



Oregon

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Department of Human Services

Vocational Rehabilitation

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Dear Job Placement Providers,

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) has become aware that some previous job placements have occurred in employment locations that do not meet the definition of competitive integrated employment (CIE). For a program participant to be eligible to receive VR services and support, that individuals' job must be at an employment location that meets all criteria for community employment. This is outlined in detail in the VR/Job Development Contract within the statement of work, performance work statement and job placement sections.

Specifically, we have found that job placements have occurred with employers that are operating under an Oregon Qualified Rehabilitation Facility (QRF) contract. Qualified Rehabilitation Facilities (QRFs) are employers that hire individuals with disabilities to perform at least 75% of the direct labor hours across that company. When operating under this contract, the employer is eligible to receive preference for contracts with some state and/or federal entities.

The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), is the federal entity providing oversight for State Vocational Rehabilitation Programs. Longstanding RSA policy has mandated that employment with businesses that operate under contracts that require a ratio or percentage of employees have disabilities (including Oregon QRF Contracts or the Federal AbilityOne Contracts), do not meet the threshold required to be deemed community integrated employment.

In order to become compliant with these directives as of 13 January 2020, VR will end support for services that occur at QRF locations. If a program participant wishes to pursue or continue employment at a location determined to be on a QRF contract, that individual may do so. However, in those instances where a person chooses to remain or pursue employment at a QRF, VR in alignment with our contract, will not be able to provide services or support for that choice.

For those individuals that job developers may be working with now; VR will honor all previous payment obligations and continue to offer limited support for existing program participants through 13 March 2020. This will allow impacted vendors the ability to discuss community employment with the program participant and allow for transition time if the individual so chooses. However, VR will no longer be able to support new placements, or any other client services that occur at a QRF location as of 13 January 2020.

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An Equal Opportunity Employer

From a program participant or job developer viewpoint, many QRF locations may look like community integrated employment. It should be noted that QRF Contract Businesses are not considered “sheltered workshops.” In almost all instances these jobs look like integrated community employment. These jobs will pay minimum wage or more, may offer benefits equal to other employees and may employ persons with disabilities working with people without disabilities. Additionally, the employment setting will likely be in a community location. As an example, many of these QRF Contracts cover services that take place in state owned building locations. The only negating factor is that the person has been hired to work in a position covered under the ratio-based criteria at a setting specifically designed to support people with disabilities.

To determine if an employer is a QRF you may check the business name at these locations:

<https://www.oregon.gov/DHS/EMPLOYMENT/EMPLOYMENT-FIRST/Documents/Oregon-QRF-AbilityOne-Contracts.pdf> (or)

<https://qrf.dasapp.oregon.gov/Search>

Questions may be addressed to Howard Fulk at howard.r.fulk@state.or.us

Thank you,



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