



# **Guidebook**

**A Resource for:**

**Community Based Case Managers**

**Care Managers**

**Service Coordinators**

**and**

**Integrated Health Home Coordinators**

January, 2016

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## Why This Guidebook Was Created

The Iowa Department of Human Services is committed to ensuring all people with disabilities have the opportunity to work in the general workforce, and to enjoy the many benefits that are associated with having employment. DHS recognizes that case managers, care managers, service coordinators and integrated health home coordinators have a critical role to play in enabling more lowans with disabilities to find and keep employment in the general workforce. However, we also recognize that case managers, care managers, service coordinators and integrated health home coordinators may not have all of the knowledge, resources and tools they need to ensure each person with a disability they work with can achieve employment in the general workforce, earning at least minimum wage.

This Guidebook was created to provide case managers, care managers, service coordinators and integrated health home coordinators with critical information, resources and tools to help them do the best possible job of assisting transition-age youth and working-age adults with disabilities they support to work. Iowa DHS welcomes feedback and suggestions on how to improve this Guidebook. Please send your ideas to: [lnibbel@dhs.state.ia.us](mailto:lnibbel@dhs.state.ia.us) (Lin Nibbelink, IDHS Division of MHDS).

## Note to the Reader:

Throughout this Guidebook, when the terms “employment” and “integrated community employment” are used, this is what is meant:

*Work that is performed (including self-employment) for which an individual is paid at or above minimum wage and not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by employees who are not disabled, where the employee interacts with other persons who are not disabled to the same extent as others who are in comparable positions, and that presents opportunities for advancement that are similar for those who are not disabled. In the case of an individual who is self-employed, the business results in an income that is comparable to the income received by others who are not disabled and are self-employed in similar occupations.*

For more information on increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities and to read personal success stories from individuals who have used HCBS services and supports to successfully meet their employment goals, please visit the MHDS Employment homepage at: <http://dhs.iowa.gov/mhds/disability-services/employment>



# Chapter One:

## Why Employment First?

### What is Employment First?

Across the nation, **Employment First** is a declaration of both philosophy and policy stating that: “**Employment** is the **first** priority and preferred outcome of publicly funded services for people with disabilities.” Momentum for making Employment First (E1st) a reality in Iowa continues to grow and this helps propel systems changes that can support full access to employment for all Iowans with disabilities.

E1st is also a “framework for systems change that is centered on the premise that **all** citizens, including individuals with significant disabilities, are capable of full participation in integrated employment and community life.” (US Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy at:

<http://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/EmploymentFirst.htm>)

### The National Movement Towards Employment First

*This section is excerpted and summarized from Lisa Mills’ “2015 Vision Quest Phase One Assessment” report to IVRS.*

Over the past 20 years, trends in federal legislation, federal policy guidance, regulatory changes and legal interpretations of states’ obligations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), along with state policy-making have created a new environment with different expectations and rules for the provision of employment and day services for people with disabilities. At the same time, the general public is becoming more aware of the issues as local and national media cover this topic more than in the past.

**The Supreme Court’s 1999 decision in *Olmstead v. L.C.*** (Lois Curtis) affirms Title II of the ADA and prohibits unnecessary segregation of people with disabilities. *Olmstead* requires that people with disabilities receive services in the “most integrated setting” appropriate to their needs. The ADA “integration mandate” is

administered by the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ). Recent Olmstead enforcement actions by the U.S. DOJ include July 2011 Statement and Technical Assistance Guide making clear public entities' obligations regarding integration, 2012 Virginia Settlement Agreement, confirming that the priority service option should be individual supported employment in integrated work settings.<sup>1</sup>, 2014 Rhode Island Settlement<sup>2</sup> requiring increased opportunities for integration, and the 2015 Oregon Settlement Agreement<sup>3</sup>.

A second major force is the **Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)**, which administers Medicaid including home and community-based services (HCBS) through waivers or State Plan services. Support for integrated employment services from CMS includes the September 2011 Guidance on Employment for Individuals in Medicaid Home and Community Based Waiver Programs, which updated the pre-vocational definition and more clearly illustrated how waiver services could be used to increase community employment opportunities<sup>4</sup>; and the January 2014 Final Rule on Home and Community Based Services, intended to ensure that individuals receiving HCBS “have full access to the benefits of community living and the opportunity to receive services in the most integrated setting appropriate.”<sup>5</sup>

Other support comes from the following:

- ✓ the U.S. Department of Education’s **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Transition Amendments**, whose purpose is “to ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living.” [20 U.S.C. 1400(d)(1)(A)]
- ✓ the **Rehabilitation Act** (the Federal law governing provision of vocational rehabilitation services), which has a “presumption of employability” in integrated settings for all individuals with disabilities, including those with the most severe disabilities, and does not count placements in segregated settings as successful placements since 2001 [34CFR361.5(b)1]

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.ada.gov/olmstead/documents/virginia\\_settlement.pdf](http://www.ada.gov/olmstead/documents/virginia_settlement.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.ada.gov/olmstead/documents/ri-olmstead-statewide-agreement.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.ada.gov/olmstead/documents/oregon\\_findings\\_letter.doc](http://www.ada.gov/olmstead/documents/oregon_findings_letter.doc)

<sup>4</sup> <http://downloads.cms.gov/cmsgov/archived-downloads/CMCSBulletins/downloads/CIB-9-16-11.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.medicare.gov/Medicare-CHIP-Program-Information/By-Topics/Long-Term-Services-and-Supports/Home-and-Community-Based-Services/Home-and-Community-Based-Services.html>

- ✓ the **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act** of July, 2014, which requires state agencies to work together to improve community-integrated, competitive wage employment opportunities for youth and adults with disabilities and expands the role of VR agencies with transition-aged youth, limits the number of transition-aged youth entering sheltered workshops and working for sub-minimum wages, and enhances the roles of the Workforce system in meeting the needs of people with disabilities.

## Iowa's Commitment to Employment First

People with disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities, can and want to work! Demand is increasing for integrated, community-based and inclusive services, including employment. Demand for integrated community employment and other integrated supports is especially high among younger service recipients and their families.

In the fall of 2009, Iowa APSE held a Summit and released a White Paper entitled "Iowa's Employment First Initiative – A Call for Change of Historical Proportion."<sup>6</sup> This Summit and White Paper represented some of the earliest E1st activities in our state. Iowa APSE is the state chapter of the national Association of People Supporting Employment First - a national organization solely focused on advancing Employment First policies and practices.<sup>7</sup> APSE has many state chapters across the country, including one in Iowa.

In 2012, Iowa's Department of Human Services adopted the following employment outcome vision statement

"Employment in the general workforce is the first priority and the expected and preferred outcome in the provision of publically funded services for all Iowans with disabilities."

In January 2013, Iowa's Olmstead Consumer Task Force (OCTF) adopted a position statement endorsing Iowa's inter-agency E1st initiatives.<sup>8</sup> The OCTF also established employment as a policy goal and defined employment as "*Regular or*

<sup>6</sup> Find the White Paper at: <http://www.iowa-apse.org/first/character.htm>

<sup>7</sup> APSE lists seven basic principles and ten characteristics necessary for successful implementation of Employment First, at <http://www.apse.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/APSE-Employment-First-Statement.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> <http://olmsteadrealchoicesia.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Position-Statement-on-Employment.pdf>

*customized employment in the general workforce, where employees with disabilities are paid by the business (unless self-employed), earning at least minimum or prevailing wages and benefits.”*

Recently, Iowa’s OCTF wrote a “Fact Sheet” for families and policy-makers on this topic.<sup>9</sup>

One of the key highlights ascribed by E1<sup>st</sup> involves a positive view of every individual’s employment potential. Iowa systems no longer ask whether a person *can* work, but instead asks *what employment best matches the person’s strengths, skills, interests and conditions for success*. **The cornerstone of E1st in Iowa has been to change our expectation(s) and realize that everyone can work with the right job match and the right supports**. Recent state collaborative projects, including the Iowa Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program (EFSLMP) and the Iowa Coalition for Integrated Employment (ICIE), have shown that people with disabilities CAN work in community-integrated employment at competitive wage when our systems and service providers focus on this as the goal! In 2014, these projects (involving 12 service providers) assisted 427 Iowans with significant disabilities to secure community-integrated employment at competitive wage. This included people who had never before worked. The 427 individuals work an average of 17 hours per week, and earn an average wage of \$7.81 per hour.

