

Employment Discussion Guide & Selecting Providers

Realizing the Potential of Employment First



Contents

Introduction to the Conversation & the Employment Discussion Guide	3
<i>High Expectations – The Standard for Planning is Twenty Hours a Week.....</i>	<i>4</i>
The Purpose of ODDS Employment Services is:	5
<i>Getting Started</i>	<i>6</i>
Documenting Employment Experiences & Conversations	7
<i>Path A: The person has a community job:</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Path B: You are not working in competitive, integrated employment but are interested in exploring it.</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Path C: You are not working in integrated employment (competitive or small group) & are unsure about pursuing or exploring it.....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Path D: You do not want to explore integrated employment now.....</i>	<i>11</i>



This guide provides resources that can support Service Coordinators and Personal Agents in ensuring that people can make an informed decision about Competitive Integrated Employment.

The expected and optimal outcome of all waiver-funded employment services is Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE).

~ CMS 2011 Informational Bulletin

Everyone has the right to integrated employment in the community.

~ Employment Position, Oregon Self Advocacy Coalition

Introduction to the Conversation & the Employment Discussion Guide

Employment First, grounded in the principles of informed choice, strives to address the extremely low employment rate of people with intellectual disabilities.

Conversations do not substitute for experiences.

We must constantly improve our skills in making people aware of their employment options. even more importantly of the benefits of working such as money, structure to their day, the opportunity to contribute and to be a “part of” and not “apart from” the community.

Some people may never say “I want to work,” to explore, pursue or obtain employment or words like them, yet they may communicate that desire in other ways.

Some people may never say “I want to work” but may communicate that desire in other ways.

The belief that someone we support may not understand concepts of work or money does not end the employment conversation. In fact, it doubles our obligation to make sure we do our utmost to help the person understand as much as possible.

A starting point for helping people to understand is relating the benefits of employment to their goals. Does the person want to own a home? Learn a skill? Travel? Does the person understand the differences between volunteering and employment?

This guide is structured to facilitate conversations about Competitive, Integrated Employment and to help people make an informed decision before the date of the ISP meeting. A person’s opportunities for employment success

are exponentially strengthened when their Services Coordinator (SC) or Personal Agent (PA) is an employment champion. Document the outcome of discussions and experiences in the Career Development Plan (CDP).

Conversations do not substitute for experiences – especially for people who are perceived to have the most significant barriers – including communication, behavioral or medical challenges. Employment First means employment for all – there are no “tests” to pass or benchmarks to meet. Employment-related experiences are particularly vital for people who choose not to work – people must have the opportunity to understand and experience what they are saying “no” to.

Finally, it is crucial that each of us recognize if or when we have difficulty imagining a particular person being successfully employed. The best way to support someone in this situation is to ensure we do not become the barrier. It is a sign of dedication to the person when we realize we may be the barrier and, with the person’s permission, enlist the help and the expertise of others to help the person move forward – even when that means moving forward with a different PA or SC.

High Expectations – The Standard for Planning is Twenty Hours a Week

At least annually, the SC/PA must have a discussion with each person who is either is working in competitive, integrated employment (CIE) or who wants to work in CIE about the number of hours they want to work per week. While the standard for planning is 20 hours a week, the 20 hours is only a starting point. Of course, the person determines how many hours a week they want to work. See [IM-16-044](#) for more information.

We believe all people with intellectual and developmental disabilities must have access to supports in the most integrated setting and access to a real community life with dignity, respect and our civil rights.

~Oregon Self-Advocacy Coalition, [Letter to Patricia Baxter](#), Interim ODDS Director, regarding Oregon's HCBS Transition Plan, June 5, 2014

The Purpose of ODDS Employment Services is:

To support people to explore, pursue, secure and advance in competitive, integrated employment. *No one, including a VR Counselor, can ever require a person to get any ODDS employment service prior to pursuing any employment-related goal.* If this happens, contact your ODDS Regional Employment Specialist so they can provide support and technical assistance. Each chosen employment service must have, at minimum, one outcome that is related to exploring, pursuing, obtaining and/or advancing in competitive, integrated employment.

