

OVR Staff Guidance for Purchase of Supported Employment

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KENTUCKY OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Purpose	1
Federal Definitions.....	2
Supported Employment.....	2
Supported Employment Services.....	3
Extended Services.....	3
Supported Employment Models.....	5
Traditional Supported Employment (TSE)	5
Individual Placement and Support (IPS)	5
Customized Supported Employment (CSE).....	7
Process of Determining if an Individual Should be Placed into Supported Employment... 	8
Procedures	9
Traditional Supported Employment.....	9
Individual Placement and Support	17
Customized Supported Employment	25
Bonus Payment for CRP Outcomes	36
Step-Down Support.....	37
Interim Employment.....	38
References	39

Purpose

The Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) partners with businesses to better serve consumers with educational, vocational, and independence needs. OVR develops contracts, agreements, and other legal documents with these partners to clearly define roles and responsibilities for both OVR and the partner.

Federal Definitions

Supported Employment

34 CFR 361.5 (c)(53)

- (i) Supported employment means competitive integrated employment, including customized employment, or employment in an integrated work setting in which an individual with a most significant disability, including a youth with a most significant disability, is working on a short-term basis toward competitive integrated employment that is individualized, and customized, consistent with the unique strengths, abilities, interests, and informed choice of the individual, including with ongoing support services for individuals with the most significant disabilities—
 - (A) For whom competitive integrated employment has not historically occurred, or for whom competitive integrated employment has been interrupted or intermittent as a result of a significant disability; and
 - (B) Who, because of the nature and severity of their disabilities, need intensive supported employment services and extended services after the transition from support provided by the designated State unit, in order to perform this work.
- (ii) For purposes of this part, an individual with a most significant disability, whose supported employment in an integrated setting does not satisfy the criteria of competitive integrated employment, as defined in paragraph (c)(9) of this section is considered to be working on a short-term basis toward competitive integrated employment so long as the individual can reasonably anticipate achieving competitive integrated employment—
 - (A) Within six months of achieving a supported employment outcome; or
 - (B) 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.

Supported Employment Services

34 CFR 361.5(c) (54)

Supported employment services means ongoing support services, including customized employment, and other appropriate services needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability, including a youth with a most significant disability, in supported employment that are—

- (i) Organized and made available, singly or in combination, in such a way as to assist an eligible individual to achieve competitive integrated employment;
- (ii) Based on a determination of the needs of an eligible individual, as specified in an individualized plan for employment;
- (iii) Provided by the designated State unit for a period of time not to exceed 24 months, unless under special circumstances the eligible individual and the rehabilitation counselor jointly agree to extend the time to achieve the employment outcome identified in the individualized plan for employment; and
- (iv) Following transition, as post-employment services that are unavailable from an extended services provider and that are necessary to maintain or regain the job placement or advance in employment.

Extended Services

34 CFR 361.5(c)(19)

Extended services means ongoing support services and other appropriate services that are—

- (i) Needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability including a youth with a most significant disability, in supported employment;
- (ii) Organized or made available, singly or in combination, in such a way as to assist an eligible individual in maintaining supported employment;

- (iii) Based on the needs of an eligible individual, as specified in an individualized plan for employment;
- (iv) Provided by a State agency, a private nonprofit organization, employer, or any other appropriate resource, after an individual has made the transition from support from the designated State unit; and
- (v) Provided to a youth with a most significant disability by the designated State unit in accordance with requirements set forth in this part and part 363 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 under paragraph (c)(58) of this section, whichever occurs first. The designated State unit may not provide extended services to an individual with a most significant disability who is not a youth with a most significant disability.

34 CFR 361.5(c)(58)

- (i) Youth with a disability means an individual with a disability who is not—
 - (A) Younger than 14 years of age; and
 - (B) Older than 24 years of age.
- (ii) Youth with disabilities means more than one youth with a disability.

Supported Employment Models

There are three different models of Supported Employment (SE): Traditional, Individual Placement and Support, and Customized. If the counselor determines an individual is eligible for supported employment, the counselor should determine which supported employment model is the best fit for the consumer and, in conjunction with consumer informed choice.

Traditional Supported Employment (TSE)

The Traditional model of Supported Employment can be applied to individuals with the most significant disabilities to assist in achieving and maintaining job stability in a competitive integrated employment setting.

TSE services may be provided to any individual (including youth) with a disability, if the individual has been determined eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, has a most significant disability, and supported employment has been determined as the appropriate outcome based on a comprehensive assessment by the OVR counselor. Other factors that must be considered include whether competitive integrated employment has previously occurred, or whether competitive integrated employment has not been maintained due to a most significant disability, and whether the individual needs intensive support to achieve employment stability followed by extended services to help maintain stability due to a most significant disability.

Individual Placement and Support (IPS)

Individual Placement and Support is an evidenced-based model of supported employment for individuals with serious mental illness and/or substance abuse. IPS supported employment assists individuals in obtaining and maintaining competitive integrated employment consistent with their work preferences.

IPS supported employment services may be provided to any individual (including youth) with a disability, if the individual has been determined eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, has a most significant disability, and supported employment has been determined as the appropriate outcome based on a comprehensive assessment by the OVR counselor. Other factors that must be considered include whether competitive integrated employment has not previously occurred or whether competitive integrated employment has not been maintained due to a most significant disability, and whether the individual needs intensive support in achieving employment stability followed by extended services to help maintain stability due to a most significant disability.