*“The Employment First movement is sweeping the country because of the urgent need to ensure that citizens with disabilities have access to the same quality of life as the rest of us. Working gives life meaning and the means to achieve our dreams.”*

--Sherry O. Becker, on Iowa APSE website, 4/29/11

<sup>9</sup> See the Fact Sheet at: [http://olmsteadrealchoicesia.org/?page\\_id=357](http://olmsteadrealchoicesia.org/?page_id=357)

## Chapter Two:

# Employment of People with Disabilities in Iowa

### Everyone Benefits When Iowans with Disabilities Work

- ✓ Competitive integrated employment provides individuals with disabilities with increased income, an opportunity to achieve economic self-sufficiency, better quality of life, and more involvement in their community.
- ✓ The Iowa economy as a whole also benefits when people with disabilities are in the workforce, paying taxes and spending their earnings in our local communities. 2012 research by Dr. Robert Cimera of Kent State University indicated that for every \$1 spent on supported employment, \$1.46 is returned to the economy.<sup>10</sup>
- ✓ The state benefits as the result of reduced costs to Medicaid and other income support programs. In fact, research by the University of Iowa Public Policy Center showed that Medicaid members covered under Medicaid for Employed Persons with Disabilities (MEPD) incur **21.5% less** in claims than members with the same definition of disability who receive SSI and do not work.<sup>11</sup>
- ✓ Businesses benefit from the talents and contributions of Iowans with disabilities. As baby boomers retire, a labor shortage is predicted.

Multiple Iowa state agencies have community-integrated employment at competitive wages as a priority in their work with Iowans who have disabilities.

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<sup>10</sup> <http://dhs.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/Cimera-Economics-of-SE.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> <http://dhs.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/MEPD-2012-Study-by-UIa.pdf>

## Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services

The mission of the Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS) is to work for and with individuals who have disabilities to achieve their employment, independence and economic goals. IVRS helps people with disabilities to prepare for, find and keep community-integrated jobs that pay competitive wages. The vision and focus of IVRS is competitive integrated employment in the community.

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services serves individuals with a wide variety of significant disabilities including physical disabilities, developmental disabilities, mental illness, autism, traumatic brain injuries and vision and hearing impairments. Persons who receive vocational rehabilitation services can receive a variety of employment-related services based upon their individual needs and goals.

Vocational Rehabilitation is a program funded jointly by the State and Federal governments. The Iowa Rehabilitation Services Bureau has 14 area offices and 32 service units across the state. For more information, see Chapter Three of this Guidebook and visit the IVRS website: <http://www.ivrs.iowa.gov/>

## The Department for the Blind

Nearly 69,000 Iowans have experienced vision loss. But that doesn't mean accepting "limitations" that many people think accompany blindness and visual impairment. The Iowa Department for the Blind believes all Iowans can lead productive, fulfilling lives – including those who happen to be blind or visually impaired. The Department supports and encourages independent living and full participation in life – at home, at work and in communities. Vision loss should not and does not need to limit accomplishment in whatever a person wishes to do. The Iowa Department for the Blind helps educate, train and empower blind and visually impaired individuals to pursue lifelong goals. With offices in Des Moines and field staff operating statewide, the Department is committed to three goals:

- *To improve skills so the blind and visually impaired may obtain or retain integrated community employment paid at competitive wage.*
- To increase confidence and independence in all aspects of daily life.
- To improve access to information, activities and opportunities.

Iowa Department for the Blind is recognized as a leading provider of services in the United States. These services include innovative and effective vocational rehabilitation and independent living programs as well as world-class library

services. The benefits to clients are profound in terms of impact on attitudes, confidence and independence. The collective social and economic impact is also significant. Productive citizens pay taxes and contribute to society and Iowa's economy – lessening their reliance on state and federal support. For more information, visit the Department's website: <http://www.idbonline.org/>

## **The Department of Human Services, Iowa Medicaid and Mental Health and Disability Services (MHDS)**

The Department of Human Services (DHS) is involved with a number of initiatives intended to increase the number of people with disabilities in integrated community employment.<sup>12</sup> DHS' goal is to unify and coordinate these efforts in conjunction with the Olmstead plan, MHDS Redesign, Iowa Medicaid, stakeholders and state agency partners so demonstrable improvement can be made in the number of persons with disabilities in integrated community employment. This effort will include the evaluation of any new or innovative approaches that can be adopted to help achieve the goal.

Iowa Medicaid (Title XIX) provides healthcare and community supports and services for financially eligible children and adults with disabilities as well as a number of other target groups. The goal is for members to live healthy, stable, and self-sufficient lives. Long term community services and supports for people with disabilities, ***including employment services***, are funded through the Medicaid 1915 (c) Home and community based services (HCBS) waivers and the 1915(i) State Plan HCBS Habilitation program. See Chapter 3 for more information on the services that can support employment available through each of these options.

Iowa Medicaid's Money Follows the Person (MFP) Initiative also has employment as a priority. The Partnership for Community Integration Project is a federal Medicaid demonstration grant to assist persons with intellectual disabilities or brain injuries who are currently residing in Intermediate Care Facilities for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (ICF/ID) or Nursing Facilities (NF) to transition to the communities of their choice. Employment plays an integral part in community inclusion and the goals of the project. For more information visit:

<http://dhs.iowa.gov/ime/members/medicaid-a-to-z/mfp>

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<sup>12</sup> <http://dhs.iowa.gov/mhds/disability-services/employment>

Iowa Medicaid's Buy-In Program or the Medicaid Program for Employed People with Disabilities (MEPD) is a Medicaid coverage group that allows persons with disabilities to work and continue to have medical assistance. For more information visit: <http://dhs.iowa.gov/ime/members/medicaid-a-to-z/mepd>

MHDS is responsible for planning, coordinating, monitoring, improving and partially funding mental health and disability services for the State of Iowa. The division engages in a wide variety of activities that are designed to promote a well-coordinated statewide system of high quality disability-related services and supports including employment.

Iowa's community-based, person-centered mental health and disability services system provides locally delivered services, regionally managed with statewide standards. Regional leaders, guided by the regional management plan, coordinate quality community services that support individuals with disabilities in obtaining their maximum independence. Employment is a key to independence for all of us.

## **Iowa Workforce System**

Iowa's Regional Workforce Development System has a goal to provide high quality employment services to all individuals. This system is designed to be able to improve accessibility for job seekers with disabilities. Each IowaWORKS Center offers accommodations and assistive technology to increase or improve the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.

Job seekers disclosing a disability also have access to additional services and supports. All IowaWORKS Centers are Social Security Administration-approved Employment Networks under the Ticket to Work program. This is one of many work incentives for beneficiaries of Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) available through the Social Security Administration. Job seekers with a disability are invited to IowaWORKS Centers throughout Iowa and identify yourself as having Social Security benefits or a Ticket to Work when you come to the workforce center. Ticket to Work is one of many work incentives offered through Social Security.