Job Coaching: Provides support needed to assist the person to learn and succeed at work. A person must earn at least minimum wage.¹ Ironically, the mantra of a successful job coach is: “the less I am needed the more I have succeeded.”

Employment Path: Learning and work experiences to develop general, non-job-task-specific strengths and skills.

Small Group Employment: Works with a group of 2-8 people with disabilities at a community business. Earns at least minimum² wage. Does not include vocational services provided in facility-based work settings. While Small Group is integrated employment, remember that its ultimate goal is competitive, integrated employment.

Discovery: It is for people who want to go to work as a direct result of the service. The SC/PA must work with the person and the team to determine if it is a good use of the person’s time prior to authorizing the service. This is called the “Pre-Referral Discovery” process. No one, including a VR Counselor, may ever require Discovery.

¹ OAR 411-345-0025(9)(b)(F)

² OAR 411-345-0025(9)(b)(F)

Many employment-related activities are done without ODDS Employment Services. For example, there are other ways to experience employment such as: touring businesses; job shadowing a family member who is in a job or profession that interests the person; and visiting their local American Job Center to learn about in-demand occupations. Employment Services are for people on Paths A, B, or C.

Getting Started

To have an impact, we must tailor conversations and experiences to each person. For example, someone with communication challenges may benefit from a wide variety of tools and experiences to help them to make an informed choice.

The Paths outlined in this guide are:

- **Path A:** Currently working in CIE
- **Path B:** Not working in CIE but are interested in exploring it
- **Path C:** Not working in CIE and are unsure about exploring it.
- **Path D:** Not in CIE and do not want to explore it now

Even though employment has been first in Oregon since 2008, it is more important than ever that people understand what employment is, what it can be and the future of developmental disability services.

Perhaps, this is most apparent in employment path facility services. Employment path is a time-limited service. For people who use these services, collaborate to create a plan that will help them to make a steady transition out of these services into other settings – preferably competitive, integrated employment. We must be vigilant about these services not being merely time spent - but time invested to build a bridge to a different way of life.

Understanding Oregon's Employment First Policy Statement:

Employment opportunities in fully integrated work settings shall be the **first and priority option** explored in the service planning for working age adults with developmental disabilities. . .

For people who successfully achieve integrated employment, service planning must focus on maintaining employment as well as career advancement.

For people who are not employed in integrated employment, annual service planning must include and reflect employment opportunities as the first and priority service option explored.

All waiver-funded employment services have the expected and optimal outcome of individual, integrated employment at or above minimum wage – including Path to Employment Services and Small Group Employment.

~Source: Oregon Administrative Rule 411-345-0025(4) regulating ODDS-funded Employment Services.

Documenting Employment Experiences & Conversations

Paths A, B & C: If you are working with someone who is described in Path A, presently working in integrated employment (either competitive, integrated, or small group), use the questions in Path A as a guide for discussion. When a person is not employed in integrated employment, draw from Paths B & C.

Path D: When a person selects Path D, it must only be after an individual has had an opportunity to make a truly informed choice about competitive, integrated employment. This requires experiences that have been tailored to the person and ideally the opportunity to experience individual integrated employment. To access employment services an individual must have, at a minimum, a goal of exploring competitive, integrated Employment. Each discussion must be based on the premise that everyone can work in competitive integrated employment. Path B & C provide discussion points around this concept. This is how the conversation must start for each person, including people who initially might be inclined to choose Path D.

Path A: The person has a community job:³

What do you want to achieve this ISP year: (more than one choice may apply)

A. Retain current job. Discussion points:

1. Approximately how much money did you earn from wages last year? _____

³ To be considered community employment (aka CIE), the person must earn at least minimum wage. See OAR 411-345-0025(9)(b)(F).

