



Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program Manual Revisions 2023

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Revision Summary – Added VR policy regarding determining integrated employment placements, jobs typically found in the community within community rehabilitation provider agencies, and informed choice not to pursue an employment outcome provided by Rehabilitation Services Administration guidance; and VR Policy for collaboration efforts between VR business employment consultants and community rehabilitation provider agencies.

VR Policy

1. Employment services are provided for customers who have completed preparatory services designed to achieve a specific employment outcome or who only need services to achieve a specific employment outcome and are in Job Ready Status. Employment services include:
 - a. Job development and job placement; and
 - b. Job placement assistance provided as a comparable service, such as through an American Job Center or a staffing agency.
2. Employment services do not include job readiness training, on-the-job training, apprenticeships, customized training, supported employment, customized employment, self-employment, pre-placement services, or pre-employment transition services.
3. The individual or, as appropriate, the individual’s representative must be actively engaged in making decisions about the selection of service providers, employment settings, and employers.
4. The provision of employment services is not subject to financial need.
5. Employment services do not require a determination of comparable services and benefits.
6. **The result of employment services must be full or part time competitive integrated employment. The VR Counselor must, on a case-by-case basis, determine whether a job position is typically found in the community, whether the interaction with others for that job position is for the purpose of performing the job duties, and whether parity exists with respect to the interaction between employees with disabilities and non-disabled individuals as compared to non-disabled workers performing the same or similar work at the work unit and the entire worksite, and with customers and vendors as appropriate. The following should be considered when conducting a case-by-case analysis but are not the only factors.**



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- a. **Is the job position open to any qualified applicant or is it limited to applicants with disabilities.**
 - b. **Whether a reasonable person observing the ordinary performance of work at an employment setting would consider individuals with disabilities to be segregated from their non-disabled coworker peers who are doing the same or similar work while performing their work duties, or would a reasonable person observe employees with disabilities as integrated among and interacting with their non-disabled coworkers while performing their work duties.**
7. Determining whether a job is considered part-time depends on the employer's policy and practice of defining employees and the hours required to be considered full-time. Wages for part-time work is determined by the employer but not less than the prevailing minimum wage.
8. Documentation to verify that the customer's placement meets the requirements for competitive integrated employment may include information provided by a BEC or CRP reports or a letter from the employer. The counselor may also visit the job site with consent of the customer to verify CIE.
9. Part time placements of less than fifteen (15) hours per week must be reviewed by the VR Field Supervisor for meeting all CIE requirements and approved by the VR Regional Supervisor. Document the review and approval in the case file.
- 10. Employment settings established by CRPs specifically for the purpose of employing individuals with disabilities are typically not employment settings found in the competitive labor market and may not satisfy all requirements for competitive integrated employment. However, the following may be considered jobs typically found in the community within CRPs that satisfies CIE:**
 - a. **Job positions in CRPs, such as job coaches, that are designed to provide services to others, even if those other persons are also individuals with disabilities;**
 - b. **Management staff and administrative staff employed by CRPs who supervise and support the CRP's "direct labor workers"; and**
 - c. **Job positions that are open to any qualified applicant regardless of disability status and allows for integration among and interaction with non-disabled coworkers in the performance of work duties.**
- 11. Centers for independent living (CIL), protection and advocacy (P&A) programs, and other similar entities (entities that are not CRPs) serving individuals with disabilities that**



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affirmatively hire and promote individuals with disabilities are typically found in the community and have integrated locations.

12. Employment services may be provided by:
 - a. A VR Business Employment Consultant (BEC) or the VR Counselor.
 - b. A Community Rehabilitation Provider (CRP).
 - c. Collaboration of a BEC and a CRP.
 - d. A local American Job Center.
 - e. Another entity providing comparable employment services.
13. Determine the availability of a Business Employment Consultant (BEC) for employment services prior to development of the IPE and referral to a CRP. If a BEC is available, the BEC may be the service provider for employment services or may collaborate with a CRP. Referral to a BEC is made using the Job Ready page.
14. A case may be moved to Employed Status when the customer is stable in competitive integrated employment (has successfully secured the employment objective on the IPE, has reported the first day to the job site, and the elements of the job that determines whether the occupation is suitable have been met).
15. If it becomes apparent that normal employment or other placement services are not the right services for an individual because of the need for ongoing supports or customized placement, refer the individual to a CRP to provide supported or customized employment services. The individual must be disability priority most significantly disabled (1) for referral for SE services and significantly disabled (2) for referral for CE services . The IPE must be amended for SE or CE services.
- 16. If an individual makes an informed choice to not pursue competitive integrated employment or supported employment, the VR counselor must make a determination that the individual is either not eligible (if they are an applicant) or no longer eligible (if they were previously determined eligible) for the VR program and must refer the individual to other community resources that may be able to assist the individual. Prior to determining the individual ineligible and closing the case, the VR Counselor must:**
 - a. Ensure that the individual understands the intent of the VR program and the availability of employment options and VR services to assist the individual to achieve competitive integrated employment or supported employment;**