The IPS model adheres to 8 primary principles: Competitive Employment, Systematic Job Development, Rapid Job Search, Integrated Services, Benefits Planning, Zero Exclusion, Time-Unlimited Supports & Work Preferences.

1. Competitive Employment: Competitive Employment is defined as a job that anyone can apply for, pays at least minimum wage, and it's consistent with what others make doing the same job.
2. Systematic Job Development: Employment Specialists develop relationships with employers, driven by consumer's needs and desires, to learn about the employer's environment and their work needs.
3. Rapid Job Search: Face-to-face contact with an employer occurs within the first 30 days. Extensive pre-employment assessments, training and counseling is not required before rapid job search can begin.
4. Integrated Services: Supported Employment staff are members of a multi-disciplinary team that meets regularly to review the consumer's progress.
5. Benefits Planning: The Employment Specialist helps the individual acquire relevant and accurate information pertaining to the impact employment has on Social Security, Medicaid, and other government benefits.
6. Zero Exclusion: Everyone who wants to work can seek employment regardless of disability. Job seekers are not excluded based on current use of alcohol or drugs, history, diagnosis, symptoms, legal difficulties, or perceived readiness.

7. Time-Unlimited Supports: Supports are individualized and continue for as long as the consumer wants and needs. Face-to-face contact occurs at least monthly.
8. Work Preferences: Program services are based on the consumer's preferences and not dictated by the employment specialist or other field professionals.

Customized Supported Employment (CSE)

Customized Employment is competitive integrated employment for an individual with the most significant disabilities that is based on consumer attributes and designed to meet the specific needs of the employer. Specifically, this employment process is carried out by specially trained and certified employment specialists, who, through flexible and creative strategies match the consumer's needed conditions for success, interests, and contribution potential with an employer's unmet, and often unidentified needs.

Customized employment services may be provided to any individual (including youth) with a disability, if the individual has been determined eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, has a most significant disability, and customized employment has been determined as the appropriate outcome based on a comprehensive assessment by the OVR counselor. Other factors that must be considered include whether competitive integrated employment has not previously occurred or whether competitive integrated employment has not been maintained due to a significant disability, and whether the individual needs intensive support in achieving employment stability followed by extended services to help maintain stability due to a most significant disability.

Process of Determining if an Individual Should be Placed into Supported Employment

At any point in the OVR process, a counselor may determine a consumer would benefit from supported employment services using the following criteria:

1. The individual has been determined eligible for vocational rehabilitation services.
2. Individual has a most significant disability.
3. Supported employment has been determined as the appropriate outcome based on a comprehensive assessment by the OVR counselor.
4. Competitive integrated employment has not previously occurred.
5. Competitive integrated employment has not been maintained due to a most significant disability.
6. The individual needs intensive support to achieve employment stability followed by extended services to help maintain stability due to a most significant disability.

Procedures

Traditional Supported Employment

Referral

Referrals for TSE services may originate from the CRP to OVR or from OVR to the CRP. It's important to note that a referral from the CRP to OVR does not guarantee approval for TSE services.

The OVR counselor should ensure to meet with the consumer and complete the following:

- Complete OVR Application
- Review existing diagnostic (i.e., medical, psychological, psychoeducational) information received from CRP.
- Determine Eligibility for Vocational Rehabilitation services.
- Conduct comprehensive assessment to determine if TSE services are appropriate. Refer to [process of determining if an individual should be placed in supported employment](#)
 - If criteria are not met for TSE supported employment services, consider Job Placement services from OVR staff or Employment & Retention services provided by a local CRP.
- Obtain Written Consent for Release of Personal or Protected Health Information in Possession of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR 15B) if referring to a CRP.
- Contact CRP, if communication from CRP regarding referral status has not been provided within 5 business days of receiving the referral.

Note: Neither Eligibility for OVR services nor the IPE is required to generate an authorization for the PCEP.

Eligibility

Individuals deemed as having a most significant disability are appropriate candidates for supported employment services. Please refer to [Process of Determining if an Individual Should be Placed into Supported Employment](#) for more guidance.

PCEP (Discovery) Activity

Discovery is a process of finding capacities as opposed to the problem-oriented approach of finding deficits. Time is spent getting to know the individual in various contexts as well as making observations pertinent to discovering strengths or assets. Time is also spent with those who know the individual well to get their perspective on the person's abilities. This form of assessment requires considerably more time than more formalized evaluations. Discovery activities lead to PCEP completion.

Person-Centered Employment Plan

The Person-Centered Employment Plan (PCEP) is a compilation of many discovery activities conducted for the purpose of learning about an individual's interests, abilities, skills, environmental preferences, and conditions for success. A comprehensive PCEP is what guides job development. It differs from more traditional forms of standardized vocational assessments and evaluations which rely on comparative (norm-based) information, checklists, or formal situational measures.

The OVR shall:

- Pre-authorize for PCEP (Discovery) Activities. These services are authorized using an hourly rate. A minimum of 10 hours is required with a maximum of 20 hours. The Pre-Authorization should not exceed 75 days.
- Pre-authorize for PCEP. This is a one-time payment, and this authorization should not exceed 75 days.
- Refer to the SFM regarding guidance on expenditures and fees.

- Review the submitted PCEP Activity Note and PCEP to ensure completeness and correctness. If documentation is insufficient, counselors will contact the CRP within five business days of receiving the documents to obtain additional information.