2. What is working/not working for you in your current job? _____
3. What are your ideas/strategies for keeping your job? _____
4. Are the current employment supports working? If not, what are possible solutions? _____
5. If you have a job coach, do the supports they provide meet your needs and the needs of your employer? _____
6. Do people who provide either natural or paid supports act in such a way that contributes to your success in integrated employment? If so, how? If not, what are the plans and the timelines for addressing this? _____
7. How have you been supported to ensure that your earnings are appropriately reported, etc. to comply with the requirements of various systems such as Social Security, Medicaid, etc.? _____
8. Are there transportation issues that need to be addressed? If so, what are they? _____

B. Advance in current job.(more hours, raise, new skills, promotion, etc.) Discussion points:

1. What will advancement look like? _____
2. What will you need in order to advance? (supports, skills, on the job training)_____
3. What will you do to achieve your career advancement goals?_____
4. How have you communicated with your employer about your goal to advance?_____

C. Get an additional job. Discussion points:

1. Do you want to try something new at your current job? _____
2. Do you want to learn about different jobs? _____
3. Do you want to see how other people make money? _____
4. Do you want to stay where you are working or would you like to work somewhere else? _____

D. Get a new job (one that would replace your current job). Discussion points:

1. What works and doesn't work in your current job? _____
2. Do you want to learn about different jobs? _____
3. Do you want to see how other people make money? _____
4. Do you want to stay where you currently work or would you like to work somewhere else? _____

E. Retire. To be classified as retired, for purposes the CDP you are at least 60 or will be this ISP year. If you are not in this age range and choose not to work or explore work, you must select Path D. Discussion points:

1. Why do you want to retire? _____
2. Do you understand that you are not required to retire at 60? _____
3. How have you been supported to make an informed decision about retiring? _____

Path B: You are not working in competitive, integrated employment but are interested in exploring it.

1. What is your preferred/ideal/dream job? _____
2. Have you worked in competitive, integrated employment or other settings? _____
 - a. If so where? _____
 - b. What did you do? _____
 - c. What worked/didn't work about current/past jobs? _____
3. What kinds of activities and/or hobbies do you like? _____
 - a. Have you ever volunteered? _____ If so where? _____
 - b. What did you do? _____
 - c. What worked/didn't work about current/past volunteer jobs? _____
- d. What skills do you have? What are you really good at? _____
- e. What kinds of jobs would you NOT want? _____
- f. How would you get to and from work (select all that apply): Bus Walk/Roll Drive
 Transportation through the K-Plan Ride from friends/family Other
- g. If you are already looking for work or have looked, have you had a hard time finding a job? If so, what do you think are the reasons? How could these reasons be addressed? _____
- h. Is there anything that worries you about getting a job? _____
- i. Do you get jobs but don't stay very long? If so, how often has this happened? _____
- j. Is your family and/or support system motivated to help you get and keep a job? _____
- k. Who do you know who might have a contact who could be helpful in finding a job? _____

If you decide to pursue competitive, integrated employment, you do not have to go through Path C questions. However, if you are unsure about pursuing competitive, , integrated employment or express that you do not want competitive, integrated employment, continue to Path C.

Path C: You are not working in integrated employment (competitive or small group) & are unsure about pursuing or exploring it.

1. How were the advantages of integrated employment discussed?

Some examples are:

- Contributing to your community	- Structure to your day
- Making friends and interacting with people	- Income (vacations, housing, transportation)

2. How were the disadvantages of not working in integrated employment discussed?

Some examples are:

- Isolation	- Lack of structure to your day
- Fewer opportunities to meet new people	- Not pushing your boundaries/learning