## **Iowa Department of Education**

The Mission of the Iowa State Board of Education and Department of Education is directly tied to all students, including students with disabilities, finishing school and successfully participating in Iowa's workforce. The mission reads:

“To champion excellence in education through superior leadership and services. We are committed to high levels of learning, achievement and performance for all students, so they will become successful members of their community **and the workforce.**” [Emphasis added]

For students qualifying for special education, the goal of the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) process is to “direct the student toward high expectations and toward becoming a successful member of his or her community **and the workforce.**” [Emphasis added]

## Iowa Council on Developmental Disabilities

Employment is a strong area of emphasis for the Council. As of 2015, they hold the federal Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities *Partnerships in Employment Systems Change (PIE)* grant for the state of Iowa.<sup>13</sup> As part of this effort, the Council coordinates and supports the Iowa Coalition for Integrated Employment (ICIE).<sup>14</sup> The purpose of the grant is to prioritize employment as the first and preferred option for youth and young adults with IDD. As a grantee, the Iowa Council is working to enhance collaboration across existing state systems, including programs administered by the Iowa Department of Health Services, Iowa Medicaid Enterprise, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Iowa Department of Education, and other entities to increase integrated community employment outcomes for youth and young adults with IDD. The goals of the grant include:

- Developing policies that support competitive integrated employment
- Removing barriers to competitive integrated employment
- Implementing strategies and best practices to improve employment outcomes for youth and young adults with I/DD
- Enhancing statewide collaborations to facilitate the transition process from the school setting to the employment setting

Every October - National Disability Employment Awareness Month – the Iowa Council also coordinates the *Take your Legislator to Work Campaign*. This campaign is intended to increase awareness that every Iowan with or without a disability should have opportunities and choices to have meaningful employment in the community.

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<sup>13</sup> More information available at: <http://www.acl.gov/Programs/AIDD/Programs/PNS/Resources/iowa-coalition-for-integrated-employ.aspx>

<sup>14</sup> More information on the Coalition is available at: [http://partnershipsinemployment.com/?page\\_id=23](http://partnershipsinemployment.com/?page_id=23)



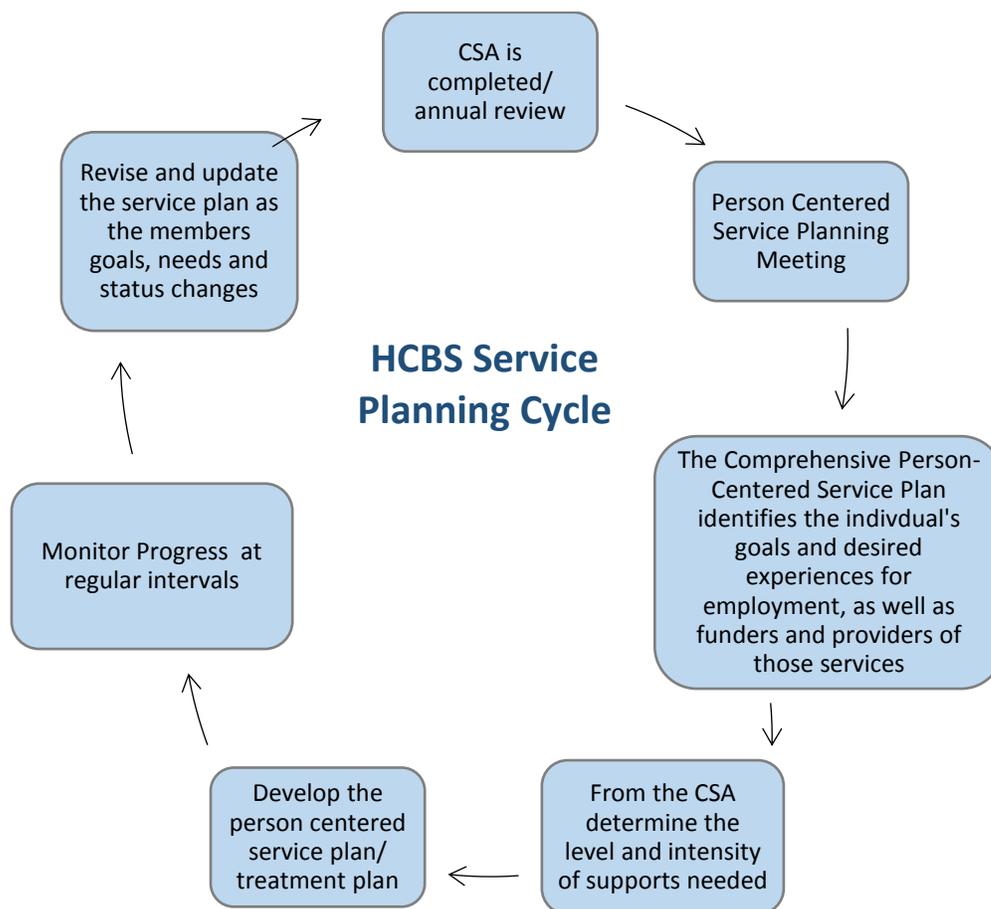
## Chapter Three:

# Service Planning for Employment

The two primary sources of employment services for the individuals with disabilities who you work with are IVRS, and the Medicaid Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Waivers and the State Plan HCBS Habilitation Program. Refer to Appendix A for a listing of HCBS services, and Appendix C for a listing of IVRS services.

### Service Planning for HCBS Waivers and Habilitation

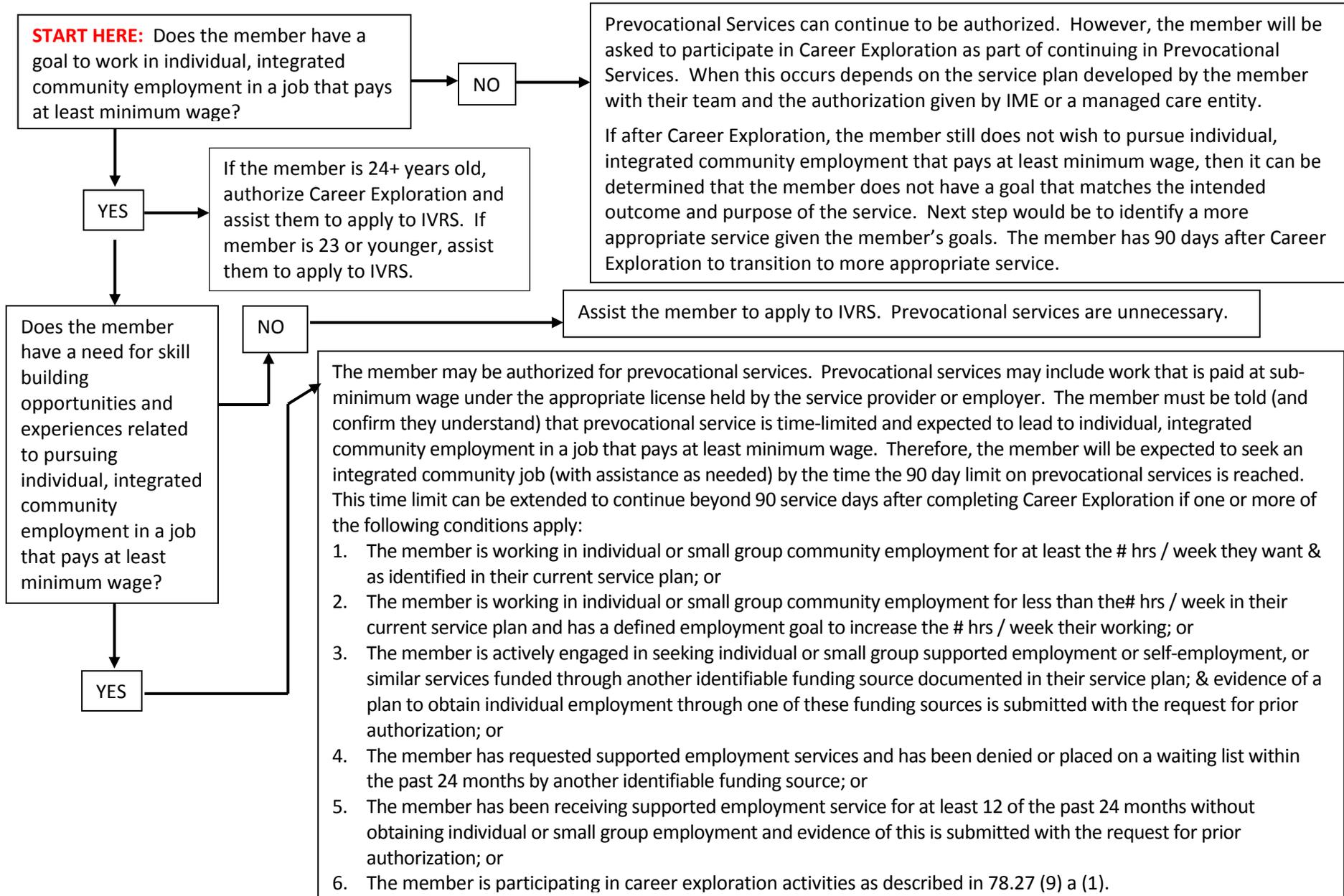
Medicaid HCBS services are individualized to meet the needs of each member, and involve person-centered planning, a core standardized assessment (CSA), and annual review.



