

## Selecting Employment Providers

Realizing the Potential of Employment First



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*The expected and optimal outcome of all waiver-funded employment services is individual, integrated employment.*

*~ CMS 2011 Informational Bulletin*

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## Selecting ODDS Employment Providers

Much of this guide is based on the manual “Working Together to Reach Employment Goals for Persons with Developmental Disabilities.”<sup>1</sup> Choosing an employment provider is a big step – especially when you consider that many ODDS-employment services are time-limited. ***The expectation of every employment service is individual, integrated employment.***

As the expectation in Oregon is that every individual can work in individual, integrated employment, it is important to find a provider or providers that can help you to reach your goals. A great way to start is by researching your employment service provider options.

Employment is first – this means that employment is everyone’s job – from the job coach to the nurse to the residential provider. Having a Personal Agent (PA) or Service Coordinator (SC) who is an employment champion is also crucial to establishing and achieving your goals.

*Employment is everyone’s job  
– from the job coach to the  
nurse to the residential  
provider.*

### First Things First

- Your PA or SC will have a list of ODDS employment providers that serve your community. After discussing your employment goals, ask your PA or SC to help you arrange interviews with prospective providers of ODDS employment services.
- In the spirit of Employment First, there are no “tests” to pass or services a person must have before pursuing and obtaining individual, integrated employment.

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<sup>1</sup> Guide #2, *Supported Employment Guidelines & Toolkit for Support Services Brokerage and OVR Staff*, Fall 2004  
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- Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) funds a service called “job development” – which is finding a person an individual, integrated job. If a provider is not a VR vendor and/or is not in the process of becoming a vendor, it is important for you to stop and consider if this provider is a skilled employment provider.
- Remember, all of the employment services have an optimal and expected outcome of individual, integrated employment. So, it is important that you select employment providers that will help you invest your time in employment services to realize your employment goals.
- A person can have different providers for different employment services – the key is that the services are coordinated and complimentary so you can reach your employment goals. It is also crucial that other services you may have – such as behavior, nursing, residential, physical/occupational therapy – are coordinated with and supportive of your employment goals.

## **Review the Employment Data**

ODDS has collected employment data from some ODDS employment providers. That employment data is at: <https://spdwweb.hr.state.or.us/EOS/Data>

For various reasons, some employment providers do not have data listed at this site. In either case, we encourage you to ask providers for data that will demonstrate their track record in helping people to secure, maintain and advance in individual, integrated employment.

Let’s start by looking at some hypothetical data on the following pages.

## ABC EMPLOYMENT PROVIDER: Data only reflect ODDS-funded employment services

**Box A:** This number is an unduplicated count of people in IE, SGE, EPC and EPF. Because a person can get multiple services, you can't look at the chart and tell how many total people are in employment services. So, look at this # to see the total # of people in employment services.

**Box B:** 15 people are in integrated employment - IE (6) + SGE (9) = 15. In some situations, a person may be in both IE & SGE, when this happens, they are counted as employed in both the IE and SGE numbers, but only once in the served numbers. A person must earn at least minimum wage in IE or SGE. 15/50 = 30%

35 total individuals served with employment  
50 total individuals served

30% of individuals are in integrated employment  
100.00% completion rate

**Box D:** Percentage of requested information that the provider completed. This provider supplied the all of the requested information.

**Box C:** ABC serves a total of 50 people in the 6 services in the chart. Because a person can get multiple services, it is not possible to look at the chart and know how many people a provider supports – so look at this #.

**Box E:** In this example, people supported by this provider spend most of their time in non-work activities.

| Employment and Day Programs at a Glance | Integrated Employment                |                                  | Path to Employment       |                         | Total Paid Job Setting         |                | Non-Work Day Activities |           |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|-----------|
|                                         | Individual Supported Employment (IE) | Group Supported Employment (SGE) | Emp Path Community (EPC) | Emp Path Facility (EPF) | Total Supported Integrated Emp | Total Employed | Facility                | Community |
| # of Individuals Served by Type         | 6                                    | 9                                | 20                       | 12                      | 15                             | 35             | 36                      | 25        |
| Average Hours Worked per Week           | 8                                    | 20                               | 6                        | 10                      |                                |                | 35                      | 25        |
| Average Wage per Hour                   | \$12.00                              | \$10.50                          | NA                       | NA                      |                                |                | NA                      | NA        |

