

## 2900 SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

**2901 General.** Supported employment enables clients with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities, to enter or retain competitive employment in an integrated work setting. Individuals eligible for this program need intensive job site training/job coaching and ongoing support services in order to perform their work after job placement and case closure occurs. Supported employment services shall be purchased only from Division acknowledged service providers in accordance with the Division's fee schedule.

**2902 Eligibility.** A client shall be eligible to receive supported employment services if:

- A. The client is eligible for vocational rehabilitation (VR) services;
- B. The client is determined to be an individual with a most significant disability, including youth with the most significant disabilities;
- C. A comprehensive assessment of the client's rehabilitation needs documented in Action statements, including an evaluation of career and job needs, identifies supported employment as the appropriate rehabilitation service for the individual; and,
- D. A CRP funding source or natural supports have been identified to provide the needed on-going follow up services. The Counselor of Record will address on-going follow up supports, funding sources, and service provision at the beginning of the supported employment case.

## 2903 Process

A. *Determining Vocational Goal and Services.* The Counselor will collect extensive information about the client's abilities, limitations, and interests in order to determine a vocational goal. Before developing an ***Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)*** with a vocational goal that includes an intermediate objective of supported employment, the Counselor must have some understanding about the client's level of need for job coaching and job site support. If the client previously has been involved with an acknowledged vendor, this information may be acquired from existing sources. If there is insufficient evidence for the client and Counselor to determine an appropriate

vocational goal and the level of services needed, the Counselor may provide a community-based assessment from an acknowledged community rehabilitation program (CRP) or service provider (SP). Assessment information should specifically include the estimated weekly number of hours of job coaching the client needs. The assessment also may include strategies for determining the amount of job coaching support needed for the client to reach and maintain job stabilization.

B. *IPE*. An IPE for supported employment will be developed that is consistent with the individual's unique strengths, resources, priorities, needs, concerns, abilities, interests, capabilities, and informed choice that will assist the client to achieve a rehabilitation goal for employment.

C. *Supported Employment Plan/Job Development*. Upon written referral from the Counselor, the service provider will develop a placement site consistent with the client's vocational goal, identified needs, and informed choice. Prior to placement and with input from the client and Counselor, the service provider will complete an intake interview when needed, *CRP Service Plan*, and *Job Placement Plan*. The placement must occur within an agreed upon timeframe and result in a competitive integrated employment outcome.

D. *Placement*. Once placed on a job, the client will receive intensive job site instruction and support from a job coach provided by a Division acknowledged CRP or service provider. The Counselor will move the case into Status 22 immediately upon placement at the job site. The Counselor will maintain close communication with the client and the CRP/SP to monitor the individual's progress. The CRP/SP will complete the *Job Placement Follow Up* form to keep the Counselor informed. This progress will be documented in the action/details section of the client's case record. If Extended Supported Employment Services funding is required from the Division, the Counselor will request it from the CRP Programs Unit Manager.

1. *Job Coaching Time Limits*. Job coaching is limited to a maximum of 100 hours within a 24-month period. Exceptions may be granted only with approval from the District Manager. If exceptions are requested, the Counselor will document the justification and specify the number of additional hours or time limit extensions that will be necessary to meet the client's employment objective.

2. *Billable Hours*. Job coaching fees will be paid to train an employee by an acknowledged vendor who uses structured intervention techniques

to help the employee learn to perform job tasks to the employer's specifications and to learn the interpersonal skills necessary to be accepted as a worker at the job site and in related community contacts. In addition to job site training, job coaching includes counseling, advocacy, and other services needed to maintain the client's employment. These interventions are face-to-face with the client and may be done on and off the work site depending upon client and employer needs.

3. *Customized Employment.* This is a specialized method of seeking integrated, community employment based on a negotiated relationship between job seekers and employers in ways that meet the needs of both and determined in a discovery process that explores the interests and skills of the client and needs of the employer. The counselor, client and CRP can agree to utilize this approach as the basis of the Supported Employment plan. While there is not a specific fee structure for Customized Employment, the discovery and placement process can be funded utilizing a combination of existing CRP services of Community Based Assessment, Work Skills Assessment, Work Adjustment Training, and Supported Placement Services.