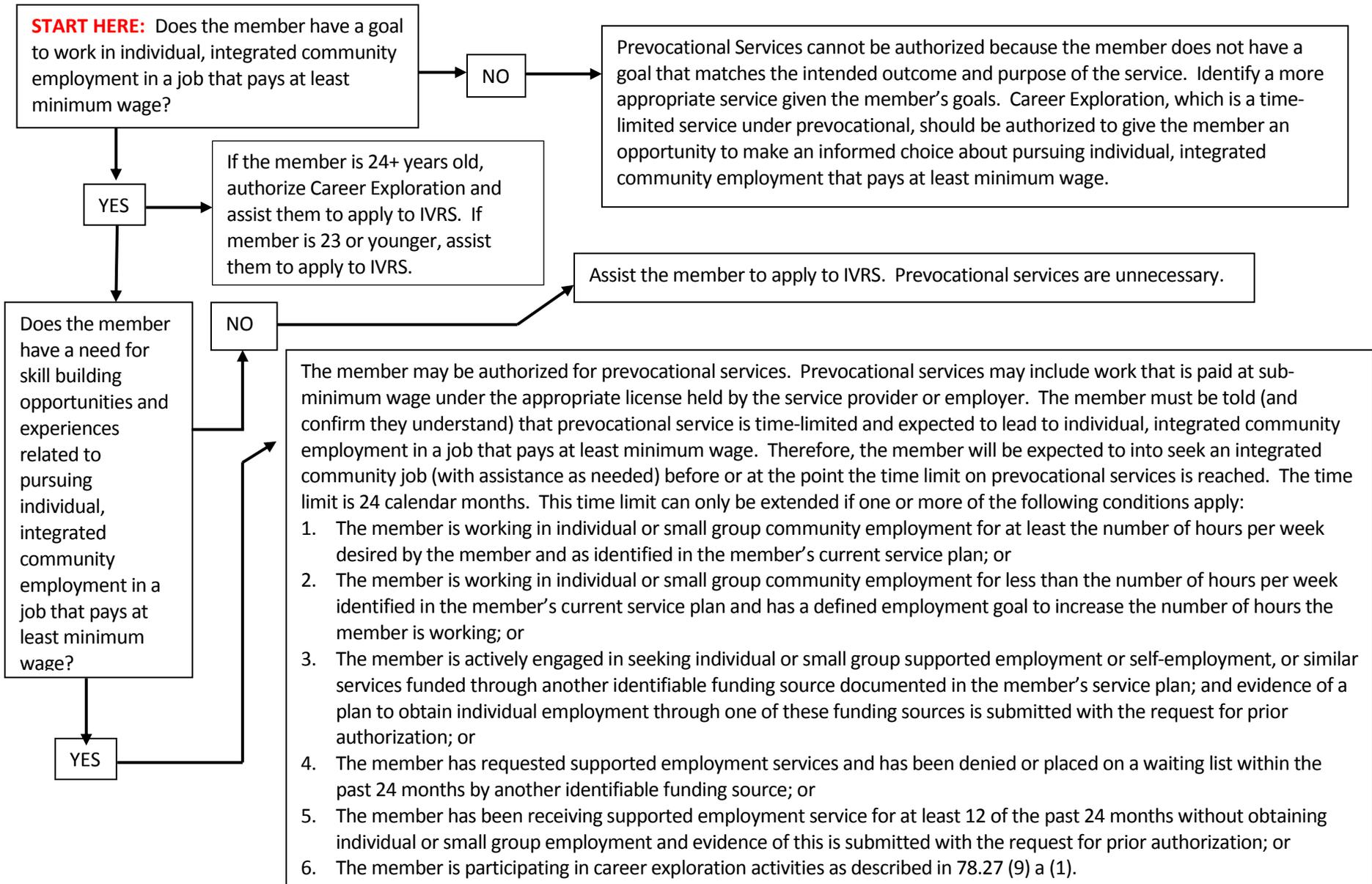
- Core Standardized Assessment is a Comprehensive functional assessment that indicates the HCBS member's needs for services and supports , including employment services and supports
- Comprehensive Person-Centered Service plan or Treatment Plan identifies employment service needs and plan for employment
- Service Prior Authorization ensures that the service is appropriate based on the member's assessed needs, employment goals of the member and other funding sources that may be available to pay for employment supports
- Annual re-assessment and review

## For Members Who Were Enrolled In Prevocational Services Prior to 5/1/16:

### Can Prevocational Services Be Re-Authorized?



**For Members Who Were NOT Enrolled In Prevocational Services Prior to 5/1/16:  
Can Prevocational Services Be Authorized? (EFFECTIVE: Through July 21, 2016)**



## Resources for Employment that People can Access while They are on Waiver Waiting Lists

Most resources listed are also available for Integrated Health Homes and people with mental illness/chronic mental illness diagnoses if they're not yet receiving Medicaid State Plan Habilitation services.

### What?

Some of the Employment Services available when you assign your Ticket to IVRS or IowaWORKS, are:

- career assessments,
- skills testing,
- employment workshops,
- resume development,
- application and interviewing tips,
- computer classes or tutorials available,
- job training programs for eligible applicants.

