

Questions from January 25, 2022 VR/ODDS Stakeholder Call

Frequently Asked Questions (F.A.Q) regarding employment policy questions for Office of Developmental Disabilities Services (ODDS) and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR). These questions are taken from a Virtual Meeting with the field and stakeholders held on Jan. 25, 2022, as well as other inquiries sent in via email.

ODDS Updates:

1. COVID continues to challenge the I/DD system, and Oregon in general. Continuing to track positive COVID-19 cases of people with I/DD in ODDS services.
2. America Rescue Plan Act funding for home and community based services means ODDS will be providing many grant opportunities. Opportunities may include, but are not limited to, start-up grants, innovation funding, and rural development.
3. ODDS is looking at revamping policies on job coaching without VR as well as remote services policies.

4. Other ODDS news: Reminder of the Road 2 Work website:

<https://road2work.oregon.gov/>

Impact Oregon advertising campaign is yielding great results, including a huge jump in new website users and impressive results from Youtube, Instagram, Snapchat and Facebook. <https://impactoregon.careers/>. Ads on transit and billboards launching soon.

Employment First is looking for more success stories. Email if you have any success stories: employment.first@dhs.oha.state.or.us

Compass training website launched: <https://www.oregon.gov/dhs/Compass-Project/Pages/Training-Center.aspx>

Also, looking for nominations for the I Work We Success award:

<https://forms.gle/69iRCcYpz4Jp6c4v8>

Finally, VR-ODDS Crosswalk PowerPoint:

<https://www.oregon.gov/dhs/EMPLOYMENT/EMPLOYMENT-FIRST/Policy/VR-DD-Service-Crosswalk-PowerPoint.pdf>

VR Updates

VR is developing many trainings for providers and staff. Also, VR is bringing back the popular community of practice sessions in March 2022.

VR has opened up its rule making for public comment:

<https://www.oregon.gov/dhs/EMPLOYMENT/VR/Pages/Policies-Rules.aspx>

<https://www.oregon.gov/dhs/DHSNEWS/NewsReleases/VR-vehicle-related-rule-change.pdf>

Question: How do we find out what trainings employment professionals should take?

Answer: ODDS has all of its approved trainings listed online:

<https://www.oregon.gov/dhs/SENIORS-DISABILITIES/DD/Documents/Department-Approved%20Employment%20Service%20Provider%20Training%20Courses.pdf>

There is also the ODDS Worker Guide on training requirements for employment professionals: <https://www.oregon.gov/dhs/EMPLOYMENT/EMPLOYMENT-FIRST/Policy/Employment-Professional-Qualifications-Training-Worker-Guide.pdf>

Instructions on how to access VR Job Development trainings are at:

<https://www.oregon.gov/dhs/EMPLOYMENT/VR/Pages/Providers-Partners.aspx>

The required training for VR providers is the Job Developer Orientation Training (JDOT). There is also a JDOT for Rural Areas. Also required are the Employment Professional Core Competencies series. To search for these in Workday Learning (which replaced iLearn): Log into your Workday Learning account and click “Browse Learning Content” and in the search type in “ODHS – DD – EP”. The series has 12 courses in it.

Question: What are on-demand modules?

Answer: These are training courses that are available 24 hours a day online so you can take them at any time.

Question: I am pleased to hear of specific grant opportunities for new programming options and startup programs and providers. Are there also options to expand existing programs?

Answer: Yes, the ARPA grants mentioned were just a few examples. There will be grant opportunities for existing providers as well.

Question: Do trainings like some of the Open Future trainings that aren't employment-specific count for continuing education credits?

Answer: Yes, the ODDS Worker Guide addresses this:

<https://www.oregon.gov/dhs/EMPLOYMENT/EMPLOYMENT-FIRST/Policy/Employment-Professional-Qualifications-Training-Worker-Guide.pdf>. Specifically, it says “All Employment Professionals must complete 12

CECs of Department-Approved training annually. At least 6 of the 12 CECs required must be specific to the topic of Supported Employment as it relates to people with developmental disabilities. The remaining CECs for the year, if any, must be Department-approved trainings related to topics about disability and not necessarily about Supported Employment.”

Question: What is being done to help with direct support professional staffing issues?

Answer: Here are the things ODDS has already done related to staffing:

- \$10 million in grants for recruitment and retention of staff to provider agencies in June 2021.
- \$20 million in funding released in September and October 2021 for retention and recruitment of group home direct support professionals.
- COVID funding for adult foster homes to support their workforce.
- Additional funding, such as hazard pay, for Personal Support Workers.
- \$500 incentive payments to workers in group homes in December 2021.
- \$5 million in grants to support employment and day support activities providers in December 2021.

The legislature also approved rate increases of 8.3 percent that went into effect on July 21, 2021 and new rate models that will increase funding significantly when they go into effect as of July 1, 2022.