

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY

Program Name: Vocational Rehabilitation

Policy Number: VR-4.4-v3

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Last Revision:

CHAPTER 4: IPE

Section 4.4: Supported Employment IPE Development

I. Policy Statement

This policy provides guidelines regarding the development of a Supported Employment Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). This policy also outlines the provision of supported employment services and extended services necessary for clients with the most significant disabilities for the purposes of job stability and maintaining employment.

II. Authority

Authority for policies contained in this document includes the following:

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), 29 U.S.C. § 3101 et seq.
- Title IV Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 701 et seq.
- State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program, 34 C.F.R. 361 §§:
 - 361.5 (c)(11),(15),(19),(37), (53), and (54) Definitions,
 - 361.45 Development of the individualized plan for employment,
 - 361.46 (b) Content of the individualized plan for employment,
 - 361.47 (a)(4), (8), and (10) Record of service,
 - 361.48 (b)(13) Scope of vocational rehabilitation services for individuals with disabilities, and
 - 361.55 Semi-annual and annual review of individuals in extended employment and other employment under special certificate provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act.
- The State Supported Employment Service Program, 34 C.F.R. 363 Subpart A—General.
- Arizona Revised Statutes:
 - § 23-502, and
 - § 23-503.
- Arizona Administrative Code, Title 6, Chapter 4:
 - R6-4-205 Individualized written rehabilitation program.

III. Applicability

- A. This policy applies to all clients with the most significant disabilities who need supported employment services and extended services to achieve and maintain employment. The client must:
 - A. Meet all eligibility criteria for VR services,
 - B. Meet the requirements for an individual with the most significant disability(ies),
 - C. Make consistent progress toward achievement of the intermediate objectives and employment outcome,
 - D. Apply and secure comparable benefits and services when appropriate, and
 - E. Maintain active participation in VR services.

IV. Standards

- A. Supported employment is competitive integrated employment intended for clients with the most significant disability(ies) as determined by placement into Priority Category 1 designation who:
 - 1. Have not been engaged in competitive integrated employment or whose employment has been interrupted or intermittent as a result of a disability,
 - 2. Are working on a short-term basis toward competitive integrated employment with ongoing support services, and
 - 3. Need intensive supported employment services and extended services to perform work and maintain competitive integrated employment.
- B. Supported employment services are provided by the VR agency from the time of job placement until transition to extended services. Extended services may be provided by the following entities after the completion of the supported employment services:
 - 1. The VR agency for youth with the most significant disability(ies), or
 - 2. A third party (e.g., Behavioral Health System (BHS), Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), or Arizona Long-term Care System (ALTCS); private non-profit organizations, or natural supports (e.g., family, friends, coworkers) for clients with the most significant disabilities.
- C. A Supported Employment IPE must meet all the criteria stated in Sections 4.2 Timelines for IPE Development, 4.3 IPE Development, 4.6 IPE Approvals, and 4.7 IPE Management and Amendments of this policy manual.

- D. The electronic case file (ECF) must include documentation indicating the client has been determined eligible and placed in the category of most significant disability to support the provision of the Supported Employment IPE.
- E. The Supported Employment IPE must include the following elements in support of the criteria listed above in IV. A:
 - 1. Placement in an integrated setting with a weekly maximum number of hours the client is capable of working,
 - 2. Supported employment services, including on-site job skills training necessary for achieving stability at work,
 - 3. Extended services for maintaining employment when supported employment services have concluded,
 - 4. Source (payor/provider) of extended services including natural supports,
 - 5. Regular follow-up schedule as often as necessary to ensure the client maintains their weekly maximum number of hours of work and confirm the expected work requirements are being met, and
 - 6. Coordination of the IPE services with services provided under other federal or state programs.
- F. The following supported employment services provided by a service provider may be arranged at the client's work site or during off-site meetings:
 - 1. Intensive job skills training,
 - 2. Social skills training,
 - 3. A minimum of bi-monthly monitoring and supervision of the client's work performance,
 - 4. Follow up with the employers and the client to reinforce and stabilize the job placement,
 - 5. Facilitation of natural supports, and
 - 6. Any other VR service identified as necessary to achieve job stability and maintain employment.
- G. Supported employment services may be provided by VR for up to 24 months, starting from the date of placement in the job until transition to extended services.
- H. Supported employment services may exceed the 24-month time limit for an additional three months when agreed upon between the VR counselor, client, and supported employment service provider as necessary for achieving job stability.

