



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT ON DISABILITY SERVICES

PROCEDURE	
Subject: Supported Employment	Procedure No.: 2019-RSA –PROC002
Responsible Program or Office: Rehabilitation Services Administration	Effective Date: 2/25/2019
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Cross References, Related Policies and Procedures, and Related Documents: Supported Employment Policy, Order of Selection Policy, and Informed Choice Policy	

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to outline steps and serve as a guide in authorizing Supported Employment services and other services related to it.

II. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Specialists, supervisors, administrators, and people whom the D.C. Rehabilitation Services Administration (DCRSA) serves.

III. PROCEDURES

A. Pre-Service Case Processing for Traditional Supported Employment

1. A person who is determined eligible for VR services must have a most significant disability and be placed in the Order of Selection Category 1, as defined in the Order of Selection Policy, in order to be provided with supported employment services.
2. The VR Specialist shall conduct and document a Comprehensive Assessment that should include consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome.
3. The Supported Employment Screening Checklist shall be completed as part of the Comprehensive Assessment to document the eligible person's need for intensive and extended services to perform work.
4. The person, with the assistance of the VR Specialist, shall identify an employment outcome consistent with his or her interests, aptitude, abilities and informed choice.



5. A provider for extended or long-term follow-along services must be identified prior to developing the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) AND a letter of commitment from the provider must be obtained and filed in the case record of services.

EXTENDED SERVICE PROVIDER FUNDING STREAM	LETTER OF COMMITMENT SOURCE
Medicaid Waiver	Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) Service Coordinator
Department of Behavioral Health (DBH)	Evidence-Based Supported Employment Provider
Ticket to Work (SSI/SSDI recipients)	Employment Network SE Provider

6. If a provider for extended or long-term services cannot be identified prior to developing the IPE, the IPE must include a statement in the comments section explaining the basis for concluding there is reasonable expectation that a source of extended services, which may include natural supports, will be available prior to case closure.
7. If the person meets the definition of a youth with a most significant disability (under age 25) and extended services are not available from other sources, or are not available at the time needed, then DCRSA shall be identified as the provider for extended services.
8. The financial participation form must be completed before IPE development.
9. The VR Specialist shall assist the person in identifying needed services to support him or her in employment and to choose a service provider utilizing informed choice.

B. Evidence-Based Supported Employment Case Processing

1. Evidence Based Supported Employment (EBSE) providers shall send complete referral packets for each referred person to the RSA EBSE Team Leader consisting of:
 - a. DDS RSA referral form;
 - b. DBH vocational profile;
 - c. Work History
 - d. Resume
 - e. Individual Work Plan (IWP)
 - f. Medical and/or psychological evaluation;





- f. Medical and/or psychological evaluation;
 - g. Proof of disability;
 - h. Social Security Disability Benefit Award Letter;
 - i. Extended service letter of commitment;
 - j. Social security card; and
 - k. Proof of D.C. residency.
2. The RSA EBSE Team Leader shall review the referral packets and assign the case to an EBSE VR Specialist once the referral is accepted.
 3. The VR Specialist shall schedule the intake of the referred person within five business days of receiving the referral, together with the assigned Employment Specialist from the EBSE service provider and process the application accordingly.
 4. The VR Specialist shall review the information from the referral packet after intake to determine eligibility, and verify that the person is eligible in priority category 1 under Order of Selection (See DCRSA Order of Selection Policy).
 5. The VR Specialist shall conduct a Comprehensive Assessment and document it accordingly, which shows that Supported Employment is the appropriate rehabilitation goal and is consistent with the strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice of the person.
 6. The VR Specialist shall inform the person of his/her options for developing an IPE, and schedule an IPE development meeting with the eligible person and the employment specialist as appropriate.

C. *Service Status (Traditional and EBSE)*

1. The person and the VR Specialist shall jointly develop an IPE in accordance with 34 CFR § 363.11(g)(3) that –
 - a. Indicates the type of plan being developed as Supported Employment;
 - b. Specifies the vocational goal that has been agreed upon between the person, VR Specialist and employment specialist (for EBSE cases);
 - c. Identifies the planned or projected date for reaching employment goal;
 - d. Specifies all the supported employment services to be provided in order to reach the identified and agreed upon employment goal;
 - e. Defines job stabilization and identifies individualized criteria for evaluating progress towards achieving a competitive integrated employment outcome;
 - f. Describes the expected extended services needed;
 - g. Identifies the funding source and provider of extended services (state, federal or private programs or natural supports that will provide the extended services); or to





