

**Authorization:** Dan Haun  
Interim Policy/Program Manager

**Number:** VR-IM-15-02  
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**Topic:** Supported Employment Procedures

**Subject:** 3.14 Supported Employment for individuals with the most significant disabilities -- procedures

**Applies to (check all that apply):**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Vocational Rehabilitation – All Staff
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vocational Rehabilitation – Executive Team
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vocational Rehabilitation - Administration
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vocational Rehabilitation – Branch Managers
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify)

**Message:**

**Timelines**

Are based on participant needs (see **Supported Employment Timelines TAG**, for guidance regarding length of supported employment services).

**Working with Special Populations**

- Supported Employment -- Intellectual/Developmental Disability TAG
- Supported Employment – Mental Health IPS Model TAG (in development)
- VR – Informational Transmittal (IM) – 15 – 01: Job Stabilization
- 6.11 Transition Policy (in development)
- Transition Procedures (in development)

## **VR Procedures:**

### ***A. Referrals***

When an outside agency or school contacts the local VR office to refer an individual with most significant disabilities, to VR for supported employment, an application meeting is scheduled. The individual, referring staff, and other members of the individual's team plus the VR Counselor become core members of the individual's employment team. During this initial meeting, the team will review information brought to the meeting by the referring staff or the individual. This meeting is expected to end with completion of a VR application and opening a VR file. Members of the core team will ideally participate in key planning meeting(s).

### ***B. Eligibility***

Supported Employment Eligibility criteria follow Eligibility criteria (See Policy 2.8 Eligibility), with these exceptions and/or enhancements: Federal regulations do not allow the VR counselor to find an individual ineligible because the source of extended services is not formally identified. During the eligibility process, an individual is either determined eligible or ineligible for VR services. The identification of the source of long-term supports is a pre-plan activity and will be discussed in greater detail later in this policy.

The timeline for confirming eligibility should be shortened in Supported Employment when the above mentioned team attends the intake meeting and brings needed documentation, information, and knowledge about the individual.

### ***C. Assessment for Supported Employment***

Assessment for Supported Employment follows Assessment criteria found in Policy 2.11 Assessments.

### ***D. Services and providers***

VR shall provide services in a community setting that meets supported employment criteria. Services and Vendors for Supported Employment follow Policy 3.3 Vendor Selection with the following additions to the Services list:

- Job development or placement
- Job carving
- Customized job development
- Job coaching

**Benefits planning** is a critically important service when working with individuals pursuing supported employment. Through benefits planning, individuals learn how work will affect their benefits as well as potential work incentives they can use to help them overcome barriers. Without benefits planning, it is difficult for the individual to set employment goals like how many hours of work per week. The VR Counselor will ideally make a referral for benefits planning as early as possible and at least by pre-plan.

### ***E. The Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)***

The Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) follows Plan Development criteria found in Policies 3.1 Time to Plan and 3.2 Summation of Vocational Planning and 3.3 Basic elements of a Rehab Plan, with these additions and/or exceptions:

#### **1. Plan**

The participant, support agency, service provider and other significant parties coordinate with VR to develop the IPE. To increase the potential for success, the roles and responsibilities for the participant, VR, and other support agencies will need to be articulated as part of the IPE. Each team member must clearly understand their roles and responsibilities. VR shall provide copies of the plan to the participant and the support agency(s). VR shall follow all confidentiality and privacy procedures. (see Section 1: Rights & Responsibilities)

The availability of extended support funding and services is not an eligibility issue, but one of resource availability. Sources of ongoing or extended supports could be funded through Medicaid funding, private funds, or individual or family participation or natural supports. If these latter resources are utilized care should be taken to insure their ongoing availability. The provision of long term supports is so fundamental to supported employment that the IPE cannot be written without identifying the source of extended supports or inclusion of a statement outlining the basis for the expectation that a source of extended supports will be developed in the course of the plan's execution.

#### **2. Plan Elements**

The Supported Employment Plan mirrors the customary IPE with these additions:

- A statement noting how many hours the individual will work per week.
- A description of integration with non-disabled co-workers.
- A description of the ongoing support services. VR-provided ongoing support should be tied to participant need, and not the

availability of extended support services from other sources.

### 3. Monitoring Progress

The job developer will submit a monthly report to the Counselor, noting:

- Services provided (hourly interventions by date).
- Progress toward established IPE goals; with specific information about job development progress when specialized job development strategies are needed by the individual.
- A projection of anticipated hours of service in the next 30-day period.

VR reviews the report and summarizes progress or problems toward completion of the IPE. The counselor shall make appropriate changes and provide updates to the supported employment team. Additional team meeting(s) are scheduled as needed.

### 4. Ongoing/Supported Employment Services – length of service

VR provides ongoing/supported employment services between placement and job stabilization. This includes all necessary training and job stabilization activities that occur between placement on a job and transition to extended and/or natural support. Participant need and the time it takes that participant to reach job stabilization are used to determine how long VR provides the services. (see **Supported Employment Timelines Tag** for guidance regarding length of supported employment services).

## **F. Closure**

Closure for Supported Employment follows Closure criteria found in Policy 3.10 Case Closure, with these additions and/or exceptions:

- 1) the job meets the vocational goal in the plan; 2) the participant is working the hours per week in the plan, performing work and receiving compensation with the same benefits and wages as other workers in similar jobs and is performing these tasks on a regular basis to the employer's and their own satisfaction; 3) there has been a smooth and effective transition to long term supports with no break in support services; 4) the VR file is kept open at least 60 days after transfer to extended services.

At closure VR documents all issues normally covered in a general program successful closure with these additions:

- Describes the community-based employment situation (type of work, designated employer issuing the paycheck, weekly hours, wage per hour and level of benefits).
- The level and adequacy of ongoing, follow-along support.
- A comprehensive summary of the 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 VR services.

### **G. Appeal Rights**

Appeal Rights for Supported Employment follows Appeal Rights criteria found in Section 1: Rights and Responsibilities.

*If you have any questions about this information, contact:*

<b>Contact(s):</b>	Ann Balzell		
<b>Phone:</b>	503-945-6975	<b>Fax:</b>	503-947-5010
<b>Email:</b>	ann.balzell@state.or.us		