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- b. Inform the individual that services can be provided in an extended (or non-integrated) setting, if necessary, for training or preparing for an employment outcome in an integrated setting;**
- c. Inform the individual with a disability about reapplying to the VR program at a later date to pursue competitive integrated employment or supported employment; and**
- d. Refer an individual that receives SSI/SSDI benefits to an SSA Benefits Specialist for information about receipt of SSA benefits while working.**

Job Development and Job Placement

- 1. Job development and job placement is a VR service provided in Job Ready Status when the customer has completed all preparatory services and is ready for employment.
- 2. Job development and job placement assists the customer with searching for and obtaining employment. This assistance may include:
 - a. Analysis of employment and economic trends;
 - b. Technical assistance on removal of architectural, communication, transportation, and other barriers to employment;
 - c. Collaboration with the State's job service and other programs at local American Job Centers and other programs providing assistance with job placement;
 - d. Job development;
 - e. VR staff contacts with employers;
 - f. When warranted, referral to a CRP for assistance with job development and job placement services;
 - g. Job analysis and job restructuring;
 - h. Counseling to achieve satisfactory adjustment to a job;
 - i. Assistance with resolution of problems or conflicts in the workplace;
 - j. Other technical assistance and consultation on job placement;
 - k. Similar assistance for post-employment services.



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3. Payment for job development and job placement services cannot be authorized until the service is included in the IPE.

Job Placement Assistance

1. Job placement assistance is a VR service and is provided in Job Ready Status when the customer has completed preparatory services and is ready for employment.
2. The purpose of job placement assistance is to refer a customer to a specific job that results in an interview.
3. Job placement assistance does not involve the activities listed for job development and job placement.
4. A job placement referral may be provided through a local American Job Center, a staffing agency or other appropriate entity, by the VR Counselor, or by a BEC.

Employment Services Provided by a BEC or VR Counselor

Employment services may be provided by a Business Employment Consultant or by the VR Counselor to assist an individual to obtain competitive integrated employment.

Employment Services Provided by a CRP

1. Employment services may be provided by an approved Community Rehabilitation Provider (CRP). Go to the CRP Web Site for the CRP Listing to verify that the CRP is approved for employment services. Referral to a CRP for employment services is made by a Vendor Authorization. Responsibilities of the VR Counselor and the CRP include:
 - a. It is the VR Counselor's responsibility to ensure that the CRP strictly follows the service's established procedures and reporting requirements outlined in the CRP Manual.
 - b. It is the CRPs responsibility to provide appropriate employment services through qualified staff in accordance with the CRP Manual to assist the individual in securing and maintaining a successful employment outcome and to work with the individual or, as appropriate, the individual's representative to be actively involved in directing, planning, and participating in the provision of employment services. This is demonstrated by documenting and reporting in accordance with the CRP Manual the provision of employment services which may include:



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- 1) Analysis of employment and economic trends
 - 2) Technical assistance on removal of architectural, communication, transportation, and other barriers to employment
 - 3) Collaboration with local American Job Centers and other State programs providing assistance with job placement
 - 4) Job analysis and job restructuring
 - 5) Working with the customer to achieve satisfactory adjustment to a job
 - 6) Assistance with resolution of problems or conflicts in the workplace
 - 7) Working with the individual to develop a list of potential employment opportunities
 - 8) Contacting an employer on behalf of the individual
 - 9) Assisting the individual with job applications/interviews
 - 10) Assisting the individual to revise their resume to target a specific employer/position.
- c. Resolve CRP relations issues by direct communication with the service provider. If an issue cannot be resolved, contact the Provider Relations Team in the VR Contracts Unit.
 - d. For issues regarding the provision of services, contact the VR Area Director.
2. Consult with the VR Field Supervisor prior to placement of an individual within a CRP's agency.

BEC and CRP Collaboration

- 1. A BEC may collaborate with a CRP for the provision of employment services and other appropriate assistance for the same customer with the end result being achievement of competitive integrated employment.**
- 2. The VR Counselor, in consultation with the BEC and the customer, determines if CRP/BEC collaboration and/or the BEC working directly with the customer can benefit in achievement of competitive integrated employment.**
- 3. BEC collaborative services should complement CRP services, not replace CRP services. BEC collaborative services may include but not limited to providing information to**



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the CRP on labor market information and placement possibilities, introductions to businesses, job site or sensory accommodations, person-centered practices, or other similar assistance that may be useful for achievement of the customer's employment outcome.

4. A BEC may work directly with a customer during the provision of CRP services to meet employment related needs and supports not provided by the CRP. The CRP must be informed of the BEC services and supports to avoid conflicts with the CRP's services.
5. BEC collaboration with a CRP is not required to be on the IPE. The BEC service should only be on the IPE along with the CRP service when the BEC is working directly with the customer in any capacity during the provision of CRP services. This may require amending the IPE to add a service.

Co-enrollment at a Local American Job Center

1. A local American Job Center (AJC) may be able to provide job development and placement services if not available from VR or other service providers. Contact the local AJC or a VR Counselor that is affiliated with an AJC about making a referral and follow the AJC referral process.
2. If appropriate, the individual may also receive job readiness training from the AJC. Inquire with the AJC or a VR Counselor that is affiliated with an AJC about job readiness training.
3. When referring an individual to an AJC, provide the individual with information about the expected services, the address and phone number of the AJC, and a contact at the AJC. Follow-up with the AJC contact, if necessary, to see if the individual came to the AJC and the outcome of the referral.
4. If an individual is enrolled at an AJC for services, include the services at the AJC in the individual's IPE and maintain communication with the AJC case manager to work together for the benefit of the individual, share in expenditures for services, and to obtain documentation from the AJC for service provision.

Job Placement through a Staffing Agency

1. Job placement through a staffing agency may be considered a successful rehabilitation outcome if VR services have been provided that contributed to the placement and appropriate guidelines for the service are followed.



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2. Staffing agencies may be extensions of the human resource departments of many businesses and industries and may provide employers with direct placements, temporary-to-hire placements, and part time placements. The staffing agency has the responsibility of pre-screening, hiring and maintenance of workers. In most instances, this service is provided at no cost to the employee (customer).
3. A staffing agency may not be used if the employment is or may be temporary and the customer wants permanent employment.
4. A staffing agency may fill open job positions for an employer as follows:
 - a. The staffing agency schedules the interview for the customer with the business. If hired, the individual becomes an employee of the business the date employment begins.
 - b. The customer begins working for an employer but remains an employee of the staffing agency for a predetermined trial period of time. If the individual and employer are mutually satisfied with the employment at the end of the trial period of time, the individual enters into permanent employment.
 - c. The customer is placed in a pool with other applicants to be considered when a business is in need of part-time workers. The customer may choose to work part-time at multiple job sites. In this scenario, the customer remains an employee of the staffing agency. The customer must work at least ninety (90) days at one job or at multiple jobs doing the same type of work. This type of placement cannot be the first objective when developing a plan of rehabilitation services and must meet the needs of the customer.

Follow-up After Placement

1. Follow-up after placement may be provided by a CRP or by a Business Employment Consultant (BEC) or the VR Counselor.
2. Follow-up provided by a BEC or the VR Counselor must include contacting the customer at a minimum on day forty-five (45) and on day ninety (90) and addressing and resolving issues to assist the customer in maintaining employment.
3. Document VR Counselor follow-up as counseling and guidance. For follow-up prior to ninety (90) days of employment include the customer's comments about the employment, any issues, and issue resolution. For the ninety (90) day contact include the requirements to



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verify employment in accordance with Closed Rehabilitated requirements and customer comments, if available.

Employment Services Provided as Post-Employment Services

1. Employment services may be provided as post-employment services if the service is necessary to regain, maintain, or advance in employment, as may be appropriate, with no other services needed.
2. Payment for employment services cannot be authorized until the service is included in an amended IPE.

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