3. Why are you unsure about pursuing and/or exploring integrated employment?

- a. If it is due to limited or no exposure to integrated employment, what is the plan to address this?
- b. Concern about loss of benefits? If yes, what is the plan to get work incentive information/benefits counseling? (one example is assistance from Disability Rights Oregon or VR)
- c. Reluctant to change routine or it is difficult to re-structure supports? (For example, the following supports would need to be altered or added, transportation, residential support, etc.)
- d. No supports for work? If yes, what is the plan to explore the supports the person needs? ____
- e. Discouraged by family? If so, is there a plan to overcome this issue? ____
- f. Discouraged with VR process or found ineligible by VR? If so, is there a plan to overcome this issue? ____
- g. Discouraged by health issue or disability? If so, is there a plan to overcome this issue? ____

If you will pursue or explore integrated employment, you do not have to consider Path D questions.

Path D: You do not want to explore integrated employment now.

Please note, if during this conversation a person expresses that they would like to, at a minimum explore integrated employment, the person may want to consider the various employment services that are described in this Employment Discussion Guide. The questions for this section are the same as the Questions for Path C.

If a person chooses an underlined selection in the grid below, “Potential Strategies for People Considering Path D,” they have selected an employment service. To receive an employment service, a person must have goals related to Competitive Integrated Employment. A person who receives or is planning to receive an employment service in their current ISP year must have a CDP.

Potential Strategies for People Considering Path D

Potential Barriers & Solutions	
<p>Transportation Concerns:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Working within walking/rolling distance of home 2. Using public transportation 3. Asking friends, family or co-workers for a ride 4. Getting a job on the bus line 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Moving to a home that is on or near a bus line 6. Asking your employment or residential provider to get you to work 7. Requesting Transportation Through The K-Plan
<p>Discouraged by my employment experiences:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discussing what did and did not work 2. Keeping the answers to #1 in mind when exploring /pursuing employment opportunities 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Talking with friends/family who work to find out if they’ve overcome negative work experiences. 4. <u>Requesting Path to Employment Services and/or Career Exploration/Discovery</u>

<p>Discouraged from working by others:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discussing why others are discouraging you 2. Finding out if their fears and concerns are based on good information 3. Talking with others who have faced similar concerns and who have gone to work 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Asking the concerned person or people if they enjoy working 5. Using resources such as benefits counseling through Disability Rights Oregon
<p>Unable to find a job that matches my skills, interests and abilities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Visiting your career center to learn about jobs in your community. 2. <u>Requesting ODDS Discovery/Career Exploration</u> 3 <u>Requesting ODDS Employment Path Services</u> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Job shadowing a friend or family member 5. Talking with your friends/ family about their jobs 6. Analyzing what contributed to having a bad job experience 7. Talking to people who have disabilities who work to find out about their employment experience
<p>Reluctant to change routine:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discussing Employment First and its key beliefs including that everyone is ready and able to work. 2. To schedule activities with friends when you don't work 3. To think about how you have made friends 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Job Shadowing with family or friends or talking with them about their jobs 6. Visiting the career center to learn about jobs in your community 7. To begin working only a few hours a week 8. <u>Requesting ODDS Discovery/Career Exploration</u> 9. <u>Requesting ODDS Employment Path Services</u>
<p>Concern that I will lose my Social Security and/or Medicaid benefits:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Meeting with a benefits specialist 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Talking with others who had the same concerns and went to work.
<p>Behavior Challenges</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discussing Employment First and its key beliefs, including that everyone (including people who may be labeled as having behavioral issues) is ready and able to work. 2. Requesting behavior support services 3. <u>Requesting ODDS Discovery/Career Exploration</u> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4.<u>Requesting ODDS Employment Path Services</u> 6. Discussing work with your behavior support professional 7. Asking your behavior support professional about their understanding and belief in employment for the people they provide behavior services to. 8. Talking with your friends and/ or family about their jobs
<p>Does not want to work:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Exploring why you do not want to work 2. Exploring if this decision has been made based on conversations or experiences. 3. Job shadowing family or friends. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Talking with others who were in this same situation and changed their mind. 5. Exploring if there are specific parts of your life or people in your life who are encouraging them not to work and understanding why they are discouraging you from working.