### By Whom?

#### ➤ IVRS

Even if a person is on a Waiver waiting list, they can still access services through IVRS. These services are available to anyone having a barrier to employment as defined by the agency. See <http://www.ivrs.iowa.gov/>

#### ➤ One-Stop system (IowaWorks)

To enhance services for individuals with disabilities some One-Stops have Disability Resource Coordinators (DRCs). Currently these Regions are 3 and 4 (who share one DRC), 7, 11, and 16. These DRCs provide information and referral to appropriate services. IowaWorks also has job listings as well as a number of training courses to help job seekers. For more information about the One-Stops and disability and employment, go to:

[http://www.iowajobnetwork.com/jobcast\\_partners.asp?s.agent\\_category\\_id=17](http://www.iowajobnetwork.com/jobcast_partners.asp?s.agent_category_id=17)

A list of Disability Resource Center's for each region with contact information can be found at <http://www.adrc-tae.acl.gov/tiki-index.php?page=IowaProfile&stabrev=IA>

- Ticket to Work (TTW)  
Every Social Security beneficiary between the ages of 16 and 64 is considered a Ticket Holder. The person can take his/her “Ticket” to any Employment Network (EN), assign his/her ticket and receive services. In Iowa we typically we think of IVRS and IowaWorks as the only two ENs. In reality however an Employment Network is any entity that has been approved by the Social Security Administration to provide employment services. Some EN’s serve multiple states and are not located in Iowa. For a list of current Employment Networks go to <http://www.iowawins.org/wipa-ticket.html>. There are multiple sources of information on this web page. You will have to navigate to find the ENs in Iowa.

Other helpful Ticket websites are:

[www.chooseworkttw.net/resource/jsp/searchByState.jsp](http://www.chooseworkttw.net/resource/jsp/searchByState.jsp)

<http://www.ivrs.iowa.gov/TTW/2015TicketToWork.html>

<http://www.iowaworkforce.org/access/employmentnetwork.htm>

Job seekers with a disability are invited to identify yourself as having Social Security benefits or a ticket. Ticket to Work is one of many work incentives offered through Social Security. Assigning your Ticket could allow you to be exempt from SSI/SSDI Medical Reviews.

- DEI through IWD, see <http://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/DEI.htm>

## Information and Referral

- Aging and Disability Resource Centers  
Iowa currently has six Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs). Some of them have Employment Specialists. These Employment Specialists can provide information and referral to potential job seekers. Others may also provide short term services. If there is not an Employment Specialist, other personnel should be able to assist.

<http://www.adrc-tae.acl.gov/tiki-index.php?page=IowaProfile&stabrev=IA>

- Iowa COMPASS  
Iowa COMPASS offers information and referral, a Used Equipment Referral Service, and legal advocacy and representation (Assistive Technology Legal Project) for Iowans with disabilities and their families, friends and service providers. See [www.iowacompass.org](http://www.iowacompass.org)

## Links to Medicaid and Other Service and Resource Sites

- Medicaid State Plan services <http://dhs.iowa.gov/ime/about/stateplan>
- MHDS Regions Core services per their Management Plans (includes employment) <http://dhs.iowa.gov/mhds-providers/providers-regions/regions> scroll down and click on “Regional Service System Management Plans” and “Annual Service and Budget Plans”
- Benefits Planning <http://disabilityrightsiowa.org/who-we-are/funding-partners/work-incentives-planning-assistance-wipa/>  
see also <http://www.iowawins.org/index.html>
- Managed Care Organizations (MCOs)  
MCOs may begin offering “Value-Added-Benefits” to members.
- Link to selected pages of the User Manual for the Supports Intensity Scale (SIS) [http://dhs.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/SIS\\_User\\_Manual.pdf](http://dhs.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/SIS_User_Manual.pdf)
- Link to interRAI information <http://www.interrai.org/instruments.html>



## Chapter Four:

# Encouraging People to Pursue Integrated Employment

### Resources for Professional Development, and Sharing with Parents and Individuals with Disabilities

Below are links to selected stories or videos that can be used for your own professional development or shared with others to encourage pursuing integrated community employment.

### Professional Development

#### Integrated Community Employment in Iowa

The following are webinars developed as part of the Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Project (ESFLMP) and the Iowa Coalition for Integrated Employment (ICIE) Initiative. They are all located on the IVRS website [www.ivrs.iowa.gov](http://www.ivrs.iowa.gov). On the tab on the left, click on Iowa Employment First. A new screen comes up highlighting Employment First in Iowa. The webinars are under the EF Resource Archive tab on the left. They include:

March 25, 2014: The Iowa Approach I

April 29, 2014: The Iowa Approach II

May 27, 2014: Iowa Community of Practice Employment Services

June 27, 2014: What is Discovery?

July 2, 2014: Customized Employment Discovery Process

July 29, 2014: Customized Employment Start to Finish

August 19, 2014: The Staff Side of Customized Employment

September 30, 2014: A Focus on Business

October 28, 2014: A Focus on Business

February 24, 2015: Influencing Employment Outcomes  
March 31, 2015: Mental Health & Employment Best Practices  
April 28, 2015: The Role & Importance of Parent Engagement

<http://ndi-inc.org/> Webinars including how Work impacts Benefits, and an Online Classroom with courses at no cost to you.

[www.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/employment-resources](http://www.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/employment-resources) Hosted by the University of Montana, this web site shares information about the Rural Institute for Inclusive Communities. Menu items include: Customized Employment, Social Security, Self Employment, Emerging Leader Stories, and archived webinars.

<http://www.dei-ideas.org/> Disability Employment Initiative (DEI). The website shares information about the DEI which is a collaborative effort between the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration and the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP).

## Share with Others

### Benefits of Integrated Community Employment

There are four videos found at this link <http://www.jobhonor.org/>  
Overview: The impact of counseling to encourage a job candidate to re-imagine his life has resulted in his becoming a small business owner who finds great satisfaction in teaching individuals how to work at his company "**T & D Repair**". Job development has opened doors for many individuals with disabilities at **Winnebago Industries** and their partnership has brought a new perspective to that company. A young lady working at **Hy-Vee** was placed after participating in **Project Search** along with a woman from a diverse background who used **post-secondary education** to secure the life she wanted for herself and her children.

<http://www.idaction.org/videos/>

Videos of various people with disabilities living and working in their communities.

<http://www.kfimaine.org/articles-other-resources> "Top Ten Actions Parents Can Take". Click on Read More to read the entire article.

<http://www.ivrs.iowa.gov/iowaSelfEmploymentProgram/ISEClientSuccessStories.html> Iowa self-employment success stories.

[www.realworkstories.org/about-us](http://www.realworkstories.org/about-us) **Real People, Real Jobs** site features employment success stories of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities working in paid jobs in their communities. Their aim is to show what's possible for people with disabilities, their families, and front-line employment-support professionals.

<http://dhs.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/MHDS-Zach-Becker-Success-Story.pdf>

Written in 2013, Zach Becker's success story is featured. Zach was born and grew up in Iowa and now lives in Kissimmee, Florida and has worked as a horse trainer and performer at the Arabian Nights Show.

[http://dhs.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/MHDS-Thinking\\_Outside\\_the\\_Employment\\_Box\\_FINAL072914.pdf](http://dhs.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/MHDS-Thinking_Outside_the_Employment_Box_FINAL072914.pdf)

18 success stories of self-employed Iowans with various disabilities

[www.iowawins.org](http://www.iowawins.org)

**"If Everybody Works-Wage Earners"**

**"If Everybody Works-New Entrepreneurs"**

Six Iowa success stories are highlighted in two videos produced by Iowa Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG), one featuring Iowa wage earners with disabilities and delivering a strong Employment First message and the other featuring Iowa business owners with disabilities.

<http://www.apse.org/resources/video-stories/>

This is a collection of video stories that changes monthly, on the national Association of Persons Supporting Employment First (APSE) website.

