

Questions from October 9, 2018 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, Discovery Profile, and more.

These questions are taken from a webinar with the field and stakeholders held on January 29, 2019, as well as other inquiries sent in via email.

Introduction: ODDS discussed several new policies and programs recently announced.

The first is the policy transmittal and worker's guide outlining circumstances under which ODDS may fund the 90-day job retention payment if a person obtains and maintains a job for at least 90 days when VR-funded services are not available.

The transmittal is at:

<http://www.dhs.state.or.us/policy/spd/transmit/pt/2019/pt19002.pdf>

Second, ODDS announced the reimbursement program for Medicaid-enrolled provider agencies with employment endorsements in rural Oregon. This is designed to make trainings more accessible to employment agencies in rural areas. Full information is available on the Action Request transmittal at:

<http://www.dhs.state.or.us/policy/spd/transmit/ar/2019/ar19004.pdf>. A call to answer questions about rural reimbursement program is scheduled for Feb. 5, 2019 from 9 to 10 a.m. The number is 877-411-9748; code: 5268628.

ODDS also mentioned the new employment provider mentoring program that will pay qualified Medicaid agencies to provide technical assistance to employment providers. Full information is available on the Action Request transmittal at:

<http://www.dhs.state.or.us/policy/spd/transmit/ar/2019/ar19003.pdf>. A call to answer questions about this program is scheduled for Feb. 6, 2019 from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. The number is 877-411-9748; code: 5268628.

ODDS has held two stakeholder meetings in the past few months regarding the job coaching funding model and what kind of model we may need going forward. The current rate model was built with an assumption based on amount of time that was presumed the job coach would spend directly (face to face) with the supported individual, which originated from Oregon job coaching data. Centers for Medicare and Medicare Services (CMS) require an annual review of direct contact time

provided and adjust the rates based on the fiscal year data. The direct time that providers spent with supported individuals was lower than prior data indicated. Because direct contact time was lower, assumptions of direct contact time in the rate were adjusted. For individuals with fewer direct care needs, assumptions went down (i.e., it is presumed less direct contact time will be provided) and for individuals with higher direct care needs, some assumptions went up (i.e., it is presumed more direct contact time will be provided).

ODDS also discussed that the proposed Discovery profile and accompanying policy are on the [ODDS Engagement website](#). Stakeholders are encouraged to look at the profile and policy and submit feedback

Vocational Rehabilitation announced that Keith Ozols is the new Interim Director for VR. He has been with DHS for eight years. Keith previously served as the workforce and youth manager and Youth Transition Program (YTP) Coordinator for Vocational Rehabilitation since 2015.

VR also has a number of new policies in the works that will soon be released for feedback. This includes new policies on students and transition-age youth, a revised Supported Employment policy as well as new Supported Employment manual, and a revised subminimum wage policy related to services VR is required to provide under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) to anyone known to be working in subminimum wage.

VR also reminded people that triage meetings continue to be held as a collaborative effort to help find solutions to issues that may arise for Oregonians who receive VR and ODDS services.

Question: When was maintenance job coaching transferred to the field, and is there an approval letter that Services Coordinators or Personal Agents must submit?

Answer: Maintenance job coaching was transferred to case management entities on January 1, 2019. ODDS staff are still available for questions and staffing issues. Exception requests will still come in as they do for all job coaching services. There is no approval letter at this time. Maintenance job coaching would go into the person's ISP and service agreement, and SCs/PAs would approve in the billing system. There is no expectation of a letter of approval, unless ODDS receives feedback that this is needed.

Question: Can an individual who is a Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP) contract with ODDS to offer PSW Discovery services?

Answer: As defined in rule and in the waiver, Personal Support Workers can offer job coaching supports only. To do Discovery, you must be a Medicaid agency with an employment endorsement or an Independent Contractor with current credentials and training, including CESP. You must also be dually enrolled with VR. It is a best practice that if you do Discovery, you also do job development. As a reminder, provider enrollment agreement and information is at:

<https://www.oregon.gov/DHS/SENIORS-DISABILITIES/DD/Pages/Employment-Service-Provider-Resources.aspx>

Question: Are there exceptions for those who are Tier 1 for their Activities of Daily Living/Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (ADL/IADL), yet one-to-one job coaching is the only way they are able to be successful at the job?

Answer: ODDS job coaching is a one-to-one service and the rate is based on that. Job coaching includes ADL/IADL supports and this is nationally true as well and is a best practice. Often we see that higher tiers expect a higher level of service. Because of this, agencies should structure services to have a blend of levels of support needs. However, there is an understanding that some individuals need job coaching supports the entire time they are on a job, while others may not. That is part of why the current rate is built on averages. A tier review can be done if an individual's current tier may not adequately reflect their needs.

Question: Is there support for someone who is interested in self-employment or micro-enterprise?

Answer: First step is to apply to VR and see if the self-employment is something that VR can support. VR counselor will work with the team on a feasibility study. Once someone has gone through the VR process, they transfer to ODDS long-term supports and that documentation is used to determine supports. As with regular employment, it is important for the person's whole team to get involved in their planning.

Question: When is VR looking at job development rates?

Answer: Job development rates are set by contract and the revisions to the current job development contract may be implement by Fall 2019. To submit input and feedback, email: vr.contractinginquiries@state.or.us

Question: Are VR applications available for providers to keep for clients to apply?

Answer: The application document is currently being revised and then a decision will be made where it will be posted and made available.

Question: How often is job development training offered?

Answer: Trainings are currently scheduled. People can go to the Employment First training calendar to see Job Development trainings, or email VR.policy@state.or.us to get updated information.