- the extent that it is not possible to identify the funding source and provider of extended services at the time the individualized plan for employment is developed, the VR Specialist must develop and include a statement describing the basis for concluding that there is a reasonable expectation that sources will become available;
- h. Provides for periodic monitoring to ensure that each person with the most significant disability is making satisfactory progress toward meeting the weekly work requirement established in the IPE by the time of transition to extended services;
 - i. Provides for the coordination of services provided under an IPE with services provided under other Federal or State programs which may include DDA or DBH;
 - j. Includes employment in an integrated setting for the maximum number of hours possible (up to 40 hours per week) based on the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice of persons with the most significant disabilities;
 - k. Documents progress measured through the required monitoring of progress meetings and monthly vendor report;
 - l. Includes any other VR services that the person and VR Specialist agree are needed to achieve the employment goal (i.e. a referral for fee-for-service benefit counseling when applicable, transportation, etc.);
 - m. Identifies anticipated need for discrete post-employment services for Supported Employment;
 - n. Identifies extended services for youths with a most significant disability if these services are required from DCRSA because they are unavailable from an extended services provider and are necessary to maintain or regain the job placement or advance in employment.
2. The supervisor shall review the case for documentation sufficiency and approve or disapprove the Supported Employment IPE submitted for review by the VR Specialist within 24 hours or the next business day.
 3. The VR Specialist shall make a referral to the selected provider for the identified services in the plan in a timely manner.
 4. Traditional Supported Employment cases: The VR Specialist shall assist the person, as needed, to exercise informed choice in selecting a provider in accordance with a the Informed Choice Policy, and shall prepare and submit a referral packet to the intended supported employment provider which includes the following:
 - a. Human Care Agreement Referral Form signed by the supervisor;
 - b. Copy of the IPE;
 - c. Copy of the Comprehensive Assessment;





- d. Release of Confidential Information signed by the person;
 - e. All relevant assessment/test results copied from the eligibility determination documents;
 - f. Resume copy (when available);
 - g. Recent medical/psychological report (when available); and
 - h. Education records (when available).
5. The VR Specialist shall review the Intake/ Assessment Report from the service provider to determine if they will provide the service consistent with the IPE goal and to identify other provider recommendations. If the intake is accepted, then the provider shall develop the Person Centered Employment Plan and submit it through the contract administrator (CA) for approval by the VR Specialist.
 6. The VR Specialist shall monitor the progress of the person during the job development/search phase, determine the level of the person's participation in the activity and review the monthly reports of the service provider submitted through the CA, and recommend approval or rejection to the CA. The CA will review the reason(s) for the recommendation, make a final determination to approve or reject, and notify the provider.
 7. VR Specialists are responsible for coordinating and scheduling case staffings with the person, the job developer, and any other persons deemed appropriate. Such case staffings should take place no less than one time per month, though meetings may need to occur more frequently depending upon individual circumstances.
 8. The VR Specialist shall document any and all correspondence, issues or progress of person towards achieving employment outcome in a case note.
 9. The person shall be maintained in Status 18 (services provided) during this phase.

D. Placement and Ongoing Supports

- a. The VR Specialist shall verify employment information from the service provider once the person has been placed.
 1. The VR Specialist shall review the information and determine suitability of placement in competitive integrated employment or, if not in competitive employment then in an integrated work setting in which the person is working toward competitive integrated employment on a short-term basis, against the following criteria:





- a. Work setting is typically found in the community.
 - b. The employee with a disability interacts, for the purpose of performing the duties of the position, with other employees within the particular work unit and the entire work site, and, as appropriate to the work performed, other persons (e.g., customers and vendors) who are not people with disabilities (not including supervisory personnel or people who are providing services to such employee) to the same extent that employees who are not people with disabilities and who are in comparable positions interact with these persons.
 - c. Work is performed on a full-time or part-time basis (including self-employment) and person is compensated at a rate that:
 1. Is not less than minimum wage in accordance with the jurisdiction in which he/she is employed;
 2. Is not less than the customary rate paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by other employees who are not people with disabilities and who are similarly situated in similar occupations by the same employer and who have similar training, experience, and skills; and
 3. In the case of a person who is self-employed, yields an income that is comparable to the income received by other persons who are not people with disabilities and who are self-employed in similar occupations or on similar tasks and who have similar training, experience, and skills; and
 4. Is eligible for the level of benefits provided to other employees.
 - d. Presents, as appropriate, opportunities for advancement that are similar to those for other employees who are not people with disabilities and who have similar positions.
2. The VR Specialist will create a case note with the placement information from the provider. Upon verifying a competitive wage and integrated employment setting consistent with the person's employment outcome, the VR Specialist shall move the person's case to Status 20.
3. A Job-Coaching/ Stabilization Authorization shall be developed and generated from System 7 or the successor system, and submitted to the service provider to authorize intensive supports services.
- a. The person may be provided intensive support services until employment is stabilized for up to 24 months in this status, or unless the person and the VR Specialist jointly agree to extend the time in order to achieve the employment outcome in the IPE. The VR supervisor shall review the justification and approve the extension prior to authorization.
 - b. Intensive ongoing support services must include, at a minimum, twice-monthly monitoring at the worksite of each person in supported





- employment to assess employment stability.
- c. If off-site monitoring is determined to be appropriate, it must at a minimum, consist of two meetings with the person and one contact with the employer each month.
 4. If the person is employed in an integrated setting and working on a short term basis toward competitive employment, the job developer/job coach shall develop a retention plan that includes a Plan to Achieve Competitive Employment by increasing per hour salary and/or benefits. The employer must agree to the plan and the person's case record must contain documentation of planning, monitoring of plan, and agreements made between the VR Specialist, the person, and the employer. Additionally, any extension of the short term basis period beyond 6 months (toward the maximum allowable 12 months), must be documented and justified by demonstrated progress toward competitive earnings.
 5. The service provider shall submit monthly progress reports about the placement, and the person's adjustment to the new employment situation, and progress toward job stability. These reports shall be submitted to the report point of contact. The point of contact will forward these reports to the appropriate VR Specialist, who shall review these reports and make a recommendation for approval or rejection to the CA. The CA will review the reason(s) for the recommendation, make a final determination to approve or reject, and notify the provider. The VR Specialist shall also use the information in these reports to determine if additional services are required.
 6. A letter of request from the employer or service provider (in cases where disability is not disclosed) indicating need for additional job coaching will warrant extension of intensive services which will be filed in the record of services.
 7. The VR Specialist shall document the justification for the additional job coaching services in the case record and amend the IPE accordingly.
 8. The VR Specialist shall generate and submit authorization for additional job coaching services to the service provider.
 9. The VR Specialist shall monitor the person's progress no less than every 30 days, but more frequently as deemed appropriate in specific cases to determine if additional services are required or until employment stability is reached as defined in the IPE. The case status of a person in supported employment shall remain in Status 20 until he or she meets the individualized criteria for job stabilization defined in the IPE.





E. Job Stabilization Phase

1. Employment Stabilization Determination: The VR Specialist shall ensure the person's job stability based on the following information and document it as such in the Supported Employment Stabilization Monitoring Report:
 - a. Funding for extended services has been secured or natural supports have been established;
 - b. 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 of 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;
 - c. The person in supported employment performs expected job duties to the employer's satisfaction;
 - d. Supervisor reports satisfaction with the person's job performance;
 - e. The person in supported employment is satisfied with the job and work environment; and
 - f. Other relevant individual factors such as necessary modifications, accommodations, transportation or behavioral stability. Natural supports have been established at this point especially if extended services will be provided by a non-paid provider.
2. The Placement Information Form shall be completed by the VR Specialist once job stabilization has been determined and documented which will automatically move the person's case to Status 22.
3. The Plan of Extended Services by natural supports should be obtained by the VR Specialist at this point. The service provider shall assist in developing this plan by identifying the kind of support that will be required and provided.
4. The VR Specialist shall obtain the provider's monthly progress report/s during job stabilization and review for approval or rejection in CRP. If rejected, the VR Specialist shall document the reason in the CRP module to notify the provider.
5. The service provider shall be notified in writing (Notification of Transition to Extended Services) that job stabilization has been reached and transition to extended services can commence.
6. If the person is a youth with a most significant disability and DCRSA is the identified provider for extended services, the VR Specialist shall develop a plan that identifies an alternate source of long term supports and establishes a timeframe for transitioning to another provider of extended service. DCRSA shall only fund extended supports



for a maximum of 48 months or until the person reaches the age of 25 or is no longer eligible for services. The VR Specialist shall identify another source of extended services prior to closing the person's case in order to ensure that there will be no interruption in services.

F. Transition to Extended Services and Case Closure

1. The VR Specialist shall monitor the person in extended services for at least 90 days prior to closing the person's case.
2. The VR Specialist shall monitor and document the person's progress in extended services no less than once every 30 days.
3. The VR Specialist shall send a Letter of Proposed Rehabilitation Closure to the person and the person's extended service provider(s) 30 days prior to the actual rehabilitation closure in accordance with the Case Closure Policy.
4. The VR Specialist shall review if the rehabilitation criteria are met after the required monitoring in the extended services phase (90 days).
5. The VR Specialist shall complete the Supported Employment Case Closure Justification and ensure that all prior active authorizations and encumbrances are paid and/or cancelled, when applicable.
6. In addition to documenting all issues normally covered in a general program successful closure, the VR Specialist shall also document:
 - a. 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 participant's service needs after closure that:
 1. Identifies specific services the ongoing support agency will provide;
 2. Determines the need for and appropriateness of rehabilitation post-closure services; and
 3. Documentation that VR Specialist and participant agree that no more employment services are needed.
7. If the person who worked for a short term basis in integrated, but not competitive, employment makes an informed choice to keep the job and does not increase pay and/or benefits to meet the salary and benefits of other employees, the person's case shall be closed as not rehabilitated.





8. The VR Specialist shall complete VR Case and Closure Information Form in System 7, or the successor system.
9. The supervisor shall review the case for documentation sufficiency and approve or disapprove the supported employment closure accordingly within 1 business day of submission by VR Specialist for review.
10. The VR Specialist shall send a Successful Rehabilitation Closure Letter to the person and/or the person's authorized representative and provide a copy to the DDA service coordinator if the person is supported by DDA.
11. If the person is a youth with a most significant disability who is receiving extended services, the case shall be closed, as appropriate, in Status 26, and then opened for extended services to transitioning youth in Status 31.

