

## **Supported Employment**

Competitive employment in an integrated setting consistent with the strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice of the individuals. It includes ongoing support services for individuals with the most significant disabilities. Such an individual is one:

- For whom competitive employment has not traditionally occurred or for whom competitive employment has been interrupted or intermittent as a result of a significant disability; and
- Who, because of the nature and severity of their disabilities need intensive supported employment services from DVR and extended services after transition in order to perform this work.

Supported Employment also includes transitional employment for individuals with the most significant disabilities due to mental illness.

## **Supported Employment Services**

Ongoing support services and other appropriate services needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability in supported employment that is provided by the DVR. The following criteria apply:

- It is for a period of time not to exceed 18 months, unless under special circumstances the eligible individual and the rehabilitation counselor or coordinator jointly agree to extend the time to achieve the employment outcome identified in the individualized plan for employment; and
- Following transition, such services can be provided, 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.

## **Individual with a disability**

An individual with a disability means an individual:

- Who has a physical or mental impairment;
- Whose impairment constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment; and
- Who can benefit in terms of an employment outcome from the provision of vocational rehabilitation services.

## **Most Significant Disability**

An individual with a most significant disability means an individual with a disability:

- Who has a severe physical or mental impairment that seriously limits **three** or more functional capacities (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome;
- Whose vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period (at least 12 months); and
- Who has one or more physical or mental disabilities or combination of disabilities determined on the basis of an assessment used for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs. The disability causes comparable substantial functional limitation.

## **Competitive employment**

Competitive employment means work:

- In the competitive labor market that is performed on a full-time or part-time basis in an integrated setting; and
- For which an individual is compensated at or above the minimum wage, but not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by individuals who are not disabled.

## **Integrated Setting**

With respect to the provision of services and employment outcome, an integrated setting is one:

- 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; and
- To the same extent that non-disabled individuals in comparable positions interact with other persons.

## **Employment outcome**

With respect to an individual, employment outcome means:

- Entering or retaining full-time or, if appropriate, part-time competitive employment in the integrated labor market to the greatest extent practicable; or
- Supported employment.

## **Extended Services**

Extended Services are ongoing support services and other appropriate services that are:

- Needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability in supported employment; and
- Provided by a State agency, a private nonprofit organization, employer, or any other appropriate resource, from funds other than funds received by DVR, and are delivered after an individual with a most significant disability has made the transition from support provided by the DVR.

## **Stabilization**

Stabilization is achieved when the counselor, employment specialist, employer and consumer agree that:

- The initial intensive services identified on the IPE have resulted in the consumer demonstrating acceptable job performance; and
- A reasonable expectation that satisfactory job performance will be maintained with the kind and level of ongoing support services being provided.

## **Transition**

Transition occurs:

- A minimum of 90 days after “stabilization.” Responsibility for funding ongoing support services transition at this time from the DVR to the source of funding for the ongoing supports services.

## **Transitional employment**

As used in the definition of Supported employment, transitional employment is:

- A series of temporary job placements in competitive work in integrated settings with ongoing support services for individuals with the most significant disabilities due to mental illness; and
- The provision of ongoing support services must include continuing sequential job placements until job permanency is achieved.

### **Supported Employment Outcome**

Closure of a person successfully rehabilitated in a supported employment outcome occurs when the following criteria are met:

- **90 days following stabilization and 60 days from transition to closure** (to assure on-going supports are successful following transition), and
- For a minimum of **150 days** following stabilization.

### **Stevens Amendment**

The Florida Department of Education, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is an equal opportunity employer. It is against the law for VR as a recipient of Federal financial assistance to discriminate against any individual in the United States on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief. The application process used by VR to determine eligibility for services, any subsequent services and the entire VR process are subject to these non-discrimination requirements. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. VR program receives 78.7 percent of its funding through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. For the 2020 Federal fiscal year, the total amount of grant funds awarded were \$153,000,001. The remaining 21.3 percent of the costs (\$41,409,148) were funded by Florida State Appropriations. Revised October 2020.