unified State Plan and section 101(a) (22) of the Act, DCRSA shall provide supported employment services for a period of not more than 24 months, unless under special circumstances the eligible person and VR specialist jointly agree to extend the time to achieve the employment outcome identified in the IPE using funds made available through the VR program allotment for persons with a most significant disability who are eligible under the Supported Employment program.
2. DCRSA shall use funds allotted under the Supported Employment program to provide supported employment services and to provide extended services in accordance with the requirements in section 604(b) (2) of the Act and 34 CFR §363.4(a) (2), to youth with the most significant disabilities for a period of time not to exceed four years, or until such time that a youth reaches the age of 25, thereby no longer meeting the definition of a “youth with a disability” in 34 C.F.R. § 361.5(c)(58), whichever occurs first.
3. DCRSA shall provide discrete post-employment services, if these services are required from the agency because they are unavailable from an extended services provider and are necessary to maintain or regain the job placement or advance in employment.
4. DCRSA shall reserve and expend 50 percent of the allotment under the Supported Employment program for the provision of supported employment services, including extended services, to youth with the most significant disabilities.
5. DCRSA shall provide not less than a 10 percent non-federal contribution for the 50 percent of allotment reserved to serve youth with the most significant disabilities.
6. DCRSA shall not pay more than 2.5 percent of the State’s Supported Employment program allotment on administrative costs.
7. Supported employment services provided through community rehabilitation providers shall be purchased, monitored, and provided in accordance with the terms outlined in a Human Care Agreement or other contracting vehicle.
8. Supported employment shall be in competitive integrated employment or, if not in competitive employment, in an integrated work setting in which the person is working toward competitive integrated employment on a short-term basis.



D. Scope of Supported Employment Services

1. Supported employment services are ongoing support services, which are furnished by the VR agency from the time of job placement until transition to extended services. These services may include customized employment, and other appropriate services needed to support and maintain a person with a most significant disability, including a youth with a most significant disability, in supported employment. These services shall be organized and made available, singly or in combination, in such a way as to assist an eligible person to achieve competitive integrated employment.
2. Supported employment services shall be limited to a period of not more than 24 months, unless under special circumstances the eligible person and the VR specialist jointly agree to extend the time to achieve the employment outcome identified in the IPE.
3. Supported employment services are subject to cost participation based on financial need in accordance with 29 DCMR § 124 and non-exempt persons shall participate in a financial need test as part of their IPE development.
4. Ongoing support services are based on a determination by the VR specialist of a person's need as specified in the IPE, and are necessary to support and maintain a person with a most significant disability, including a youth with a most significant disability, in supported employment. Ongoing support services may include activities such as:
 - a. Assessment of employment stability and the provision or coordination of specific services at or away from the worksite that are needed to maintain stability, including supplementary assessments of rehabilitation needs;
 - b. Intensive on-site job skills training and other training provided by skilled job coaches, employment specialists, co-workers and other qualified persons. This would involve the actual time spent observing, supervising, intervening, and assisting the person in the performance of his or her duties;
 - c. Social skills training, including the enhancement of those behaviors that are needed in order to get along with others at and away from the workplace;
 - d. Follow-up services including regular contact with employers, trainees, parents, guardians or other representatives of person, and other suitable professional and informed advisors in order to reinforce and stabilize the job placement;



- e. Facilitation of natural supports at the work site (networking with the employer to promote the development and use of natural supports, to include the actual time that the job coach spends working with the regular work-site supervisor, co-workers, parents or others to assist them toward assuming the function of providing the regular or intermittent job coaching the person needs in order to maintain the job); and
 - f. Facilitation of any other services identified in the scope of vocational rehabilitation services at or away from the work site, such as transportation and personal assistance services.
5. Job stabilization marks the point at which a person shall begin to transition from receiving the intensive ongoing supports of supported employment to maintaining employment with the support of extended services identified in the IPE. All supported employment services must be complete (with the exception of discrete post-employment services) prior to the transition to extended services.
 6. Following the transition to extended services, DCRSA shall provide discrete post-employment services if these services are necessary to maintain or regain the job placement or advance in employment, and are unavailable from an extended services provider other than DCRSA. These post-employment services may be provided with supported employment funds or with funds made available under the VR program.

E. Extended Services

1. Extended services must be organized and made available, singly or in combination, in such a way as to assist a person in maintaining supported employment based on needs specified in the IPE.
2. Prior to initiating supported employment services, DCRSA shall develop an IPE which specifies the expected extended services needed and identifies the source of extended services or, to the extent that it is not possible to identify the source of extended services at the time the IPE is developed, includes a description of the basis for concluding that there is a reasonable expectation that those sources will become available (See also, supported employment requirements in (6)(C) of the DCRSA Individualized Plan for Employment Policy).
3. DCRSA shall make extended services available to youth with the most significant disabilities with reserved funds available under the Supported Employment program based upon the individual needs of the youth for a period of up to four years or until such time that a youth reaches the age of 25, and, thus, no longer meets the definition of a “youth with a disability” under 34 CFR §361.5(c) (58),



whichever occurs first.