E. *Job Stabilization.* Job stabilization occurs during supported employment job coaching when a client's work performance plateaus and the job coaching and related interventions have faded to the lowest level necessary to maintain the client's employment. Determining that stabilization has been attained is a mutual decision that should involve agreement between the service provider, client, employer, and Counselor using the following guidelines:

1. The intervention level is less than 20% of the work week for a period of at least 3 consecutive weeks; or,
2. If an intervention greater than 20% is required to sustain a client on the job, the Counselor may determine that stabilization has occurred when the same level of job coach intervention is provided for 4 consecutive weeks.

F. *Short-Term Basis.* An individual with a most significant disability, whose supported employment in an integrated setting does not satisfy the criteria of competitive integrated employment is working on a short-term basis toward competitive integrated employment so long as the individual can reasonably anticipate achieving competitive integrated employment.

1. Within six months of achieving a supported employment outcome;  
or,

2. In limited circumstances, within a period not to exceed 12 months from the achievement of the supported employment outcome, if a longer period is necessary based on the needs of the individual, and the individual has demonstrated progress toward competitive earnings based on information contained in the service record.

*G. Case Closure.* The case may not be considered successfully rehabilitated until job stabilization has occurred. Once stabilization has been determined, the Counselor shall consider a client to be successfully rehabilitated when:

1. The client meets basic requirements of competitive integrated employment;
2. The client is working the agreed upon work hours identified in the IPE. If the client is stabilized in employment at a level of hourly work less than the goal established on the IPE and the individual and Counselor agree that the job represents substantial and suitable employment, the Counselor shall amend the IPE noting the actual hours of employment achieved prior to the Status 26 closure;
3. The job is stable and is expected to continue; and,
4. The Counselor should determine whether the placement meets the eligibility criteria for supported employment incentive payments and, if so, authorize to the CRP prior to closure.

*H. Extended Supported Employment Services (ESES).* Prior to moving the case into Status 26, the Counselor will schedule a face to face meeting with the client and service provider to complete an *ESES Plan* to guide the provision of extended services regardless of the ESES funding source. The Division receives state funds earmarked to provide Extended Supported Employment Services (ESES) for clients closed as successfully rehabilitated who require ongoing job coaching to maintain employment and who are not eligible for services through other funding sources.

1. For DRS to provide ESES, the *ESES Plan* (CRP-1) must include a minimum of twice monthly monitoring at the job site by the service provider (unless off-site monitoring has been determined to be in the client's best interests) and be signed by the client and Counselor. Copies of the *ESES Plan* must be given to the client, the service provider who will furnish the follow along services and filed in the case record.

West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services  
**Client Services Manual**

2. Upon receipt of the *ESES Plan* the service provider will complete an *Application for ESES Funding*, if needed, and mail both forms to the CRP Program Manager. If funds are available, an authorization number will be entered on the *Application for ESES Funding* with copies forwarded to the service provider and Counselor.

3. To be eligible for DRS funded ESES, the client must:

- a. Have received supported employment services;
- b. Have stabilized in the employment situation;
- c. Require ESES to maintain employment after closure;
- d. Be ineligible for ongoing support services from any other funding source; and,
- e. Employer must be entity other than the Community Rehabilitation Program.

I. After closure, the service provider annually completes the *ESES Plan* and an *Application for ESES Funding* and submits both forms to the CRP Program Manager. With a signed *Release of Information*, a copy of the client's *ESES Plan* may be provided to the Counselor of Record.

J. *Youth Exception*. Extended services may be provided through case service funds to youth with the most significant disability for a period not to exceed four years, or at such time that a youth reaches age 25 and no longer meets the definition of a youth with a disability, whichever occurs first. Once the case can be placed in Status 26 meeting normal case closure requirements, the funding for the extended services can be paid by moving the case to Post Employment services, Status 32, for a period not to exceed four years or they reach age 25 or no longer need the extended services.

**2904 Post Employment Services.** The Counselor may authorize up to 50 hours of supported assistance as a post-employment service, Status 32, for a client age 25 or older. The supported assistance may be provided only if aspects in the work environment change that create the need for further job coaching in order for the client to maintain employment. Such aspects may be a different supervisor,

West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services  
**Client Services Manual**

new tasks required of the worker, or a change in job location. For Youth under age 25, will not be limited to 50 hours and can continue as needed up to age 25, not to exceed four years.