## **How to Involve Providers in Encouraging and Supporting People to Make an Informed Choice to Pursue Integrated Community Employment**

### **1. Suggestions on how to involve existing providers in a person's life:**

- If involved, ask the residential provider, day habilitation provider and/or prevocational service provider to help the person learn about integrated community employment as an option.
- Make learning about and exploring integrated community employment a goal attached to the authorizations for these services.
- Education and exploration of integrated community employment can be done within the time these other services are being delivered. Integrated community employment can be explored as a topic.

Example: when the residential, day habilitation or prevocational provider is supporting people in the community, the staff person can point out the people employed in that place. The staff person can assist the people being supported to recognize what jobs are available in that place (e.g. bank, grocery store, hairdresser, medical clinic, bowling alley, etc.). The staff person could help the people being supported to learn about the jobs and what tasks they specifically involve. They could help the people request a tour of the place to learn about the jobs being done, an informational interview with the owner, manager or supervisor where the different jobs are explained, or an opportunity to shadow one of the employees for a period of time (e.g. an hour or half day) to see first-hand what the job is like.

- Support people in volunteer opportunities which can help people consider the kinds of interests they have which could lead to a job.

### **2. Suggestions on how to involve integrated/supported employment providers who may not yet be involved in a person's life:**

- An integrated/supported employment provider can be asked to attend an ISP meeting to provide information and education on the benefits of integrated community employment. This can include things like:

- Explaining how the supported employment process works and what the first steps would involve;
  - Sharing success stories (verbally, through video or other means) of others who they have helped obtain and maintain integrated community employment;
  - Answering questions and addressing concerns the individual, his/her guardian or family members may have about integrated community employment and supported employment services; and
  - Providing information and an application for IVRS, and assisting with completion of this application if the individual, guardian or family requests this.
- An integrated/supported employment provider may also be able to host the individual for a visit (e.g. an hour or a half-day) where the person (and his/her guardian or family) can meet people who are working in integrated community employment and visit them at their workplace with advance notice to the employer.
  - If supported employment is included in the ISP and approved, the integrated/supported employment provider could engage the person in a time-limited career exploration process (e.g. 15-25 hours over a thirty day period).

**All of the above activities help an individual to make a truly informed choice about whether to pursue integrated community employment.**

*“The dignity, responsibility and economic independence resulting from gainful employment is one of the most effective ways of enhancing self-reliance, changing attitudes, reducing dependency on public benefits and promoting community acceptance of people with disabilities.”* (U.S.D.H.H.S. 2001. Report to the President: *“Delivering on the Promise: Preliminary Report of Federal Agencies’ Actions to Eliminate Barriers and Promote Integration”*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.)

## Myth Busting to Advance Employment First

Studies show that family members are the most important early influence on a person with disability with regard to work. Family members function as role models for working, and influence expectations about working. They also have unique insights that can help planners during career development.<sup>15</sup>

Here are some common myths that people with disabilities or their families may present to you, and some suggestions for challenging those myths.

### MYTH: “My son (daughter, loved one) can’t work; who will hire them?”

#### TALKING POINTS:

- ✓ Assume that everyone can try employment.
- ✓ Your loved one may need assistive technology, a simple accommodation, or may need an employment specialist to accompany them to work in the beginning; with the properly identified and supplied supports, most people can, in fact, work.
- ✓ “Your disability may impact the kinds of jobs you can do and the number of hours you’re able to work. However, many people with disabilities are finding that with good, thoughtful preparation and support, they are able to succeed at jobs that are satisfying and meaningful to them.” <http://mo.db101.org>
- ✓ Customized Employment is a strategy available that matches an individual’s strengths and interests with a business need in the community; it’s a win-win for business and a person with a disability.
- ✓ Employers value reduced turnover, reduced time-to-hire, increased productivity, and leveraged resources – all these are things that people with disabilities have to offer.
- ✓ There’s lots more information available at Missouri’s Ticket to Work website, <http://mo.db101.org/mo/situations/workandbenefits/myths/article2.htm>

### MYTH: “It’s not safe for me (my son, daughter, loved one) to work in the community.”

#### TALKING POINTS:

- ✓ Customized Employment offers the opportunity to define “safe” in the context of a particular individual’s needs, and negotiate job matches that include or

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<sup>15</sup> Wolfe, A. & Hall, A.C. [2011]. The Influence of Families on the Employment Process. Tools for Inclusion Brief, Issue No. 24, Boston, MA: Institute for Community Inclusion, University of Massachusetts Boston.

facilitate those conditions. No one wants to put your loved one at risk or place them into an unsafe situation.

- ✓ Vocational Rehabilitation can help you to find, prepare for, and keep the job which is right for you. Visit <http://www.ivrs.iowa.gov/ContactUs/counties.html> to find your local VR office.
- ✓ Integrated community employment is the FIRST choice, not the only choice.
- ✓ Connect families with others' success stories, such as [http://dhs.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/MHDS-Thinking\\_Outside\\_the\\_Employment\\_Box\\_FINAL072914.pdf](http://dhs.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/MHDS-Thinking_Outside_the_Employment_Box_FINAL072914.pdf) and <http://www.ivrs.iowa.gov/IowaSelfEmploymentProgram/ISEClientSuccessStories.html>, see also "If Everybody Works-Wage Earners" and "If Everybody Works-New Entrepreneurs" [www.iowawins.org](http://www.iowawins.org)

**MYTH: "I'm afraid I (my son, daughter, loved one) will fail or be rejected when working in the community."**

#### **TALKING POINTS:**

- ✓ It's natural to try to protect your loved one from negative experiences; instead you could focus on maximizing their chances for success by focusing on their strengths, staying involved in the job development phase, share your networks, problem-solve the supports they'll need to be successful, and help them practice soft skills.
- ✓ Persons with disabilities have a right to participate in the full range of human experiences including success and failure. Employers should have the same expectations of, and work requirements for, all employees. If this is a good job match for the person and the employer, give them the same opportunity to try that you would give anyone else.
- ✓ Walgreens, Costco, Bank of America, Lowe's, and other companies recognize the value of recruiting and hiring people with disabilities. Studies show that people with disabilities can offer businesses increased diversity, an ability to address unmet needs, resourcefulness, innovative thinking, and improved morale and productivity throughout their organizations<sup>16</sup>. Research has found that people prefer to do business with companies who employ people with disabilities<sup>17</sup>.

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/Employers.htm>

<sup>17</sup> <http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/edicollect/1292/>

**MYTH: “Social Security Administration will say I’m not disabled anymore if I work.”**

**TALKING POINTS:**

- ✓ A Ticket to Work website<sup>18</sup> says “Social Security ordinarily reviews your medical condition from time to time to see whether you are still disabled, using a process called the medical Continuing Disability Review, or medical CDR. If you participate in the Ticket program with either an Employment Network or your State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency, and make ‘timely progress’ following your individual work plan, Social Security will **not** conduct a review of your medical condition.”
- ✓ Also see the information available at Missouri’s Ticket to Work website, <http://mo.db101.org/mo/situations/workandbenefits/myths/article2c.htm> and [www.iowawins.org](http://www.iowawins.org)

**MYTH: “If I (my son, daughter, loved one) work, I’ll lose my benefits – or if I lose my job then I’ll lose my services & insurance.”**

