



Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program Manual Revisions 2023

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Revision Summary – Added VR Policy regarding referral decision guidance for supported employment services provided by the Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center for Quality Employment Resource Guide; and VR Policy for employment settings established by Community Rehabilitation Providers provided by Rehabilitation Services Administration guidance.

VR Policy

1. Supported employment (SE) services may be provided for eligible individuals in accordance with the following guidelines and as described in the customer's IPE.
2. The individual or, as appropriate, the individual's representative must be actively engaged in making decisions about service providers, assessments, employment objectives and settings, and training.
3. The provision of supported employment services is not subject to financial need.
4. Supported employment services do not require a determination of comparable services and benefits.
5. SE services require both training and placement to accomplish the employment objective and therefore constitute multiple VR services requiring at least six (6) months to complete.
6. Funding for supported employment services is provided in part by the VR services Federal grant and in part by the supported employment services Federal grant. The supported employment services Federal grant can only fund VR services provided after an individual has obtained a supported employment outcome. Assessment and placement services are funded by the VR services Federal grant.
7. **SE may be considered appropriate for individuals whose disability priority is Most Significantly Disabled (1) and in an open priority category and who meet at least one of the following criteria:**
 - a. **The individual has not been able to achieve a competitive integrated employment outcome or is unable to sustain CIE without long-term supports.**
 - b. **The individual's experiences have primarily been in segregated facility-based programs for people with disabilities such as sheltered workshops or subminimum wage work.**
 - c. **The individual has not had the opportunity to work due to low expectations/ perceptions of abilities due to the type/nature of the disability.**



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d. The individual is a student with a disability who is transitioning from secondary education and has had limited opportunities to explore career opportunities.

8. As part of the ENA refer the individual to a CRP (using a Vendor Authorization) for SE consultation and meeting to assist with determining a specific employment objective. Collaboration with a BEC may be appropriate. Following determination of a specific employment objective, develop an IPE for supported employment services.
9. The scope of supported employment services may include but is not limited to:
 - a. A consultation meeting with the service provider prior to IPE development to determine the individual's service needs and specific employment objective.
 - b. Career development by the service provider following completion of the IPE and placement services provided in Service Status.
 - c. When warranted, Customized Employment placement services.
 - d. Career stabilization (training) and maintenance (ongoing supports) provided in Service Status and Employed Status by skilled employment specialists and job coaches.
 - e. Other services, beyond routine services, that are required because of the individual's intensive support needs.
 - f. Individual Placement and Support (IPS) for individuals with mental illness.
 - g. Extended services funded by other sources or by VR under certain circumstances for youth no older than age twenty-four (24) to maintain employment stability.
10. Supported employment services must be provided by an approved Community Rehabilitation Provider (CRP) with the appropriate training certification required by VR. Go to the CRP Web Site for the CRP Listing to verify that the CRP is approved for supported employment services. Referral to a CRP for supported employment services is made by a Vendor Authorization. Responsibilities of the VR Counselor and the CRP include:
 - a. It is the VR Counselor's responsibility to ensure that the CRP strictly follows the service's established procedures and reporting requirements outlined in the CRP Manual.
 - b. It is the CRPs responsibility to provide appropriate supported employment or individual placement and support services through qualified staff in accordance with the CRP Manual for individuals with the most significant disabilities to secure and maintain a successful supported employment outcome and work with the individual or, as appropriate, the individual's representative to be actively involved in directing, planning,



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and participating in the provision of supported employment services. This is demonstrated by documenting and reporting in accordance with the CRP Manual the provision of supported employment or individual placement and support services which includes:

- 1) Consultation and meeting to determine an individual's career profile, service and support needs and specific employment outcome.
 - 2) Career development and placement to assist an individual in securing the employment objective.
 - 3) Customized employment placement services in lieu of career development and placement, if warranted.
 - 4) On-the-job training services, if warranted.
 - 5) Career stabilization and maintenance depending on an individual's training and on-going support needs.
 - 6) For individual placement and support, coordination with mental health services to integrate an individual's mental health treatment with career development and placement and stabilization.
 - 7) Extended services to provide on-going supports to maintain an individual in supported employment.
 - 8) Intensive job services that may be necessary due to unusual and extraordinary circumstances which are attributable to the individual's severity of disability and intensive support needs.
 - 9) Post-employment services if additional job placement services are needed.
- c. Resolve CRP relations issues by direct communication with the service provider. If an issue cannot be resolved, contact the Provider Relations Team in the VR Contracts Unit.
 - d. For issues regarding the provision of services, contact the VR Area Director.
11. Supported employment intensive job services beyond one-hundred (100) hours requires approval of the VR Field Supervisor and the VR Area Director or the VR Assistant Director.
 12. On-the-job training may be provided for supported employment when the training is best provided by the employer.



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13. Documentation to verify that the customer's placement meets the requirements for competitive integrated employment may include information provided by CRP reports or a letter from the employer. The counselor may also visit the job site with consent of the customer to obtain documentation.
14. Part time placements of less than fifteen (15) hours must be reviewed by the VR Field Supervisor for meeting all CIE requirements and approved by the VR Regional Supervisor.
- 15. Employment settings established by CRPs specifically for the purpose of employing individuals with disabilities are typically not employment settings found in the competitive labor market and may not satisfy all requirements for competitive integrated employment. However, the following may be considered jobs typically found in the community for CRPs that satisfies CIE:**
 - a. Job positions in CRPs, such as job coaches, that are designed to provide services to others, even if those other persons are also individuals with disabilities;**
 - b. Management staff and administrative staff employed by CRPs who supervise and support the CRP's "direct labor workers"; and**
 - c. Job positions that are open to any qualified applicant regardless of disability status and allows for integration among and interaction with non-disabled coworkers in the performance of work duties.**
16. Staffings for reviewing the provision of services must be attended in person or by phone.
17. An individual is considered to have achieved a successful supported employment outcome when the individual has:
 - a. Achieved competitive integrated employment;
 - b. Completed all supported employment services based on the individual's strengths, abilities, and interests and as listed on the individual's IPE;
 - c. The case has been moved to Employed Status following a period of stabilization; and
 - d. Maintained employment for at least ninety (90) days after transitioning to extended services.
18. An Extended Services Plan must be developed that identifies the individual's ongoing support needs, the strategy to address the support needs and the responsible party that provides the extended services.



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19. Extended services for youth may be funded by another state agency or other resources, such as a Social Security PASS or IRWE; provided by natural supports; or funded by VR provided there are no other means of funding for providing the extended services and the youth has not declined VR providing extended services. If VR funds extended services for a youth with a disability, the case cannot be closed until the time period for providing extended services ends.
20. Individuals who are determined to need customized employment placement services will remain under an IPE for SE services for the duration of the case for training and stabilization and should be referred to an approved Community Rehabilitation Provider for customized employment services.
21. Individuals who have been determined to need ongoing supports either through assessment or in the provision of other VR services such as vocational adjustment training services must be referred for SE services.
22. If it is determined at any time after placement that an individual cannot benefit from supported employment services in terms of an employment outcome, the VR Counselor will review the continuation of services for the individual.
23. Post-employment services may be provided after the case moves to Employed Status.