PCEPs that are submitted and approved (does not need revisions) within 45 days of the authorization begin date will be eligible for the higher fee indicated in the SFM.

A Person-Centered Employment Plan must be submitted to the Counselor prior to job development. Once the IPE goal has been determined, and all parties agree that the goal is appropriate, the counselor shall complete the IPE, and notify the CRP along with an authorization for job development.

PCEP Extensions

It is the expectation that the CRP will successfully complete the PCEP within 75 days of the original authorization. If an extension is needed, a written request shall be submitted to the counselor for approval two weeks prior to the end of the authorization. The extension should not exceed fourteen calendar days, but the counselor may grant exceptions to this timeframe due to extenuating circumstances. Counselors should respond to request as soon as possible.

Counselors should make a progress note concerning the extension in the Case Management System (CMS) referencing the original authorization number in the reauthorization field.

It is the expectation that the CRP will not need more than 20 hours of activity to complete the PCEP. Requests to exceed the maximum hourly limits will be handled on a case-by-case basis and submitted to the counselor's Branch Manager for approval.

Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)

An Individualized Plan for Employment must be developed for each consumer served in supported employment before Job Development services can begin.

Primary guidance for development of the IPE can be found in the OVR [Policies and Procedures Manual](#)

The IPE must specify both the supported employment services and expected extended services to be provided along with the identified provider. (34 CFR 361.45, 46)

The OVR shall:

- Complete the IPE as expeditiously as possible.
- Ensure that the IPE goal matches the PCEP goal.
- Effectively communicate with the partnering CRP to ensure acknowledgment of the IPE goal and next steps.

Job Development Services

Individual job development services are important component of the supported employment process. Job development activities should be based on the Person-Centered Employment Plan.

Job Development may focus on interviewing, work environments, job types, settings, learning styles, transportation needs, hours required, potential for natural supports, job carving, job creation, accommodations, and other individualized services.

OVR Shall:

- Pre-Authorize for Job Development services. These services are authorized using an hourly rate. The pre-authorization should not exceed 90 days and no more than 30 hours.
- Refer to the SFM for guidance regarding expenditures and fees.
- Review the submitted Job Development Activity Note and Job Acquisition Report to ensure completeness and correctness. If documentation is insufficient, counselors will contact the CRP within five business days of receiving the documents to obtain additional information.

Job Acquisition Reports that are submitted and approved (does not need revisions) within 60 days of the authorization begin date will be eligible for the higher fee indicated in the SFM.

Job Development services end with consumer securing employment.

Job Development Extensions

It is the expectation that a CRP will secure employment for the consumer within 90 days of the Job Development original authorization. If an extension is needed, a written request shall be submitted to the counselor for approval two weeks prior to the end of the authorization. The extension should not exceed 90 calendar days, but the counselor may grant exceptions to this timeframe due to extenuating circumstances. Counselor should respond to the request as soon as possible. Counselors should make a progress note concerning the extension in the Case Management System (CMS) referencing the original authorization number in the reauthorization field.

It is the expectation that the CRP will not need more than 30 hours to secure employment for the consumer. Requests to exceed the maximum hourly limits will be handled on a case-by-case basis and submitted to the counselor's Branch Manager for approval.

Supported Employment Services

Supported Employment Services begin after the individual starts working, and they are designed to provide personalized support, training, and accommodations to help individuals with disabilities achieve stability in the workplace and accomplish their vocational goals.

The OVR shall:

- Pre-authorize for Supported Employment Services upon receipt of approved Job Acquisition Report. These services are authorized using an hourly rate and based upon support needs of the individual. Collaboration

between the consumer, counselor, CRP employment specialist will determine the number of hours needed to achieve stable employment.

- Refer to SFM for guidance regarding expenditures and fees.
- Review the Supported Employment Services Notes, Employment Stability Assessment and Extended Services Plan submitted by the CRP to ensure completeness and correctness. If documentation is insufficient, counselors will contact the CRP within five business days to obtain additional information.
- Review, agree with and sign the Extended Services Plan prior to consumer transitioning to Extended Services.

Supported Employment Services Extensions

Supported Employment Services should not extend beyond 24 months unless a written exception request has been provided to, and approved by, the counselor's Branch Manager.

Stable Employment Outcome

Once an individual has achieved stable employment and no longer requires intensive ongoing Supported Employment Services, the provider will submit the Extended Service Plan, the Employment Stability Assessment and request Day 1 Supported Employment Outcome. An outcome payment can be paid at day 1, day 45 and day 90 of stable employment. Stable employment will be determined by using the Employment Stability Assessment following the guidance below.

Stability on the job is defined as the following:

- Competitive integrated employment is achieved.
- The individual is satisfied with employment.
- The acquired job is consistent with the individual's strengths, abilities, interests, and informed choice.
- The individual's job performance meets the expectations of the employer.
- Natural supports are appropriate and in place.

- All necessary accommodations are appropriate and in place.

The OVR shall:

- Review, agree and sign the Extended Services Plan prior to consumer transitioning to Extended Services.
- Move case to employed status.
- Authorize and pay the Stable Employment Outcome for the first day of employment. Authorizations for Day 45 and 90 Stable Employment Outcomes should follow when the provider has submitted the appropriate documentation and with counselor approval.
- Refer to SFM for guidance regarding expenditures and fees
- Review the Extended Services Plan and Employment Stability Assessment at Day 1 and the Extended Services Plan at Day 45 and 90 submitted by the CRP to ensure completeness and correctness. If documentation is insufficient, counselors will contact the CRP within five business days of receiving the document to obtain additional information.

Extended Services

Supported Employment Services are provided to assist the individual in achieving stability while Extended Services are provided to assist the individual in maintaining stability, once achieved.

Extended Services are ongoing support services and other appropriate services needed to support an individual with a most significant disability, including a youth with a most significant disability in supported employment after the individual has achieved stable employment.

Historically, Extended Services have also been referred to as “long-term support” or “follow-along” services. The goal is to assemble and implement services designed to assist the individual in maintaining stability on the job. These services may consist of natural supports including co-workers, family, friends as well as support from the Employment Specialist. Federal regulations permit the OVR to

successfully close the individual's case 90 days after the individual has transitioned to Extended Services.

The OVR shall:

- Pre-Authorize Extended services upon receipt of approved Extended Services Plan and Employment Stability Assessment. These services should be authorized using an hourly rate and are only for individuals who are eligible for supported employment and between the ages of 14-24. (34 CFR 361.5 (c) (19) (v)). These services take place during the 90-day period leading to case closure and should be authorized in a timely manner to avoid a delay in services.
- Refer to SFM for guidance regarding expenditures and fees.
- Review the Extended Services Report submitted by the CRP to ensure completeness and correctness. If documentation is insufficient, counselors will contact the CRP within five business days of receiving the document to obtain additional information.

Case Closure

Once stability on the job has been achieved, the supported employment consumer can be transitioned to extended services and simultaneously moved to employed status. The case can be closed a minimum of 90 days later.

The following requirements must be met before case closure:

1. The individual is employed in a job consistent with the IPE.
2. The consumer and employer are satisfied with the job in terms of performance, hours, etc., and this has been verified by the counselor.
3. It has been determined extended services will be in place after OVR closes the case.
4. The individual has maintained stability in the same employment situation for a minimum of 90 days.
5. The individual no longer requires vocational rehabilitation service and agrees to the closure of this case.

Counselors should ensure the following:

1. Not place an individual's case in employed status until the individual has transitioned to extended services.
2. Close a supported employment case no less than 90 days after transitioning to extended services.

Individual Placement and Support

Referral

Referrals for IPS supported employment services may originate from the CRP to OVR or from OVR to the CRP. It's important to note that a referral from the CRP to OVR does not guarantee approval for IPS services.

The counselor should ensure to meet with the consumer and complete the following:

- Complete OVR Application within 10 days of the received OVR referral.
- Counselors who are assigned to receive IPS referrals should reserve 2-3 appointments per week for IPS referrals.
- Seek other available counselors if the 10-day application deadline is unlikely to be met to ensure the Application can be completed within 10 days.
- Review existing diagnostic (i.e., medical, psychological, psychoeducational) information received from CRP.
- Determine Eligibility for Vocational Rehabilitation services.
- Conduct a [comprehensive assessment](#) to determine if supported employment services are appropriate. Refer to [process of determining if an individual should be placed in supported employment](#)
 - If criteria are not met for supported employment services, consider Job Placement services from OVR staff, or Employment & Retention services provided by a local CRP.

- Obtain Written Consent for Release of Personal or Protected Health Information in Possession of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR 15B) if referring to a CRP.
- Contact CRP, if communication from CRP regarding referral status has not been provided within 5 business days.

Note: Neither Eligibility for OVR services nor the IPE is required to generate an authorization for the Career Profile.

Eligibility

Individuals deemed as having a most significant disability resulting from a serious mental health or substance use condition are appropriate candidates for IPS services. Please refer to [Process of Determining if an Individual Should be Placed into Supported Employment](#) for more guidance.

Drug and alcohol free, job readiness, therapy participation, stable living arrangement, legal free history, and limited psychiatric hospitalizations are not prerequisites for acceptance and participation in IPS services.

The Rapid Job Search principal is an important part of this evidence-based model, which requires employment specialists to begin face to face job searches with employers within 30 days of referral. Therefore, it's considered best practice expedite the eligibility process.

Counselors should determine eligibility within 10 business days from the date of the OVR Application

Career Profile and Job Search Plan

The Career Profile is the initial assessment that must be used for all individuals receiving IPS supported employment services. The Job Search Plan is the detailed plan to be followed based on information provided in the Career Profile. The Career Profile takes the place of the Person-Centered Employment Plan (PCEP) for only those individuals receiving IPS. PCEP's may be utilized in

addition to the Career Profile but the counselor must submit an email approval request to their respective CRP Branch Consultant that provides justification as to why the PCEP is a necessary addition to the Career Profile. The PCEP should not be used in lieu of the Career Profile. If approval is given, then the same requirements are to be followed as outlined in the [Traditional Supported Employment](#) section.

The OVR shall:

- Pre-Authorize for Career Profile. This service should not exceed 30 days.
- Refer to SFM for guidelines regarding expenditures and fees.
- Review the submitted Career Profile and the Job Search Plan to ensure completeness and correctness. If documentation is insufficient, counselors will contact the CRP within five business days of receiving the documents to obtain additional information.

A Career Profile and Job Search Plan must be submitted to counselor prior to job development.

Career Profile Extensions

It is the expectation that the CRP will successfully complete the Career Profile within 30 days of the original authorization. If an extension is needed, a written request shall be submitted to the counselor for approval two weeks prior to the end of the authorization. The extension should not exceed fourteen calendar days, but the counselor may grant exceptions to this timeframe due to extenuating circumstances. Counselor should respond to the request as soon as possible. Counselors should make a progress note concerning the extension in the Case Management System (CMS) referencing the original authorization number in the reauthorization field.

Individualized Plan for Employment

An Individualized Plan for Employment must be developed for each consumer served in supported employment before Job Development services can begin.

Primary guidance for development of the IPE can be found in OVR [Policies and Procedures Manual](#).

To parallel the evidence-based practice of IPS supported employment services, as it relates to rapid job search, it's appropriate to expedite the IPE process. The IPE must specify both the supported employment services and expected extended services to be provided along with the identified provider.

The OVR shall:

- IPEs should be completed within 10 business days of the approved documents mentioned above, or OVR eligibility determination, whichever is the latter. Counselors should effectively communicate with the partnering CRP to ensure acknowledgment of IPE goal and next steps.

Job Development Services

Individual job development services are important component of the supported employment process. Job development activities should be based on the Person-Centered Employment Plan.

Job Development may focus on interviewing, work environments, job types, settings, learning styles, transportation needs, hours required, potential for natural supports, job carving, job creation, accommodations, and other individualized services.

OVR Shall:

- Pre-Authorize for Job Development services. These services are authorized using an hourly rate. The pre-authorization should not exceed 90 days and no more than 30 hours.
- Refer to the SFM for guidance regarding expenditures and fees.
- Review the submitted Job Development Activity Note, Job Acquisition Report and Job Support Plan to ensure completeness and correctness. If documentation is insufficient, counselors will contact the CRP within five business days of receiving the documents to obtain additional information.

Job Acquisition Reports that are submitted and approved (does not need revisions) within 60 days of the authorization begin date will be eligible for the higher fee indicated in the SFM.

Job Development services end with consumer securing employment.

Job Development Extensions

It is the expectation that a CRP will secure employment for the consumer within 90 days of the Job Development original authorization. If an extension is needed, a written request shall be submitted to the counselor for approval two weeks prior to the end of the authorization. The extension should not exceed 90 calendar days, but the counselor may grant exceptions to this timeframe due to extenuating circumstances. Counselor should respond to the request as soon as possible. Counselors should make a progress note concerning the extension in the Case Management System (CMS) referencing the original authorization number in the reauthorization field.

It is the expectation that the CRP will not need more than 30 hours to secure employment for the consumer. Requests to exceed the maximum hourly limits will be handled on a case-by-case basis and submitted to the counselor's Branch Manager for approval.

Supported Employment Services

Supported Employment Services begin after the individual starts working, and they are designed to provide personalized support, training, and accommodations to help individuals with disabilities achieve stability in the workplace and accomplish their vocational goals.

The OVR shall:

- Pre-authorize for Supported Employment Services upon receipt of approved Job Acquisition Report. These services are authorized using an hourly rate and based upon support needs of the individual. Collaboration

between the consumer, counselor, CRP employment specialist will determine the number of hours needed to achieve stable employment.

- Refer to SFM for guidance regarding expenditures and fees.
- Review the Supported Employment Services Notes, Employment Stability Assessment and Extended Services Plan submitted by the CRP to ensure completeness and correctness. If documentation is insufficient, counselors will contact the CRP within five business days to obtain additional information.
- Review, agree with and sign the Extended Services Plan prior to consumer transitioning to Extended Services.

Supported Employment Services Extensions

Supported Employment Services should not extend beyond 24 months unless a written exception request has been provided to, and approved by, the counselor's Branch Manager.

Stable Employment Outcome

Once an individual has achieved stable employment and no longer requires intensive ongoing Supported Employment Services, the provider will submit the Extended Service Plan and request Day 1 Supported Employment Outcome. An outcome payment can be paid at day 1, day 45 and day 90 of stable employment. Stable employment will be determined by using the Employment Stability Assessment following the guidance below.

Stability on the job is defined as the following:

- Competitive integrated employment is achieved.
- The individual is satisfied with employment.
- The acquired job is consistent with the individual's strengths, abilities, interests, and informed choice.
- The individual's job performance meets the expectations of the employer.
- Natural supports are appropriate and in place.

- All necessary accommodations are appropriate and in place.

The OVR shall:

- Review, agree and sign the Extended Services Plan prior to consumer transitioning to Extended Services.
- Move case to employed status.
- Authorize and pay the Stable Employment Outcome for the first day of employment. Authorizations for Day 45 and 90 Stable Employment Outcomes should follow when the provider has submitted the appropriate documentation and with counselor approval.
- Refer to SFM for guidance regarding expenditures and fees.
- Review the Extended Services Plan and Employment Stability Assessment at Day 1 and the Extended Services Plan at Day 45 and 90 submitted by the CRP to ensure completeness and correctness. If documentation is insufficient, counselors will contact the CRP within five business days of receiving the document to obtain additional information.

Extended Services

Supported Employment Services are provided to assist the individual in achieving stability while Extended Services are provided to assist the individual in maintaining stability, once achieved.

Extended Services are ongoing support services and other appropriate services needed to support an individual with a most significant disability, including a youth with a most significant disability in supported employment after the individual has achieved stable employment.