**TALKING POINTS:**

- ✓ This is a big concern for many people. There are lots of ways set up to help you keep your benefits, services, and insurance while you’re working or during a transition period. A qualified Benefits Planner can explain these to you. Find one through your service provider, Vocational Rehabilitation <http://www.ivrs.iowa.gov/TTW/2015TicketToWork.html> or visit <http://disabilityrightsiowa.org/resources/benefit-planning-resources/>
- ✓ Social Security has “work incentives” that are only available to people with disabilities who are working—such as the Impairment Related Work Expense (IRWE), which helps pay for expenses that are needed to work (such as special transportation); the Plan for Achieving Self Support (PASS), the Earned Income Exclusion, and Iowa’s Medicaid for Employed Persons with Disabilities (MEPD). A qualified Benefits Planner can explain how these incentives could work for your family member. Social Security’s guide to employment support is called “The Redbook” ([www.ssa.gov/redbook](http://www.ssa.gov/redbook)), and it gives additional information and calculators.
- ✓ More information is available at Missouri’s Ticket to Work website, <http://mo.db101.org/mo/situations/workandbenefits/myths/article2a.htm>, <http://mo.db101.org/mo/situations/workandbenefits/myths/article2b.htm>,

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<sup>18</sup> <http://www.ivrs.iowa.gov/TTW/2015TicketToWork.html>

<http://mo.db101.org/mo/situations/workandbenefits/myths/article2f.htm>

**MYTH: Certain jobs are more suited to persons with disabilities.**

**TALKING POINTS:**

- ✓ While we can all think of obvious bad job matches, be careful not to stereotype people based on a disability. Just because you can only think of one way to do something does not mean that other ways do not exist that are equally effective. As with all of us, certain jobs may be better suited to some than to others.

**MYTH: Supports in the workplace would be too costly.**

**TALKING POINTS:**

- ✓ Accommodations are generally not expensive. Statistics show that 15% of accommodations cost nothing and 50% of accommodations cost less than \$500. The vast majority workers with disabilities do not require accommodations.
- ✓ Employers make accommodations daily, for people with and without disabilities. “The most requested accommodation is a flexible work schedule, which costs nothing.” –*Marian Vessels, ADA & IT Information Center for the Mid-Atlantic Region*
- ✓ “Any operation that has more than a handful of workers is going to have to make accommodations. This might include not asking an employee with a bad back to lift a heavy box or not requiring an employee with poor eyesight to read fine print. You’re not doing something unusual. You’re accommodating the people you work with, without even thinking about it.” –*Bradley Bellacicco, Salisbury Area Chamber of Commerce*
- ✓ Employers can help create disability-friendly environments for workers and customers with disabilities. They may be eligible for use tax credits, deductions, or other assistance to help them do so. A partial list:
  - Work Opportunity Tax Credit <http://www.doleta.gov/business/incentives/opptax/>
  - Welfare to Work Tax Credit [http://www.ehow.com/info\\_7742716\\_welfareto-work-tax-credit.html](http://www.ehow.com/info_7742716_welfareto-work-tax-credit.html)
  - Veterans Employment and Training Service <http://www.dol.gov/vets/>
- ✓ In addition, other tax credits and deductions are available to employers, including
  - Disabled Access Credit (<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f8826.pdf>)

- Architectural/Transportation Tax Deduction (<http://www.irs.gov/Businesses/Small-Businesses-%26-Self-Employed/Tax-Benefits-for-Businesses-Who-Have-Employees-with-Disabilities>),
- and others (see <http://hrpeople.monster.com/training/articles/31-hiring-people-with-disabilities-the-tax-code-is-on-your-side>).

**TTW Website:** [http://www.ivrs.iowa.gov/TTW/SSA 3 Biggest Myths Flyer-Final-2.pdf](http://www.ivrs.iowa.gov/TTW/SSA_3_Biggest_Myths_Flyer-Final-2.pdf)

**T-TAP “Q&A on Customized Employment: Addressing Parental Concerns”:**  
<https://dhs.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/TTAP%20for%20Parents.pdf>

# Chapter Five:

## Resources for Other Populations

### **Resources for Employment for Individuals with Physical Disabilities**

While the employment rate for all individuals with disabilities is much lower than their peers without disabilities, statistics for individuals with physical disabilities is even lower. Sometimes service providers, case managers as well as parents and the individuals themselves might not see employment as a possibility due to their physical disability. Since the person may not be able to perform all the essential functions of many existing job descriptions they, and others, often believe employment is not an option for them. However, as for any person with a disability, those experiencing physical disabilities have the same right to work in the community as others.

One strategy that is currently being researched by the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (RRTC) of Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) to improve the employment outcomes for this group of individuals is Customized Employment. This strategy involves matching the unique strengths, needs and contributions of the job seeker to the identified needs to the business. It is especially applicable for individuals who cannot meet all the requirement of an “off the rack job”—meaning they typically are not successful using “demand-side” employment strategies.

Regardless of the specific strategy used, questions related specifically to accessibility and potential assistive technology need to be asked. Examples include:

- What type of accessible transportation will this person need?
- If there is personal care-related assistance needed on the job how will that be handled? Can the work place handle it or do we need outside assistance?
- How can we best use Assistive Technology?
- What specific job tasks are problematic due to the physical limitations? What accommodations can we make?
- Is there assistive technology that the person uses at home that might be helpful at the work place?

Service providers benefit from thinking of the individual with physical disability first as a person and their abilities, and only then should limitations be noted and the potential support needs for success be identified. One critical component of determining the impact of any noted limitations is a thorough job analysis. The essential functions of the job must be identified so potential accommodations can be brainstormed. This job analysis must consider factors not only of the workplace and the specific workstation, but also of the individual. Questions such as the following must be asked (not an exhaustive list):

- What duties must be performed and can they be performed differently?
- What equipment is typically used, can it be modified or can different equipment be used?
- What is the workspace/station like? Can it be altered?
- What psychosocial factors should be considered? Issues such as the personality of the worker, personal goals, the culture of the workplace as well as the worker, are examples of psychosocial factors that should help determine appropriate accommodations.

How these accommodations should be provided is another consideration. While the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) puts some responsibility on the employer, the employer should not be expected to fund all accommodations. For example, a wheelchair is typically considered a personal need and therefore the employer is generally not responsible for providing the item. Likewise with personal attendant care in the workplace. Since the employer is not responsible for personal needs or services in the workplace for employees without disabilities, they are generally not responsible to cover the cost of personal attendant care for an employee with a disability.

As with all individuals with disabilities seeking employment, Benefits Counseling should be offered. Currently there are multiple options to find these services including:

- Disability Rights Iowa

- Disability Employment Initiative operated through the Workforce Centers IVRS

### **Potential funding sources:**

**Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services:** As the State agency whose mission is to assist eligible individuals to find and maintain integrated community employment IVRS should be considered a potential funding partner. They could possibly fund a number of needed services to help the person prepare for, find and maintain employment as well as necessary accommodations.

**Waiver for Individuals with a Physical Disability (PD Waiver):** While there are no specific integrated community employment services available under this Waiver, there are services that could be used to assist the person. These include:

**Consumer Choices Option:** CCO could be an option for providing accommodations and supports and is available under the PD Waiver. Using this service the individual could hire a person of their choice to provide the needed supports.

**Consumer Directed Attendant Care:** CDAC, also available through the PD waiver, is an option for providing personal attendant care at the job site while the person is working.

**Specialized Medical Equipment:** There might be instances where the PD Waiver purchased specialized medical equipment that could be used not only at home but also in the work place.

**Home/Vehicle Modifications:** The PD waiver will pay for modifying a vehicle (there is a cap). Such a vehicle would make getting around in the community easier and that could include getting to work.