Significant health problems/ needs:

- 1. Your health problems are temporary and you are undergoing treatment to get better – examples are chemotherapy, recovering from surgery, etc.
- 2. A job would need to meet certain criteria for your health, examples are: need to work inside, you have allergies, etc.
- 3. A job with a schedule that won't interfere with medical appointments like dialysis, etc.

- 4. Due to health problems, you tire easily. Examples of solutions are working part-time, etc.
- 5. Because you have health-related needs through the day (examples are: help with using the restroom, eating, etc.) if you worked, you would need help with these activities.
- 6. Requesting ODDS Discovery/Career Exploration
- 7. Requesting ODDS Employment Path Services

You do not believe you can work:

- 1. Exploring why you do not want to work
- 2. Exploring if this decision has been made based on conversations or experiences.
- 3. Job Shadowing family or friends.

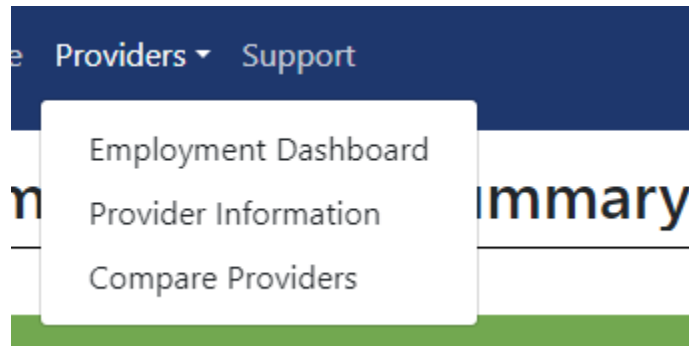
- 4. Talking with others who were in this same situation and changed their mind.
- 5. Exploring if there are specific people in your life who are discouraging you from working and understanding why they are doing this.

Other:

Using Provider Performance Data to Make Decisions

To see a list of employment providers, visit <https://eos.oregon.gov/>

Select “providers” and then select “Provider Information”



Provider Information

Provider Information

All Counties Any Capacity

Any Language Any Specialty

Let’s choose Clackamas County (first box) and leave the other dropdown boxes as they are. However, you can change the other boxes if you want to narrow down your search results. Please note, because providers update their service availability, your listing may look different than the one below.

Clackamas Any Capacity

Any Language Any Specialty

Reset

Provider Name ↓	Email	Website	Phone
ABILITIES AT WORK FKA OREGON EMPLOYMENT SERVICES C	geraldp@abilitiesatwork.org	http://abilitiesatwork.org	(503) 641-5820
ADVANTAGE WORKING SOLUTIONS LLC	jmaxey@advantageworkingsolutions.com	http://www.advantageworkingsolutions.com/	(503) 791-9928

You’ll see a list of employment providers that serve Clackamas. Click on a Provider Name. As the screen on the next page shows, there are 50 employment providers serving Clackamas. (See “50 Records Found”)

Provider Name	Email	Website	Phone
ALBERTINA KERR CENTERS	erinc@albertinakerr.org	http://www.albertinakerr.org	(503) 915-9819
ALTERNATIVE SVCS OREGON INC	efleming@asioregon.org	https://www.asioregon.org/	(503) 941-5256
COMMUNITY ACCESS SERVICES II INC	gavin@casoregon.org	http://communityaccessservices.org/	(503) 533-4373
COMMUNITY VISION INC	dawn@cvision.org	https://cvision.org/	(503) 292-4964
EASTCO DIVERSIFIED SERVICES	eastco@eastcods.org		(503) 667-0613
EDWARDS CENTER INC	lchambers@edwardscenter.org	https://www.edwardscenter.org	(971) 277-0122
UNITED CEREBRAL PALSY ASSOC OF OR & SW WA INC	nvivanco@ucporegon.org	https://www.ucpaorwa.org/	(503) 888-6585
ADVOCATES FOR LIFE SKILLS AND OPPORTUNITY, INC. ALSO	cvolavka@alsoweb.org	http://alsoweb.org	(503) 758-8576
EXCEED ENTERPRISES INC /FKA CCI ENTERPRISES INC	carrie@exceedoregon.com	http://www.exceedoregon.com/	(503) 652-9036
NATIONAL MENTOR SERVICES LLC DBA MENTOR OREGON	Alundis.brice@thementornetwork.com	http://www.mentororegon.com/	(503) 812-5848