Historically, Extended Services have also been referred to as “long-term support” or “follow-along” services. The goal is to assemble and implement services designed to assist the individual in maintaining stability on the job. These services may consist of natural supports including co-workers, family, friends as well as support from the Employment Specialist. Federal regulations permit the OVR to

successfully close the individual's case 90 days after the individual has transitioned to Extended Services.

The OVR shall:

- Pre-Authorize Extended services upon receipt of approved Extended Services Plan and Employment Stability Assessment. These services should be authorized using an hourly rate and are only for individuals who are eligible for supported employment and between the ages of 14-24. (34 CFR 361.5 (c) (19) (v)). These services take place during the 90-day period leading to case closure and should be authorized in a timely manner to avoid a delay in services.
- Refer to SFM for guidance regarding expenditures and fees.
- Review the Extended Services Report submitted by the CRP to ensure completeness and correctness. If documentation is insufficient, counselors will contact the CRP within five business days of receiving the document to obtain additional information.

Case Closure

Once stability on the job has been achieved, the supported employment consumer can be transitioned to extended services and simultaneously moved to employed status. The case can be closed a minimum of 90 days later.

The following requirements must be met before case closure:

1. The individual is employed in a job consistent with the IPE.
2. The consumer and employer are satisfied with the job in terms of performance, hours, etc., and this has been verified by the counselor.
3. It has been determined extended services will be in place after OVR closes the case.
4. The individual has maintained stability in the same employment situation for a minimum of 90 days.
5. The individual no longer requires vocational rehabilitation services and agrees to the closure of this case.

Counselors should ensure the following:

1. Not place an individual's case in employed status until the individual has transitioned to extended services.
2. Close a supported employment case no less than 90 days after transitioning to extended services.

Customized Supported Employment

Referral

Referrals for CSE services may originate from the CRP to OVR or from OVR to the CRP. It's important to note that a referral from the CRP to OVR does not guarantee approval for customized employment services.

The counselor should ensure to meet with the consumer and complete the following:

- Complete OVR Application
- Review existing diagnostic (i.e., medical, psychological, psychoeducational) information received from CRP.
- Determine Eligibility for Vocational Rehabilitation services.
- Conduct comprehensive assessment to determine if CE services are appropriate.
- If criteria are not met for CE supported employment services, consider Job Placement services from OVR staff or Employment & Retention services provided by a local CRP.
- Obtain Written Consent for Release of Personal or Protected Health Information in Possession of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR 15B) if referring to a CRP.
- Contact CRP if communication from CRP regarding referral status has not been provided within 5 business days.

Note: Neither Eligibility for OVR services nor the IPE is required to generate an authorization for the Vocational Profile.

Discovery Activities

Discovery is a process of finding capacities as opposed to the problem-oriented approach of finding deficits in an individual. Time is spent getting to know the individual in various contexts as well as making observations pertinent to discovering strengths or assets. Time is also spent with those who know the individual well to get their perspective on the person's abilities. This form of assessment requires considerably more time than more formalized evaluations.

Vocational Profile

The Vocational Profile is a compilation of many discovery activities conducted for the purpose of learning about an individual's interests, abilities, skills, environmental preferences, and conditions for success. It differs from more traditional forms of standardized vocational assessments and evaluations which rely on comparative (norm-based) information, checklists, or formal situational measures.

The OVR Shall:

- Pre-authorize for Discovery Activities. These services are authorized using an hourly rate. A minimum of 25 hours is required with a maximum of 40 hours. The Pre-Authorization should not exceed 75 days.
- Pre-authorize for Vocational Profile. This is a one-time payment, and this authorization should not exceed 75 days.
- Refer to the SFM regarding guidance on expenditures and fees.
- Review the submitted Discovery Activity Note and Vocational Profile to ensure completeness and correctness. If documentation is insufficient, counselors will contact the CRP within five business days of receiving the documents to obtain additional information.

Vocational Profiles that are submitted and approved (does not need revisions) within 45 days of the authorization begin date will be eligible for the higher fee indicated in the SFM.

Vocational Profile Extensions

It is the expectation that the CRP will successfully complete the Vocational Profile within 75 days of the original authorization. If an extension is needed, a written request shall be submitted to the counselor for approval two weeks prior to the end of the authorization. The extension should not exceed fourteen calendar days, but the counselor may grant exceptions to this timeframe due to extenuating circumstances. Counselors should respond to the request as soon as possible. Counselors should make a progress note concerning the extension in the Case Management System (CMS) referencing the original authorization number in the reauthorization field.

It is the expectation that the CRP will not need more than 40 hours of activity to complete the Vocational Profile. Request to exceed the maximum hourly limits will be handled on a case-by-case basis and submitted to the counselor's Branch Manager for approval.

Eligibility

Individuals deemed as having a most significant disability are appropriate candidates for customized supported employment services. Please refer to [Process of Determining if an Individual Should be Placed into Supported Employment](#) for more guidance.

Individuals better suited for customized employment typically have minimal or no success in sustaining labor market positions, and they may have a history of performing poorly on traditional vocational evaluations.

Additionally, they may have little interest in or knowledge about employment. The disabling condition(s) must impede opportunities for obtaining and maintaining competitive integrated employment. The individual must be able to benefit from services in terms of an employment outcome, and vocational rehabilitation services are required to achieve suitable and sustainable employment.

Counselors should determine eligibility as expeditiously as possible.

Planning Meeting

The planning meeting is an integral part of customized employment and may involve one or more meetings aimed at identifying unique features of a job to a consumer.