See **Box A** for explanation

See **Box B** for explanation

## PROVIDER ABC

Number of People Served: 50  
 Percentage of People in Integrated Employment: 30%

| Employment Programs<br>at a glance | Integrated Employment           |                                   |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
|                                    | Individual<br>Supported<br>(IE) | Small Group<br>Supported<br>(SGE) |
| Number of Individuals Served:      | 6                               | 9                                 |
| Average Hours per Week             | 8                               | 20                                |
| Average Wage per Hour              | \$12.00                         | \$10.50                           |

## PROVIDER DEF

Number of People Served: 50  
 Percentage of People in Integrated Employment: 30%

| Employment Programs<br>at a glance | Integrated Employment           |                             |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
|                                    | Individual<br>Supported<br>(IE) | Group<br>Supported<br>(SGE) |
| Number of Individuals Served:      | 15                              | 0                           |
| Average Hours per Week             | 20                              | 0                           |
| Average Wage per Hour              | \$12.00                         | 0                           |

### Discussion Points

This example uses ABC Provider (their complete data set is on the previous page) and DEF Provider. For this example, DEF does not support people in ODDS-funded Sheltered Work or Non-Work Facility or Non-Work Community. Let's analyze the numbers. . .

While Small Group Employment is a form of integrated employment – it is not the end goal. The end goal of Small Group Employment is Individual Supported Employment (often called Individual, Integrated Employment.) Group Employment is when a group of 2-8 people with disabilities works at a community organization. Individual, Integrated Employment and Group Employment require that the person earns minimum wage or better, but also no less than the same wage paid to people who do not have disabilities and are doing the same or similar work.

Other data elements to consider include the number of hours worked per week as well as average hourly wage.

While data is crucial to the decision making process, as noted earlier, some providers are new to ODDS employment data collection and will not have data on the ODDS website until the next employment report. Regardless if a provider has data on the website or not, interviewing employment providers is also crucial.



## Asking the Right Questions

Now that you have considered the data, you may want to interview prospective employment providers. We will begin with a list of general questions that a person may want to ask in regard to a variety of employment services. Following the general questions, you will find questions regarding specific services. This guide is not inclusive of all the questions you may want to ask an employment provider.

### General Questions

1. What percentage of the people you support have their own, individual, integrated community job? (Do not include people working for the provider, another ODDS provider or a provider-affiliated entity.)
2. Can you name some of the employers people work for?
3. Can you give me a list of job titles?
4. Of the people in #1, what is the average:

|                             |                                           |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| - Length of time on the job | - Time it took to find the job            |
| - Average hourly wage       | - Average number of hours worked per week |

5. How many people with disabilities similar to mine have you helped to get, maintain and advance in individual, integrated employment?
6. Please describe the challenges and/or specific needs job seekers had. How did you meet these challenges?
7. Would you arrange for me to talk with a couple of people and their families?

8. If I hired you as my employment provider, are you the person who will be working directly with me? If no, will I have a choice of who works with me? Will I have the opportunity to meet the person or people who will be working with me prior to making my decision?

### Questions for Selecting a Discovery Provider

1. Is your agency also a VR vendor? If not who will help me to find a job?
2. What is your relationship like with VR?
3. Will the same person provide me with Discovery and Job Development? If not, how will that work?
4. What percentage of the people you have provided Discovery for get an individual, integrated job?
5. Do you have an example of a completed Discovery Profile?
6. Can you provide me with some ideas about what Discovery would be like for me?
7. How long have you been getting people jobs?
8. What type of Discovery training has your staff had?
9. Can you tell me about a person who went to work as a result of the Discovery you or your agency provided?
10. How often does someone receive Discovery from you and not go to work in individual, integrated employment?

### Questions for Selecting a Job Coaching Provider

1. Give an example of how your job coaches help a person to learn their job and be as independent as possible.
2. Give me an example of how your job coaches fade from a job.
3. How have your job coaches worked with other staff (such as residential staff) to make ensure a person has what they need to be successfully employed?



4. Can you give me some examples of people who you've gotten a job for who have not participated in employment path services?
5. Will I have a dedicated job coach? For example, one specific person who will provide the employer and me with support?
6. What experiences have your job coaches had resolving problems with employers?
7. How are your job coaches trained?
8. How would you work with me and my supervisor and co-workers to help me become successful at my job?
9. Do your job coaches also have other roles at your agency? For example, are they also residential staff?

#### Questions for Selecting an Employment Path Provider

1. Is your agency also a VR vendor? If not, who will help me to get a job?
2. If yes to #1, what is your relationship like with VR?
3. Give me an example of how someone's time in employment path services helped them to realize their employment goals.
4. Can you give me some examples of people who you've gotten a job for who have not participated in employment path services?
5. What type of relationship does your agency have with the career centers in our community?