50 Records Found | Page 1 of 5

1 2 3 4 5 ▶

Page Size

10 ▾

Click on any provider and a page like the following one will appear.

Provider Details

[Provider Data](#) [Back to List](#)

Provider A

Address

Email

Phone

Website

Provider Specialties

- ✔ Job Development - Vocational Rehabilitation
- ✔ Job Development - Commission for the Blind
- ✔ Complex Care Needs - Behavioral

Job Coaches Employed: 17 **Job Developers Employed: 6** **Discovery Providers Employed: 1**

Capacity

County	Job Coaches Available?	Job Developers Available?	Discovery Providers Available?
Clackamas	✔ Yes	✔ Yes	✘ No
Multnomah	✔ Yes	✔ Yes	✘ No
Washington	✔ Yes	✔ Yes	✘ No
Jefferson	✘ No	✘ No	✘ No
Marion	✔ Yes	✔ Yes	✔ Yes
Polk	✔ Yes	✔ Yes	✔ Yes
Yamhill	✘ No	✘ No	✘ No



Provider Capacity by County

Capacity last updated 11/8/2022

Look at “Provider Specialties.” This provider has indicated that they provide job development through VR and the Commission for the Blind. They have also indicated that they are interested in serving job seekers who need behavior supports.

This provider serves seven counties and what services they have available. In Marion County, this provider currently has capacity to provide job coaches, job development and discovery. In Jefferson and Yamhill, they don’t have capacity to provide any of these services. To see the provider’s employment track record, click “**Provider Data**”. A chart like the one below appears.





Provider Details

[Provider Data](#) [Back to List](#)

Overview - March 2023

60 total individuals served with paid employment

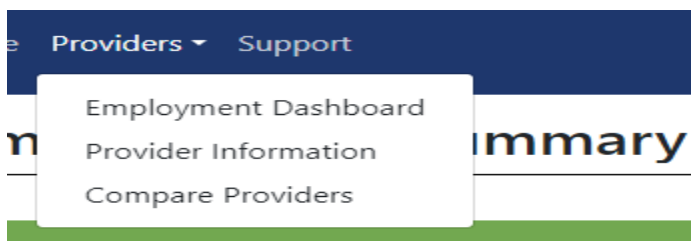
100% of individuals are in integrated employment
98.61% completion rate

Employment Services	Individuals Served by Type	Average Hours Worked per Week	Average Wage per Hour
 Individual Supported Employment <i>Integrated Employment</i>	60	16.0	\$16.39
 Small Group Employment <i>Integrated Employment</i>	0	0	\$0
 Employment Path Community <i>Path to Employment</i>	0	0	\$0
 Discovery Profiles <i>Completed in Lasts 6 Months</i>	1	-	-

This provider serves 60 people – all are working in Competitive, Integrated Employment. On average, the people this provider supports are working 16 hours a week and earning \$16.39 an hour. If you click on the red box by the service name, you will see a video about that employment service.

Comparing Providers

You can compare up to three providers at once. Select “providers” and then select “Compare Providers”



Because we’re comparing three, start by clicking the “x” in the red box under “Statewide Provider Average”

Compare Employment Providers

i Click "Add Provider(s)" to select a provider (or all providers in an area) to add to the comparison below.