Upon receiving and approving the Vocational Profile,

The OVR shall:

- Pre-authorize the Planning Meeting for a period of 90 calendar days. One pre-authorization is sufficient to cover a series of meetings, as necessary.
- Refer to SFM for guidelines regarding expenditures and fees
- Review the submitted report to ensure completeness and correctness. If documentation is insufficient, counselors will contact the CRP within five business days of receiving the document to obtain additional information.

Individualized Plan for Employment

An Individualized Plan of Employment must be developed for each consumer served in supported employment before Job Development services can begin.

Primary guidance for development of the IPE can be found in the OVR

[Policies and Procedures Manual](#)

The IPE must specify both the supported employment services and expected extended services to be provided along with the identified provider. (34 CFR 361.45, 46)

The OVR Shall:

- Complete the IPE as expeditiously as possible.
- Ensure that the IPE goal matches the Vocational Profile goal.

- Effectively communicate with the partnering CRP to ensure acknowledgment of the IPE goal and next steps.

Visual Resume

This can be used as a consultation service by the certified staff in conjunction with a Community Rehabilitation Program that may be providing one of the other models of Supported Employment.

The OVR Shall:

- Pre-authorize for a Visual Resume. This is a one-time payment, and images of completion should be submitted within 5 business days of completion.
- Refer to the SFM regarding guidance on expenditures and fees.
- Review the submitted Visual Resume to ensure completeness and correctness. If documentation is insufficient, counselors will contact the CRP within five business days of receiving the documents to obtain additional information.

Job Development Services

Individual job development services are an important component of the supported employment process. Job development activities should be based on the Person-Centered Employment Plan.

Job Development may focus on interviewing, work environments, job types, settings, learning styles, transportation needs, hours required, potential for natural supports, job carving, job creation, accommodations, and other individualized services.

OVR Shall:

- Pre-Authorize for Job Development services. These services are authorized using an hourly rate. The pre-authorization should not exceed 90 days and no more than 30 hours.

- Refer to the SFM for guidance regarding expenditures and fees.
- Review the submitted Job Development Activity Note and Job Acquisition Report to ensure completeness and correctness. If documentation is insufficient, counselors will contact the CRP within five business days of receiving the documents to obtain additional information.

Job Acquisition Reports that are submitted and approved (does not need revisions) within 60 days of the authorization begin date will be eligible for the higher fee indicated in the SFM. If a labor market position is obtained instead of a customized position, then the traditional supported employment job development fee for the higher rate should be utilized.

Job Development services end with consumer securing employment.

Job Development Extensions

It is the expectation that a CRP will secure employment for the consumer within 90 days of the Job Development original authorization. If an extension is needed, a written request shall be submitted to the counselor for approval two weeks prior to the end of the authorization. The extension should not exceed 90 calendar days, but the counselor may grant exceptions to this timeframe due to extenuating circumstances. Counselors should respond to the request as soon as possible. Counselors should make a progress note concerning the extension in the Case Management System (CMS) referencing the original authorization number in the reauthorization field.

It is the expectation that the CRP will not need more than 30 hours to secure employment for the consumer. Request to exceed the maximum hourly limits will be handled on a case-by-case basis and submitted to the counselor's Branch Manager for approval.

Needs Analysis

The needs analysis is specific to an employer and employment site and can be characterized as "discovery" of the worksite. The employer's unmet workplace

needs are assessed to demonstrate an actual benefit to the creation of a customized job position.

The OVR Shall:

- Pre-Authorize for Needs Analysis concurrently with Job Development.
- Refer to SFM for guidance regarding expenditures and fees.
- Review the Needs Analysis Report submitted within 5 business days after Job Acquisition Report to ensure completeness and correctness. If documentation is insufficient, counselors will contact the CRP within five business days of receiving the document to obtain additional information.

Job Analysis

A job analysis can be performed after the employer agrees to hire the consumer, but before the first day of work. The job analysis along with the needs analysis allows for the development of a customized job for the consumer.

The OVR Shall:

- Pre-Authorize for Job Analysis. This is a one-time payment and authorization should not exceed 30 days after the agreement to hire and before the job begins, if possible.
- Refer to SFM for guidance regarding expenditure and fees.
- Review the Job Analysis form submitted by the CRP for completeness and correctness. If documentation is insufficient, counselors should contact the CRP within five business days of receiving document. to obtain additional information.

Supported Employment Services

Supported Employment Services begin after the individual starts working, and they are designed to provide personalized support, training, and accommodations to help individuals with disabilities achieve stability in the workplace and accomplish their vocational goals.

The OVR shall:

- Pre-authorize for Supported Employment Services upon receipt of approved Job Acquisition Report. These services are authorized using an hourly rate and based upon support needs of the individual. Collaboration between the consumer, counselor, CRP employment specialist will determine the number of hours needed to achieve stable employment.
- Refer to SFM for guidance regarding expenditures and fees.
- Review the Supported Employment Services Notes, Employment Stability Assessment and Extended Services Plan submitted by the CRP to ensure completeness and correctness. If documentation is insufficient, counselors will contact the CRP within five business days to obtain additional information.
- Review, agree with and sign the Extended Services Plan prior to consumer transitioning to Extended Services.

Supported Employment Services Extensions

Supported Employment Services should not extend beyond 24 months unless a written exception request has been provided to, and approved by, the counselor's Branch Manager.

