Employment Path Community Service

Exploration and Soft Skills Training in the Community

DHS | Oregon Department of Human Services
INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
What is Employment Path Community?

✓ The outcome of the service is to build employment skills and should be related to a goal of achieving or exploring competitive, integrated employment.

✓ Employment Path Community should have specific goals and timelines in the Career Development Plan and Provider Implementation Strategies.

✓ Should clearly outline the intent of the service and document if the goal was reached and what the next steps should be.

✓ Allows people to have actual, first-hand experiences with community employment.
Who Can Access Employment Path Community?

Anyone eligible for ODDS-services who wants to explore their interests in community employment may receive this service.
Employment Path Community

**Exploration**
Can be used to help a person explore their strengths and interests in community work through various methods.
Examples of exploratory activities:
• Informational interviews
• Business tours
• Work experiences
• Job Shadows
• Volunteering

**Soft Skills**
Can be a great way to practice a person’s soft skill goals in the community.
Examples of soft skills:
• Personal boundaries
• Voice volume
• Appropriate dress
• Hygiene
Benefits of EPC

• Informed choice
• Hands-on experience
• First-hand information
• Person can receive service while working with VR or Discovery provider
• Help gather information that informs the employment process

Bill worked for many years in a sheltered workshop. He used Employment Path Community services to volunteer in the community at Meals on Wheels, which eventually led to a job working 20 hours per week at the Best Western Hood River.
Employment Path Exploratory Activities

Informational Interviews and Business Tours

** Formal: **
✓ Prior arrangements made with management.

** Informal: **
✓ No prior arrangements made. Should be quick and not interrupt business flow.
✓ Can happen more than once if person needs more time to gather information or become more comfortable.

** Always track employment data: Sights, sounds, smells, interactions, preferences, etc. **
Employment Path Exploratory Activities

Job Shadows

✓ Requires prior arrangement with the business owner or manager.

✓ Remember to note the duties observed, the environment and people, and what the person did or didn’t like.

** Always track employment data: Sights, sounds, smells, interactions, preferences, etc.**
Employment Path Exploratory Activities

Work Experience

✓ Paid or unpaid
✓ Set length of time
✓ Document:
  a) What duties the person performs
  b) How well they learned the task(s)
  c) Any assistance provided information about the environment and people
  d) What the person did or didn’t like.

Project Search is an example of an unpaid work experience that is billed as Employment Path Community.

** Always track employment data: Sights, sounds, smells, interactions, preferences, etc.**
Employment Path Exploratory Activities

**Volunteering**

✓ Can only be done at a nonprofit organization
✓ Document:
  a) What duties the person performs
  b) How well they learned the task(s)
  c) Any assistance provided information about the environment and people
  d) What the person did or didn’t like.

Cindy volunteered at the South Coast Humane Society before being hired as a permanent employee in 2015.

**Always track employment data: Sights, sounds, smells, interactions, preferences, etc.**
More Examples of Employment Path Community

- Peer to Peer curriculum

- Short-term courses (example: 12 weeks)- all community based, time limited, specific topics, relevant to a person’s interests

- 1:1 or small group (4 or less) volunteering

- 1:1 or small group (4 or less) work experiences

- 1:1 or small group (4 or less) business visits- relevant to a person’s interests, should involve a follow-up step

- 1:1 or small group (4 or less) informal interviews- teach people how to ask questions and answer questions about themselves

- Support to take an employment-related community class
The Rule of Always:
Always Collect Employment Data During Exploratory Activities

**Example:**

**Who:** Person participating and business contact

**When:** Date and time

**Where:** Business or organization

**What:** What duties did the person observe or perform? What did the person like/not like? This is a good place to gather sensory information (sights, sounds, smell, touch, etc.)

**Next steps:** Job shadow, work experience, or another tour/interview (great for people nervous about community employment)
Example: Starbucks Visit

**Employment Data**

Where: Starbucks  
Who: Sarah Jane  
What: Business tour - Sarah Jane watched the employees preparing coffee, cleaning tables, and taking out trash. She enjoyed the music and the busy environment, but the smell of coffee was a bit strong. She stated that she could probably get used to it.

**Next Steps:** Sarah Jane would like to schedule an informational interview with the manager. She would like to be able to ask questions about hours, what the job duties would be, and what the starting pay is.

**Day Support Activities (DSA) Data**

Where: Starbucks  
Who: Sarah Jane  
What: Sarah Jane met two of her friends at Starbucks to have coffee. They visited for an hour and Sarah Jane said that she enjoyed herself.

**Next steps:** Sarah Jane will meet her friends for coffee next Monday at Starbucks.
Employment Path is NOT:

✓ Required
✓ A prerequisite for other services
✓ A “test” that has to be passed- does not have to be done before receiving another service
✓ Take place the majority of the time in any provider-owned, operated, or controlled setting
✓ Mandated classes that an individual is required to take from a provider
✓ Classes that are not relevant to a person’s goals, rather a generic offering for everyone
✓ Volunteering indefinitely without a specific employment goal
✓ Does not require 1:1 service but is best done in group sizes less than 4 (as calculated in the rate model)
Notes Regarding EPC Billing

➢ Can compliment other services, such as Discovery and Job Development
➢ Cannot duplicate the same service/outcome and cannot be billed for in the same increment of time as other services.

Example:
Jane is enrolled in EPC and does a group work experience from 1-3 p.m. Then Jane does a Job Development activity, such as work experience at a community employer, from 3-5 p.m.

However, the EPC group work experience is billed as EPC and the progress notes from that work experience cannot be used as part of the Job Development experience.
Contact Information

Website:  http://iworkwesucceed.org
Email:  employment.first@state.or.us

More on Employment Path Community at:
http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/EMPLOYMENT/EMPLOYMENT-FIRST/Pages/policy.aspx
And: