

## Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) Technical Specifications: Supported Employment

Effective July 1, 2014 **Until Further Notice**

Supported Employment is competitive and integrated employment for those consumers who may need long term support to maintain a job. The services provided are intended to assist a DVR consumer in assessing, planning, development, placement, providing support on the job, a transition to long term support and successful employment.

Supported employment services are provided in a working alliance with many partners. Communication is the key to success between these partners. Use of issued agency guidance, technical assistance guides, and policies and regulations is encouraged to build collaboration. These technical specifications were designed to provide opportunity for input of all partners at various points in the process.

DVR can provide up to 18 months of support, although this level of need is rare. The services and processes outlined in the technical specifications have been designed to foster independence. The assessments should provide information to insure a good job match and reduce the need for job coaching support while maximizing consumer independence.

Service Providers must meet the qualifications defined by state law and any qualifications outlined by the long term support provider. Service providers that have agreed to provide Supported Employment Services also agree that the services and reporting required are completed by qualified personnel.

NOTE: DVR will NOT accept any supported employment report that does not provide a recommendation and information about the conditions for competitive and integrated employment. Detailed information must be provided as to the nature of any needed support for an individual to work in a competitive and integrated workplace. A percentage of projected support is not an acceptable report recommendation and will not be accepted or paid.

### **Services provided:**

- Supported Employment Consultation Meeting with Report
- Supported Employment Assessment including Work Trial, Meeting and Report
- Supported Employment Work Trials and Report (if approved)
- Supported Employment Job Development, Plan, Placement/Hire and Reports
- Supported Employment Ongoing Support and Reports
- Supported Employment, Meeting and Transition to Long Term Support and Report

### **Referral Process for all Services**

1.) Consumer and Counselor meet and discuss service to be provided and responsibilities and roles of each party. Consumer makes a choice of provider available using standard information.

Note: Consumer may elect to conduct research prior to selection of service provider with assistance from DVR.

2.) Counselor/DVR staff contact service provider and provide referral information required at time of authorization: consumer name, phone number, reason/purpose for authorization and any specific questions or concerns to address. If a meeting requiring DVR staff attendance is included in the service the DVR will provide meeting date(s) to the provider in advance to schedule the required meeting to be held within timeframe specified.

30 days-Supported Employment Consultation  
60 days-Supported Employment Assessment  
90 days-Long Term Support Transition

3.) Meeting is held with DVR consumer, DVR staff and service provider, takes place (if required) and report is provided.

### **Reporting/Billing Requirements**

The services and reports meeting the technical specifications should be completed within five (5) days of completion of the service or month of on-going service and not to exceed 30 days from referral/receipt of authorization for Supported Employment Consultation, Job Hire and Ongoing Support services and not to exceed 60 days from referral/receipt of authorization for the Supported Employment Assessment service and not to exceed 90 days from referral/receipt of authorization for the Long Term Support Transition service. DVR will pay the applicable fee for the service upon completion of an acceptable report (one that meets the technical specifications), and the meeting (if required). No additional fees will be provided for requested meetings.

### **Service Provided - Supported Employment Consultation Meeting and Report**

The purpose of the supported employment consultation meeting is to have initial discussion and develop a plan for further participation in supported employment. It is expected that the consumer may need long term support to maintain competitive employment so the provider of long term support should be identified, if available, and then involved in this consultation. This meeting should take place before a supported employment assessment is authorized. After the meeting, the service provider will issue a report to DVR within 5 business days of the conclusion of the meeting with a detailed summary of ALL the elements listed to secure an outcome payment.

### **Required Service Elements:**

- Required Participants; DVR Consumer, DVR Counselor, Supported Employment Service Provider, Funder or unpaid source of long term support (if identified)  
(Other participants could include: family members or guardian, case manager, previous or current school representatives, spouse or significant other, advocate or any other person the consumer chooses.)
- Meeting Topics Required-Discussion and clarification:
  - What is involved in the process of supported employment
  - What are the expected outcomes of supported employment
  - Possible sources of existing information to contribute to an assessment to make assurances that there is not an unnecessary duplication of effort.

- the source of long term support (if identified and needed) or plan to secure long term support (if needed),
- Stated current employment goal(s)
- Other areas of interest in employment
- Outside activities, personal interests and/or hobbies
- Educational background and goals
- Work restrictions or medical issues to consider
- Legal issues that may impact employment
- Existing logistical and or financial supports available
- Benefits Analysis and Counseling status
- Transportation resources
- Status of social security benefits and impact of employment
- Previous work history and experience
- Fading and Natural Support considerations
- Use of a targeted work trial as part of the assessment based on consumer skills and interests and need for up to two additional targeted trial experiences for better competitive job match.
- Possible locations for the work component of the supported employment assessment
- Possible need for assistive technology
- Method for exchange of reports and other ongoing information to include releases of information
- Other areas not addressed above

**Required Reporting Elements:**

- Date, place and meeting participants
- Results of discussion regarding supported employment process. Concerns addressed or ongoing issues to resolve.
- Expectations of outcomes of supported employment
- A list of possible sources of existing information to contribute to an assessment.
- the source of long term support (if identified and needed) or plan to secure long term support (if needed),
- Stated current employment goal(s)
- A listing of other areas of interest in employment
- A description of outside activities, personal interests and/or hobbies that may form the basis for community based observation
- A description of educational background and goals
- Any work restrictions or medical issues to consider
- Any legal issues that may impact employment
- A listing of logistical and or financial supports available
- Benefits Analysis and Counseling status including social security benefits and impact of employment
- Transportation resources or deficits
- Previous work history and experience
- Discussion of work trial as part of the assessment and need for up to two additional trial experiences for better competitive job match.
- Possible locations for the work trial component of the supported employment assessment
- Possible need for assistive technology
- Other areas not addressed above

## **Service Provided - Supported Employment Assessment including Work Trial, Meeting and Report**

The purpose of this assessment is to determine the conditions for participation in competitive and integrated employment. The assessment follows the consultation meeting. The information gathered at the consultation meeting along with other observation and at least one work trial is the basis for the assessment. Selection of the placement for the work trial must be done based on the consumer's stated vocational interest. The assessment must be done in the community and the work trial must be in a community based competitive and integrated workplace at wages commensurate with others performing the same work. The supported employment assessment fee includes: selection, set-up, competitive wage/fringe to the consumer, and direct job coaching/observation for one work trial. A meeting will be held with DVR Consumer, DVR Counselor, Supported Employment Service Provider, and Provider of long term support (if identified) and/or others the consumer would like involved. This meeting will discuss the results of the assessment and additional work trial(s) (if approved) and provide the consumer with information to decide about next steps in their search for competitive and integrated employment.

### **Required Service Elements:**

- Placement in a community based work trial for at least 8 hours in an integrated setting for which the consumer is compensated at or above the minimum wage, but not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer.
- Community interaction and observation as it relates to work readiness, alternate skills, independent functioning and other skill sets that may be matched to employment.
- Interviews with family, friends or significant people as identified by the consumer at the consultation meeting.

### **Required Reporting Elements:**

- A review and summary of all existing materials and information to inform the competitive employment goals of consumer.
- Identification of the provider of long term support or plan to provide long term support
- An exploration in discussion about the consumers stated employment goals and areas of interest
- A description of how information from the consumers outside interests and activities can be used to match the consumer to a possible job goal,
- A description of how and why the individualized work trial location was selected.
- Target wages, hours worked and special conditions that apply to the work site for that consumer (e.g. fragrance-free environment, amount of job structure vs. need for variety, work place culture, etc.)
- Short and long-term employment goals.
- A description of the type of support needed on the job and strategies to address them including worker traits, time management and ability to follow directions.

- A description of the medical or accommodations that will need to be addressed in competitive employment. Provide some strategies on job match to mitigate these needs
- Identify the personal/family, community and or logistical support or deficits.
- Transportation resources or deficits
- Results of observation of the consumer in familiar situations and what competencies, skills and natural motivations/interests were identified that may benefit employers and facilitate success in employment.
- A description of assistive technology needs
- A list of specific jobs that will be developed in the job development phase.
- Possible job coaching strategies
- A description of employment preparation needs. (Interviewing skills etc.)
- Plans to use work incentives, as appropriate, to maximize earnings.
- Recommendations for competitive employment including an initial list of employer contacts.
- A checklist of responsibilities for the DVR consumer, DVR staff and Service Provider.
- A timeframe for review of the plan for job development.

### **Service Provided - Supported Employment Work Trials and Report**

One work trial is included in the fee collected by the provider in the Supported Employment Assessment. It is expected that with the comprehensive nature of the other components of the Supported Employment Assessment and other information gathered that one work trial will provide enough information to begin a job search. Additional work trials may be provided based on feedback from the consumer wishing to identify an alternate job or to try a job that better matches their skills. The work trial fee includes: selection, set-up, competitive wage/fringe to the consumer, and direct job coaching/observation. *If the consumer, counselor and provider feel additional trials are needed; up to two additional 8 hour trials can be authorized by the DVR Counselor. This request needs to include a justification and will not automatically be approved. See fee schedule.*

#### **Required Service Elements:**

- Selection of the placement for the work trial must be done based on the consumer's stated vocational interest.
- Placement in a community based work trial for at least 8 hours in an integrated setting for which the consumer is compensated at or above the minimum wage, but not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer.

#### **Required Reporting Elements:**

- Job description, wages, dates/hours worked.
- Name of supervisor, natural support provider, and a detailed description of the supports provided to include dates/hours and type of support (task behavior, sequencing, quality, etc.)
- A list of all employers contacted to set-up possible work trial.
- A description of the type of support needed on the job and strategies to address them including worker traits, time management and ability to follow directions.

- Employer feedback for all stages of interaction.

## **Service Provided - Supported Employment Job Development, Plan, Placement/Hire and Reports**

This service is provided using consumer specific information as a result of information gathered via a formal assessment or other comprehensive information gathering that reflects the service and reporting elements in the Supported Employment Assessment Service listed above. The assessments should provide information to insure a good job match and reduce the need for job coaching support while maximizing consumer independence. Job Development in supported employment is an individualized service and requires a written plan listing activities, a contact standard between the consumer and service provider and also between potential employers and the service provider.

The first monthly report will consist of a written Job Development plan to provide job development services. All elements of this plan would have been discussed during the assessment phase for the consumer and include responsibilities of each party and a 60 day in-person review component.

### **Required Supported Employment Job Development Service Elements:**

- Job Development activities are performed under the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation name. The Job Developer will represent their services to the employing community as a service provider for the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.
- Service Provider secures job opportunities for the authorized consumer using all appropriate resources to include Job Center of WI registration, and other services such as resume writing, job seeking/keeping workshops or other employment preparation services as needed.
- Service Provider directly and in person contacts employers on behalf of the consumer and DVR to obtain information on competitive job openings and to develop or construct jobs for the consumer based on their stated preferences and skills.
- Service Provider conducts on-site job analysis, assists employers in identifying, modifying, and eliminating environmental barriers and provides for rehabilitation engineering consultation as appropriate.
- Service Provider, in cooperation with the DVR staff, educates employers about disability related issues, including pertinent legislation.
- Service Provider networks with DVR staff and other community agencies in the service area to coordinate contacts with employers.
- Service Provider provides employment preparation services (interview prep, resume development, including visual resumes or profiles, job shadows, etc.) as part of Job Development, as identified in the planning process when Job Center services do not adequately address consumer's needs.

### **Required Supported Employment Job Development Plan Elements:**

- Target wages, hours worked and special conditions that apply to the work site for that consumer (e.g. fragrance-free environment, amount of job structure vs. need for variety, etc.)
- Specific jobs that will be developed.
- Initial list of employer contacts.
- Employment barriers, resources and strategies to address them.

- Responsibilities for the consumer, DVR staff and service provider.
- Conditions for the use of internships, work experiences and on-site job coaching.
- Plans to use work incentives, as appropriate, to maximize earnings.
- Short and long-term employment goals.
- Sources of support (e.g. sister drives consumer to work)
- A set standard of contact between the service provider and DVR consumer. (one time per week)
- A set standard of direct contact between the service provider and employers.
- Availability of On-the-Job training agreements
- Criteria for a review and/or update of the Job Development Plan.
- Scheduled dates for 60 day review of the Job Development Plan.
- Other information identified

**Required Supported Employment Monthly Reporting Elements:**

- Dates of meetings with consumer and nature of the meeting.
- Dates and all employers contacted on behalf of the consumer including the nature of the contact (phone, in-person, business tour, in-depth meeting).
- Feedback from previous employer contacts (job filled, no openings)
- Any employment preparation services provided including copies,
- Requests for technical assistance from DVR or other collaborative partner including job development plan update meeting request

Note: Employment less than 15 hours per week will need DVR approval in advance. During the initial meetings and/or assessment the supported employment team discussed the number of hours the consumer indicated they would like to work. If employment is secured and there is a substantial difference in the hours secured, approval must be provided by DVR and discussed with the consumer. Consumers may elect to work less than 15 hours per consumer choice; however, DVR will review and track these cases.