Statewide Provider
Average

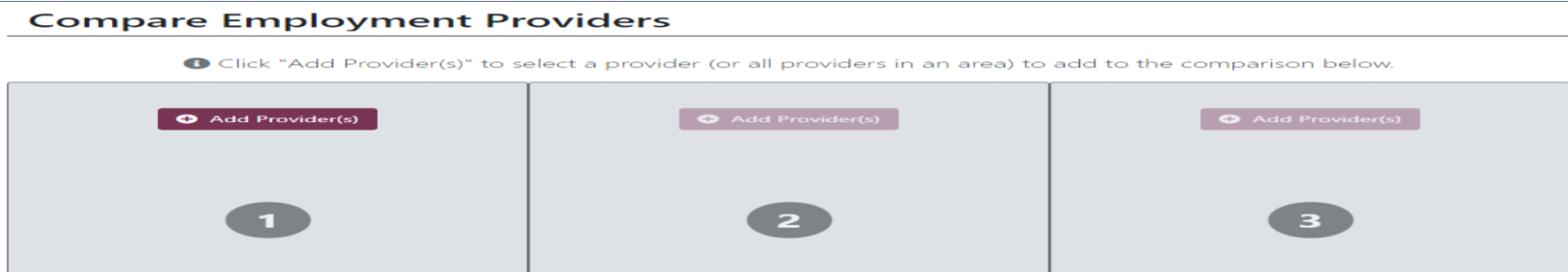
View Providers in Area



+ Add Provider(s)

+ Add Provider(s)

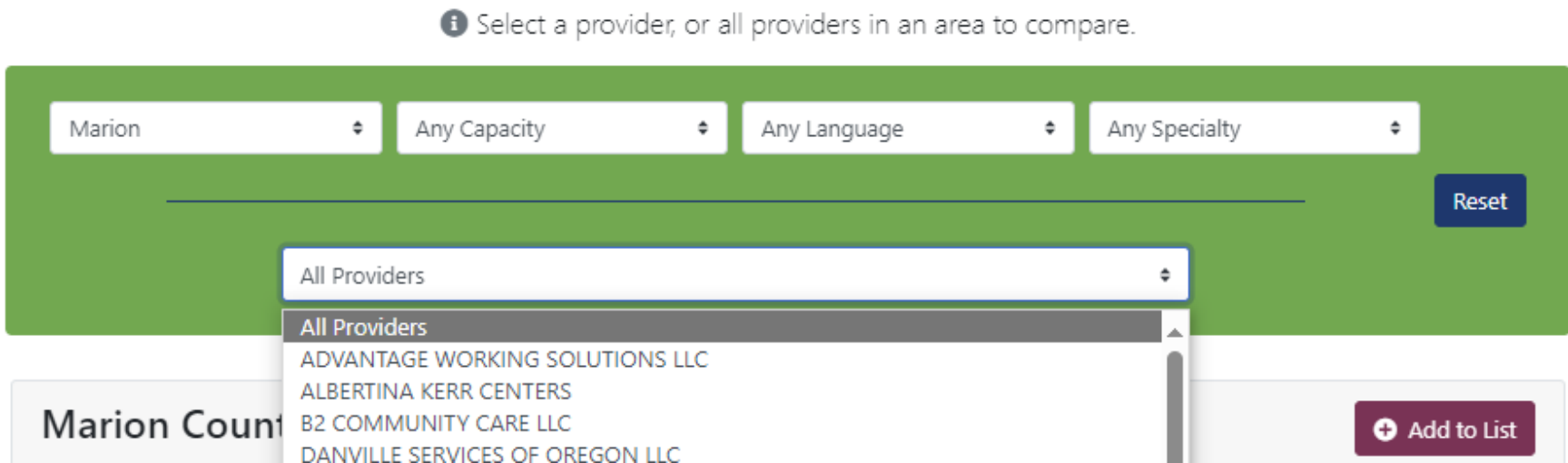
Now, your screen looks like this. Start by clicking “Add Provider” in box 1.



