

## Questions from April 2, 2019 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) on topics including: Retention Policy, JDOT Trainings, and more.

These questions are taken from a webinar with the field and stakeholders held on April 2, 2019, as well as other inquiries sent in via email.

### ODDS Updates:

1. The Statewide Referral and Release of Information is now available. These new tools are available for statewide use April 1, 2019. Effective April 1, it is best that these tools will be used if a written referral for Office of Developmental Disabilities Services (ODDS) or Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) employment services is needed, or if a release of information is needed for coordinating or sharing information between Oregon's social service agencies (such as ODDS, VR, Oregon Department of Education, etc.) Referral tools include the Authorization for Sharing Individual Information (Form 3010, commonly referred to as the statewide Release of Information). The tools can be used to refer a person for employment services to VR, ODDS, or both agencies simultaneously. Form 3010 was developed as a result of 2017 legislation that directed social service agencies to work together to develop and implement a statewide release of information. The 3010 replaces form 2099 (the current DHS release of information) and will be used more broadly by social service agencies working together to more seamlessly meet the needs of people served.  
The 3010 Release of Information will have a soft launch as it continues to be tested statewide during 2019. Please continue to send comments and feedback as these tools launch to: [ODDS.Engagement@state.or.us](mailto:ODDS.Engagement@state.or.us)
2. Retention Policy: We heard feedback from stakeholders that a policy was needed when someone finds their own job, or gets one through Discovery or Employment Path services, and is stable so they can access ODDS job coaching services right away. This is not so people skip or bypass VR. However, if the person is stable at their job, the job meets their goals and desired hours, this policy can help. If there is any uncertainty, the team should talk. There is a flow chart for service coordinators and personal agents to use at the end of the worker guide.  
<http://www.dhs.state.or.us/policy/spd/transmit/pt/2019/pt19002.pdf>

3. Benefits counseling for youth: a policy was just released on allowing benefits counseling as a waived employment path community service for students and youth. More information is on the worker guide at: <https://www.oregon.gov/DHS/EMPLOYMENT/EMPLOYMENT-FIRST/Policy/Worker-Guide-ODDS-Benefits-Counseling-Version2-03.08.19.pdf>
4. The Service Coordinator/Personal Agent Conference date is set for June 19-20 at the LaSells Stewart Center in Corvallis. More details will be announced soon.
5. Employment First podcasts have launched. VR counselors, service coordinators, personal agents and others spend a lot of time traveling. This is a way to get short, helpful information while on the go. Recent topics have included ADL/IADL supports, History of Employment First, and more. The podcast is available at: <https://feeds.blubrry.com/feeds/oregondhs.xml>

### **VR Updates:**

The VR In-Service will be August 28 and 29 at the Salem Convention Center. More information to come soon. This year VR is opening it up more to partners and stakeholders. Once the event is posted, people can register starting June 1, 2019 on the state's iLearn website: [ilearn.oregon.gov](http://ilearn.oregon.gov)

JDOT trainings – check for upcoming trainings on iLearn (also posted on the training calendar found at the Employment First website). Matt Baldwin with VR is working on scheduling these trainings.

There is a VR Request for Applications open right now for summer work experience for students with disabilities. Eligible applicants include schools, employment providers, workforce programs, and other providers of disability services. Successful applicants must have 20 percent of students with I/DD. Last year had a bit less than 300 students go through the program. Find the application at: <https://orpin.oregon.gov/> and search for: Summer Work or DHS-4708-19. All questions, concerns, etc. regarding this opportunity must go to the Sole Point of Contact, Louie Thomas at the Procurement Office: [Louie.Thomas@dhsosha.state.or.us](mailto:Louie.Thomas@dhsosha.state.or.us). Applications must be submitted by 3 p.m. May 15, 2019.

VR's Subminimum Wage Project is starting early this year and Living Opportunities (the contractor) has begun to schedule and provide services to individuals who work at subminimum wage employment. Deb McHargue, Nicholas Von Pless and Brian Johnson from Living Opportunities are reaching out

to try to include those Personal Agents, Service Coordinators, Parents and Guardians who want to be present during a meeting. If anyone has questions about the process they can contact [ann.balzell@dhs.ohio.gov](mailto:ann.balzell@dhs.ohio.gov) or phone at 503-949-9876.

VR's job placement advisory committee is not up and running yet. The next contract has to be written and ready before the current expiration date of Oct. 1, 2020. If you would like to participate on that committee, contact Lexie Majors at: [Lexie.majors@dhs.ohio.gov](mailto:Lexie.majors@dhs.ohio.gov) or [VR.ContractInquiries@dhs.ohio.gov](mailto:VR.ContractInquiries@dhs.ohio.gov)

VR Revised Application – VR staff training has been developed and the new application will soon be available for staff to use. Currently waiting for it to be posted on the DHS forms server.

**Question:** Where can we find the Retention Policy information and flow chart?

**Answer:** Go to [iworkwesucceed.org](http://iworkwesucceed.org), go to the I/DD Employment Policy page, and under the topic Employment Stabilization and Competitive Integrated Employment the first item is ODDS Retention Policy and Worker Guide.

**Question:** Could you review the authorization of 30 days of job coaching by SC/PA's not needing a formal request or paperwork?

**Answer:** The main thing to remember is we don't want people at risk of losing their job. Service coordinators and personal agents can authorize job coaching without a formal request.

**Question:** Can you review the "job coaching without VR" form use?

**Answer:** As mentioned above, the retention policy is about making sure someone is stable on their job. If someone is going to use job coaching and is not going to VR, then this form is essential. It tells ODDS that the person is stable in their job. Also, without that form, the provider will not receive a retention payment if it didn't go through VR. The form is available, along with the retention policy and worker guide at:

<http://www.dhs.ohio.gov/policy/spd/transmit/pt/2019/pt19002.pdf>