4. DCRSA shall not provide extended services to any person who is not a youth with a disability using funds allotted under either the Supported Employment program or the VR program.
5. A youth may no longer be eligible to receive extended services provided by DCRSA with funds allotted under the Supported Employment program or the VR program if the person no longer meets age requirements established in the definition of a “youth with a disability” or-
 - a. Has received extended services for a period of four years; or
 - b. Has transitioned to extended services provided with funds other than those allotted under the VR program or Supported Employment program prior to meeting the age or time restrictions.
6. Once a youth reaches age 25 or has met the four year limit of extended services provided by the Supported Employment or VR program, DCRSA must identify another source of extended services to ensure that there will be no interruption of services.
7. DCRSA shall not provide extended services to a youth with a most significant disability who has not received services from the agency through an IPE simply because he or she meets the definition of a “youth with a disability” and is in need of extended services.

F. Case Closure

1. Prior to closure, DCRSA shall have completed a plan to implement natural supports or to transition the person to extended services.
2. With the exception of youth with disabilities, a person’s case shall be closed when the person has maintained employment for at least 90 days after the transition to natural supports or long-term extended services funded by an agency other than DCRSA.
3. For youth, the person’s case shall be closed when the person is no longer eligible to receive services, or has transitioned to natural supports or extended services paid for by another agency (See also DCRSA Case Closure Policy).
4. Cases shall be closed in accordance with the DCRSA Case Closure Policy with the following additional information documented in the case record:



- a. Description of the community-based employment situation (type of work, designated employer issuing the paycheck, weekly hours, wage per hour and level of benefits).
- b. The level and adequacy of ongoing, follow-along support.
- c. A comprehensive summary of the person's service needs after closure that:
 1. Identifies specific services the ongoing support agency will provide;
 2. Determines the need for and appropriateness of post-employment services;
 3. Documents that the VR specialist and person agree that no additional employment services are needed.

V. RESPONSIBILITY

The responsibility for this policy is vested in the Director of DDS. Implementation of this policy is the responsibility of the Deputy Director of DCRSA.

VI. STANDARDS

- A. The employment outcome described in the IPE shall be consistent with the general goal of competitive integrated employment and job placement/development shall be consistent with the employment outcome.
- B. Employment must be in an integrated work setting to meet the requirement for an employment outcome in supported employment.
- C. A person with a most significant disability may receive supported employment service in an integrated setting that does not satisfy the criteria of competitive integrated employment only if:
 1. The position is considered to be on a short-term basis while the person works toward competitive integrated employment;
 2. The position in question is a good match to meet the person's training needs, and he or she has made an informed choice between this and other available training options; and
 3. The person has been counseled by the VR specialist regarding competitive



integrated employment opportunities and goals, and has made an informed choice with regard to job placement.

- D. The VR specialist shall monitor employment stability and progress at least once a month at the work site (or off-site, especially at client request), or more frequently if needed, from the time of job placement until the person transitions to extended services.
- E. The VR specialist shall ensure that job stabilization and the transition to extended services is part of the conversation from the beginning of IPE development and everyone on the team understands and recognizes job stabilization for the person. In this way, the team is able to recognize that stabilization in employment is close, and can then facilitate a timely transition to extended services.
- F. The VR specialist and person, or person's representative shall define stabilization and jointly decide on length of Supported Employment Services based on the person's needs. This information, and any agreed on changes, shall be documented in the IPE.

Stabilization shall be defined based upon the following factors:

- a. The funding for extended services has been secured or natural supports have been established;
 - b. The person is performing expected job duties;
 - c. The person's supervisor reports satisfaction with the person's job performance;
 - d. Job coaching and related interventions have decreased to a level necessary to maintain the person in employment which may be defined as:
 - 1. A reduction in job coaching down to 20% of the person's working hours in a week; or
 - 2. The intervention has reached a plateau or leveled out;
 - e. The person reports satisfaction with the job and work environment;
 - f. Other relevant individual factors such as necessary modifications, accommodations, transportation or behavioral stability.
- G. Under supported employment, the person must be compensated in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act. In order for a person's case to be closed as a competitive case closure (closed rehabilitated, status 26), the person must be compensated at or above the minimum wage, but not less than the customary wage



and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by individuals who are not disabled.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Darryl Evans', written over a horizontal line.

Darryl Evans,
Deputy Director, DCRSA

2/25/2019
Date

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andrew P. Reese', written over a horizontal line.

Andrew P. Reese, Director

2/25/19
Date