- I. In instances when the additional three months of supported employment services do not lead toward achieving job stability, the VR counselor, client, supported employment service provider, and employer (if applicable) must discuss the next course of action, including case closure.
- J. Once job placement occurs, the VR Counselor must arrange the provision of supported employment services as outlined in IV. F 1-6 above.
- K. The VR Counselor must maintain a minimum of monthly contact with the client and/or supported employment service provider and as often as necessary to discuss employment stability, progress, concerns, and the need for additional services to ensure success.
- L. A client is considered stable in their employment when the following criteria are met:
 - 1. Reduction in support services has occurred,
 - 2. The source of extended services has been identified, and
 - 3. The client has achieved the highest level of independence on the job, as determined by the VR Counselor, the client, and the provider of supported employment services (i.e., job coach).
- M. Extended services may be provided from VR for youth with the most significant disabilities for up to four years or until a youth reaches age 25, whichever occurs first.
- N. The VR Counselor must assist the youth with exploring and identifying alternative source(s) of extended services after the limit of VR funding for this service has been reached.
- O. In instances when it is determined that the youth no longer needs extended services, the client's IPE must be amended per Section 4.7 IPE Management and Amendments of this policy manual.
- P. Clients above the age of 25 with the most significant disability(ies) must be assisted with exploring and identifying other sources of extended services that VR is unable to provide.
- Q. When the source of extended services is unable to be identified during IPE development, the IPE may still be implemented when there is a reasonable expectation that the source will later become available.
- R. The IPE Justification must include a statement that the client has been informed of the circumstances and rationale listed in IV. Q above.
- S. In instances when the source of extended services has not been identified after substantial efforts are made by the VR Counselor, after Supported Employment IPE services, the client must be notified of pending case closure.

- T. Upon achieving employment stability and completion of VR supported employment services, the VR Counselor, the client, and the extended services provider must agree on the date of transition to extended services.
- U. The date when the client will begin receiving extended services must be documented in the electronic case file (ECF).
- V. The VR Counselor must maintain a minimum of monthly contact and as often as necessary with the client and the extended services provider for the next 90 days or longer after transition to extended support to ensure the client's employment remains stable.
- W. The case record may be closed as achieving an employment outcome when the following criteria are met:
 - 1. The employment outcome is in a competitive and integrated setting,
 - 2. The client has maintained employment for an appropriate period of time, not less than 90 days after the date of job placement and subsequent transition to extended services,
 - 3. The client has achieved stability in work performance, and the employment outcome is satisfactory as agreed upon between the VR Counselor, client, supported employment services provider (job coach), and employer, and
 - 4. The IPE services are complete, and the client no longer requires services from the VR agency.
- X. Refer to Section 5.1. Case Closure of this policy manual for case closures for:
 - 1. Meeting an employment outcome when there are no extended services provided, or
 - 2. When an employment outcome is not met.

V. Procedure

- A. Refer to Section IV. C-E, J-K, O-P, R-W above.
- B. Refer to Standard Work, if available.
- C. Refer to the RSA Allowable Services Document, contracts/service provisions (if available), and provider requirements. For non-contracted service, refer to the RSA Contracts Unit for guidance on whether the service is to be procured via:
 - 1. Arizona Health Care Cost Containment (AHCCCS) Fee for Services, or
 - 2. Other procurement methods, or
 - 3. Direct payment to the client via CPA.

- D. The VR Counselor must complete the "MSP New Client Referral Form" (located on the MSP AZVRS State Portal via the Links tab in Libera) to submit the referral for Job Development and Retention to Managed Service Provider (MSP) for service provider selection.
- E. Upon confirmation of service provider selection, the agency Referral for Services form may be completed with additional pertinent information relating to the client and service provision to be provided directly to the service provider.
- F. The VR Counselor must task the Purchasing Specialist to create RSA Purchase Authorization for the service listed in V. D.
- G. The Purchasing Specialist must submit the RSA Purchase Authorization for the service listed in V. D directly to MSP.
- H. Upon receipt of the provider's assessment report, the VR Counselor must review the report for completeness, approve the provider's invoice, and process for payment after confirming that the reporting documentation is complete.

VI. Documentation Requirements

- A. The client's electronic case file must include the following:
 - 1. Vocational Counseling and Guidance (VCG) case notes,
 - 2. Client contact case notes,
 - 3. IPE Justification, and
 - 4. IPE Amendment Justification.

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