You can specify from 1-4 factors that you want to use as filters: County, Capacity (is the provider accepting new referrals); language; specialty (specify employment service) In this example, we’ve chosen Marion County

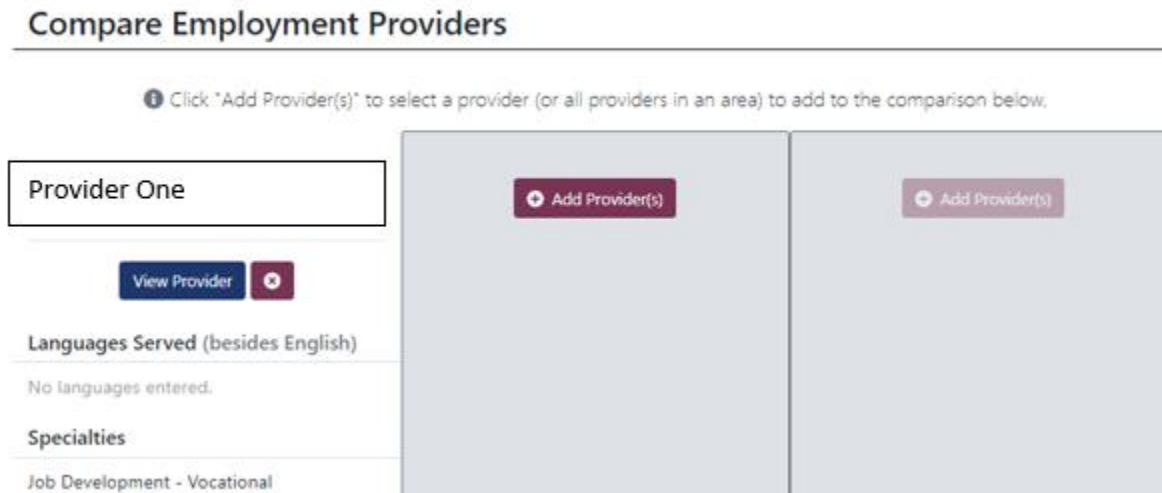
Add Provider(s) to Compare

Close






Next, choose a provider from the “All Providers” field. Once, you’ve chosen the provider, click “Add to List”

Once you’ve done this, you’ll be taken back to this screen. Now, you’ll repeat the process by clicking on the red “Add Provider(s)” button in the second column



If you repeat the process and choose two more providers, you will get a chart like the one on the next page

Compare Employment Providers

Provider A	Provider B	Provider C
Specialties		
Job Development - Vocational Rehabilitation	Benefits Counseling Services, Job Development - Vocational Rehabilitation, Job Development - Commission for the Blind	Job Development - Vocational Rehabilitation, Job Development - Commission for the Blind
Current Counties Served		
Clackamas, Douglas, Jackson, Josephine, Lane, Linn, Marion, Multnomah, Polk, Washington, Yamhill	Benton, Clackamas, Columbia, Coos, Curry, Deschutes, Douglas, Jackson, Josephine, Klamath, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, Marion, Multnomah, Polk, Washington	Clackamas, Multnomah, Washington
Capacity		
 Capacity Available	 Capacity Available	 Capacity Available
Employment Service Statistics		
Select a Period and/or County to filter the data below by your selection.		
March 2023	March 2023	March 2023
Clackamas	Clackamas	Clackamas
<small>i These may not reflect the current counties served and instead represent a historical list of counties the provider(s) has rendered services in.</small>		
Individual Supported Employment		
5 individuals served	23 individuals served	1 individuals served
12.4 average hours worked per week	13.5 average hours worked per week	7.8 average hours worked per week
\$15.75 average wage per hour	\$14.75 average wage per hour	\$16.00 average wage per hour

Data is an important part of the decision making process. If a provider’s data is not current, you may want to contact them to request the most current.