**Required Supported Employment Placement/Hire Service Elements:**

- The consumer is accepted for employment by the employer, agrees to start on the job and a start date is established.
- The consumer must be compensated at or above the minimum wage i.e., competitive employment, and receive at least the customary wage and benefit level paid to other individuals performing similar work for the same employer. in “competitive employment”:
- Work must be in a setting typically found in the community in which applicants or eligible individuals interact with non-disabled individuals, other than non-disabled individuals who are providing services to those applicants or eligible individuals, to the same extent that non-disabled individuals in comparable positions interact with other persons.
- The employer is not the Service Provider.
- Wage at entry needs to be reported to DVR and discussed with the consumer.
- Hours at entry needs to be reported to DVR and discussed with the consumer.
- Job support strategies, additional plans for fading of support, and necessary hours of support including natural supports and factors mitigating need for support including a good job match.

- The Service Provider was actively involved in assisting the consumer in obtaining the job. (All reports filed, services provided)

**Required Supported Employment Placement/Hire Reporting Elements:**

- Hire report is due within five (5) business days of hire and to include: employer contact information, start date, job title, name of supervisor, wages, availability of benefits, impact on social security, hours and a detailed description of the paid supports and natural supports including a fading plan anticipated to receive outcome payment.

Note: If there is a reasonable belief that the consumer will not need long term support to maintain employment, DVR may elect to reserve payment of the monthly transition fee for up to 2 months and provide job coaching support at an hourly fee. If after 2 months, the consumer continues to require assistance to retain or maintain the job as reported in the monthly reports and independently verified with the employer by DVR, the monthly fee will be paid to the provider.

**Service Provided - Supported Employment Ongoing Support and Reports**

DVR intends to provide follow along support for a period of time necessary for the consumer to reach stability. DVR supports transition to long term support as soon as possible given individual circumstances. The goal of ongoing supports is to provide a reduction in the level and method of supports including on-site job coaching. A transitioning should occur to natural supports as quickly as possible. The assessments should have provided information to insure a good job match and reduce the need for job coaching support while maximizing independence. The supported employment provider will be paid a bonus if the consumer is transitioned to long term support in months 1-6. DVR intends to promote employment maximizing the number of hours of work, wages and benefits available to all consumers.

- In general, a consumer is considered stable on a job when he/she has met the level of stability identified and agreed to by the team. (DVR Consumer, DVR Counselor, Supported Employment Service Provider, Funder or unpaid source of long term support (if identified), family members or guardian(s), case manager, previous or current school representatives, spouse or significant other, advocate or any other person the consumer chooses.) While further independence and progress may still be made, stabilization has occurred when the consumer has learned the job, and is performing at a level where he/she is able accurately complete the required job tasks with a reasonable level of support given the timeframe on the job and in the timeframe agreed upon with the employer.

**Required Service Elements:**

- On-site observation of employment no less than 1 time per month with employer or as needed and discussed
- On-site observation of employment no less than 2 times per month with consumer or as needed and discussed.
- Discussion with employer/supervisor to gauge progress toward independence on the job.
- Method for exchange of progress reports for future transition and other ongoing information to include releases of information

**Required Reporting Elements:**

- Job description, wages, dates/hours worked.
- Name of supervisor, natural support provider, and a detailed description of the supports provided to include dates/hours and type of support (systematic instruction, task behavior, sequencing, quality, etc.)
- A description of the type of support needed on the job and strategies to address them including worker traits, time management and ability to follow directions.
- Method identified for exchange of reports and other ongoing information for future transition to long term support
- Employer feedback

Note: Direct job coaching is included in the monthly fee. If a provider wishes to use other support methods they MUST fully consult with the consumer, employer, DVR and the provider of long term support *prior* to use of a different methodology.

**Service Provided - Supported Employment Meeting and Transition to Long Term Support and Report**

A meeting with the service provider, consumer, counselor and long term support provider (as well as others invited by the consumer) should be conducted to discuss the timing and plan to facilitate the transfer.

**Required Service Elements:**

- Discussion of transfer of support if the service provider is anticipated to change.
- 90 day follow-up and DVR case closure date identification
- Discussion of resources and referral process for consumer if service needs change.

**Required Reporting Elements:**

- Effective date of transfer to Long Term Support and end of DVR funding of supported employment.
- Employer contact information,
- Employment start date, job title, name of supervisor, wages, availability of benefits,
- A description of impact on social security benefit eligibility
- Detailed description of the supports anticipated to receive outcome payment. (Dates/hours and type of support-task behavior, sequencing, work quality/accuracy, speed etc.)

**Alternate Modes of Supported Employment**

There are several unique models of long term supported employment utilized depending on the needs of each consumer and local availability.

For information about use of customized employment or individual placement and support models for consumers please see the DVR external webpage and discuss options and local availability with the WDA Manager or WDA Supervisor.