Stable Employment Outcome

Once an individual has achieved stable employment and no longer requires intensive ongoing Supported Employment Services, the provider will submit the Extended Service Plan and request Day 1 Supported Employment Outcome. An outcome payment can be paid at day 1, day 45 and day 90 of stable employment. Stable employment will be determined by using the Employment Stability Assessment following the guidance below.

Stability on the job is defined as the following:

- Competitive integrated employment is achieved.
- The individual is satisfied with employment.

- The acquired job is consistent with the individual’s strengths, abilities, interests, and informed choice.
- The individual’s job performance meets the expectations of the employer.
- Natural supports are appropriate and in place.
- All necessary accommodations are appropriate and in place.

The OVR shall:

- Review, agree and sign the Extended Services Plan prior to consumer transitioning to Extended Services.
- Move case to employed status.
- Authorize and pay the Stable Employment Outcome for the first day of employment. Authorizations for Day 45 and 90 Stable Employment Outcomes should follow when the provider has submitted the appropriate documentation and with counselor approval.
- Refer to SFM for guidance regarding expenditures and fees.
- Review the Extended Services Plan and Employment Stability Assessment at Day 1 and the Extended Services Plan at Day 45 and 90 submitted by the CRP to ensure completeness and correctness. If documentation is insufficient, counselors will contact the CRP within five business days of receiving the document to obtain additional information.

Extended Services

Supported Employment Services are provided to assist the individual in achieving stability while Extended Services are provided to assist the individual in maintaining stability, once achieved.

Extended Services are ongoing support services and other appropriate services needed to support an individual with a most significant disability, including a youth with a most significant disability in supported employment after the individual has achieved stable employment.

Historically, Extended Services have also been referred to as “long-term support” or “follow-along” services. The goal is to assemble and implement services

designed to assist the individual in maintaining stability on the job. These services may consist of natural supports including co-workers, family, friends as well as support from the Employment Specialist. Federal regulations permit the OVR to successfully close the individual's case 90 days after the individual has transitioned to Extended Services.

The OVR shall:

- Pre-Authorize Extended services upon receipt of approved Extended Services Plan (OVR SE 6) and Employment Stability Assessment (OVR SE 7). These services should be authorized using an hourly rate and are only for individuals who are eligible for supported employment and between the ages of 14-24. (34 CFR 361.5 (c) (19) (v)). These services take place during the 90-day period leading to case closure and should be authorized in a timely manner to avoid a delay in services.
- Refer to SFM for guidance regarding expenditures and fees
- Review the Extended Services Report submitted by the CRP to ensure completeness and correctness. If documentation is insufficient, counselors will contact the CRP within five business days of receiving the documents to obtain additional information.

Case Closure

Once stability on the job has been achieved, the supported employment consumer can be transitioned to extended services and simultaneously moved to employed status. The case can be closed a minimum of 90 days later.

The following requirements must be met before case closure:

1. The individual is employed in a job consistent with the IPE.
2. The consumer/guardian and employer are satisfied with the job in terms of performance, hours, etc., and this has been verified by the VR counselor.
3. It has been determined extended service supports will be in place after OVR closes the case.

4. The individual has maintained stability in the same employment situation for a minimum of 90 days.
5. The individual no longer requires vocational rehabilitation services and agrees to the closure of this case.

Counselors should ensure to the following:

1. Not place an individual's case in employed status until the individual has transitioned to extended services.
2. Close a supported employment case no less than 90 days after transitioning to extended services.

Bonus Payment for CRP Outcomes

A [bonus payment](#) may be awarded to a CRP for outcomes meeting a specific targeted wage (52% of the average hourly wage for all employed individuals in the state of Kentucky) for consumers working a minimum of 20 hours weekly. A bonus payment may also be awarded to a CRP for all employed individuals whose employer provides at least 51% premium payment for comprehensive major medical insurance.

Authorizations for bonus payments or adjustment to existing authorizations should be generated by counselors during the extended services period. Any situations outside of this timeframe should be directed to OVRauthorizations@ky.gov

The OVR Shall:

- Authorize bonus payment(s) or adjust existing authorization to reflect the bonus(s).
- Refer to CRP Bonus Payment SFM for guidance on expenditures and fees.
- Review documentation submitted by CRP to ensure completeness and correctness.

Step-Down Support

Step-Down Support refers to a process designed to reflect the skills acquired, independence on the job, and effectiveness of natural supports suited to an individual successfully functioning in a competitive integrated form of employment.

To qualify for Step-Down Support Services, the individual must be employed in the same job for at least 12 months and have transitioned to Extended Services. The provider can submit the Step-Down Support Plan detailing specifics of the modified ongoing support to the designated CRP Consultants within the Community Rehabilitation Branch for consideration. If approved, the provider agrees to give priority to any such consumer who requires more intensive ongoing support services to maintain employment. This is not a billable service.

Interim Employment

Supported employment services for Interim Employment can be provided by providers for individuals with most significant disabilities, including youth. This would be appropriate in instances where employment is on an interim basis, while in pursuit of the IPE employment goal, or in addition to existing employment. An example would be a student needing interim employment while participating in a required training program that's connected to the IPE employment goal.

Counselors can reach out to CRP Branch staff for any questions about this service.

Stable employment outcomes will not be paid for interim employment.

References

- Service Fee Memorandum-Guidance on Supported Employment
- CRP Manual
- Policy and Procedures Manual