**Transportation** is a service allowed under the PD Waiver that could help the person get to and from work.

It is also important to note that the Regions may fund services for individuals with physical disabilities who also experience an intellectual disability or have a mental

illness diagnoses and are not currently on a waiver. See: <http://dhs.iowa.gov/mhds-providers/providers-regions/regions> for more information. A Regional map is at <http://dhs.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/MHDS-Regions-Approved-Map.pdf>. Regional Service Plans are at <http://dhs.iowa.gov/mhds-providers/providers-regions/regions/service-budget>

## Other Resources:

JAN (Job Accommodation Network): [www.askjan.org](http://www.askjan.org). One particularly helpful document is the “Accommodation and Compliance Series: Employees who use Wheelchairs”. However, their entire website is very valuable.

Social Security Work Incentives: Social Security Administration (SSA) Work Incentives such as Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS), Impairment Related Work Expense (IRWE) and Subsidies and Special Conditions. [www.ssa.gov/redbook/](http://www.ssa.gov/redbook/) Using subsidies and special conditions might be particularly applicable for individuals with physical disabilities.

RRTC on Employment of People with Physical Disabilities: <http://www.worksupport.com> or <http://vcurrtc.org/> This project is funded from 2013 through 2018. Contact Pamela C. Hinterlong [pchinterlong@vcu.edu](mailto:pchinterlong@vcu.edu)

## Resources for Older Adults Who Want to Work

1. Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP)  
<https://www.iowaaging.gov/senior-community-services-employment-program-scsep>

SCSEP participants are paid minimum wage while they gain marketable job skills working part-time in non-profit and public organizations, including senior centers, schools and libraries. The program provides a win-win for participants and their communities. Participants help communities extend their capabilities, while developing their own job skills, self-confidence and a restored sense of self-worth.

2. Iowa Area Agencies on Aging (AAA)  
<https://www.iowaaging.gov/area-agencies-aging>

Iowa's Area Agencies on Aging provide expertise at a local level to guide individuals to a multitude of services, including nutrition, long-term care, legal aid and caregiver assistance, among many others. There is no charge to the consumer for information and referral services.

### 3. Iowa Department on Aging

[www.iowaaging.gov](http://www.iowaaging.gov)

The mission of the Iowa Department on Aging is to develop a comprehensive, coordinated and cost-effective system of long-term living and community support services that helps individuals maintain health and independence in their homes and communities.

### 4. One-Stop system (IowaWorks)

[http://www.iowajobnetwork.com/jobcast\\_partners.asp?s.agent\\_category\\_id=17](http://www.iowajobnetwork.com/jobcast_partners.asp?s.agent_category_id=17)

Through this program, groups and organizations that directly work with One-Stop Career Centers receive open job notifications on a daily basis that match the criteria they specifically requested. These notifications can be customized by location, profession, education and experience.

### 5. Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS)

<http://www.ivrs.iowa.gov/ContactUs/maincontact.html>

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services mission is to work for and with individuals who have disabilities to achieve their employment, independence and economic goals. IVRS assists eligible individuals with disabilities to become employed. Persons who receive vocational rehabilitation services have a wide range of disabilities. There is no age requirement for an individual to receive services.

### 6. Benefits Planning

<http://disabilityrightsiowa.org/who-we-are/funding-partners/work-incentives-planning-assistance-wipa/>

Disability Rights IOWA (DRI) staff members provide benefits planning services to assist Social Security beneficiaries who receive Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and/or Supplemental Security Income (SSI), who want to pursue gainful employment or self-employment.



# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Q1. What's behind all this talk recently about employment for people with disabilities?**

**A:** There is increasing national expectation, attention, and recognition of integrated community employment as a civil rights issue of the day. The 1999 Olmstead Decision by the U.S. Supreme Court (Olmstead) and the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) require States to direct their funding to integrated settings. The federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) issues guidance on how federal Medicaid HCBS Waiver funds are used. CMS, as well as the DOJ, do not support using Medicaid funds for segregated settings. The Iowa Department of Human Services (Department) must be clear that integrated community settings are the preferred location for the delivery of Home and Community Based employment supports. Additionally, there are economic benefits to the State of increasing the number of people with disabilities employed. Research by Robert Cimera (Kent State) indicates that there is a \$1.46 return on investment for every \$1.00 of employment services.

## **Q2. Why is now the right time to talk about employment?**

**A:** According to the Administration for Community Living (ACL), it is more evident than ever that employment affects not only income, but also well-being and self-esteem, in powerful ways. "The confidence and growth that come with successful employment are huge, and the empowerment that comes with controlling your own resources is an important part of living a self-determined life."<sup>19</sup>

## **Q3. Where do enclaves fit, in all this?**

**A:** Enclaves are considered community-based group employment by some systems and not by others. Enclaves may have value for the job seeker in providing opportunities to gain exposure to work tasks and the work environment in a structured and supportive setting. Vocational Rehabilitation can't financially support enclaves as it is not competitive, community employment. Enclaves may,

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<sup>19</sup> [http://www.acl.gov/NewsRoom/Blog/2013/2013\\_03\\_15.aspx](http://www.acl.gov/NewsRoom/Blog/2013/2013_03_15.aspx)

however, be used as a stepping stone to further develop work behaviors and work skills that will lead to integrated community employment.

**Q4. There's a gap between prevocational services and integrated community employment services. Are there any types of services that can do some more work at bridging the gap?**

**A:** Opportunities for individuals to move from prevocational services to integrated community employment can include job shadows, volunteer work, on-the-job-training (OJT), temporary employment, enclaves, mobile work crews, plus various specific training curriculum being developed in partnership with business and/or community colleges. Two such examples present in various locations throughout Iowa are Walgreen's Retail Employees with Disabilities Initiative (REDI) program (retail), and Project SEARCH within healthcare and other industries.

**Q5. Why is it always about "the money" and not about the best interests of the people we serve?**

**A:** It is about how to make the money serve the best interests of people with disabilities. The goals of Employment First and all these efforts are about providing community based services with positive outcomes for those served.

## **Questions about Medicaid**

**Q6: What is "CMS"?**

**A:** The federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services is referred to as "CMS". This is the federal agency that grants authority to the States to provide Medicaid services including Home and Community Based Waiver employment services, and guides how Iowa's Medicare and Medicaid programs are operated and how funds are used.

**Q7. Will prevocational services go away?**

**A:** No.

**Q8. What are the differences between prevocational and sheltered work, and other wrap-around or day services?**

**A:** According to the federal regulations found at 42 CFR 440.180(c)(2)(i), prevocational services are “services that prepare an individual for paid or unpaid employment and that are not job-task oriented but are, instead, aimed at a generalized result.” People who receive prevocational services may also receive educational, supported employment, and/or day habilitation services.

The federal CMS rules for Medicaid prevent DHS from using Medicaid funds for sheltered workshop services. In addition, the DOJ Olmstead enforcement actions are clear that it is the State’s responsibility to ensure people have opportunities to choose to live and work in integrated community settings.

Day programs funded by Medicaid include day habilitation, day care, supported employment, or prevocational services.

Likewise, prevocational services are designed to prepare a person for more integrated community employment. As such, CMS does not allow Medicaid funding for this service to continue indefinitely without demonstrating that the person is progressing toward his or her vocational goals.

The ID and BI Waivers, in addition to the State Plan Habilitation program, offer other day services such as day habilitation, home-based habilitation, supported community living, or adult day care for people who do not desire employment or are not working toward employment. For those who are interested in becoming competitively employed, other individualized services such as supported employment, are available to assist in meeting this need.

Iowa’s Department of Human Services (DHS) intent is to ensure that Medicaid members continue to receive services for which they are eligible and based on the identified need of the member. In addition, DHS must assure CMS that service plans are authorized and utilized appropriately through ongoing service plan reviews.

**Q9. If a person with a disability is not on a waiver but wants to work, would they still be able to receive employment training?**

**A:** Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services and IowaWORKS serve Iowans with disabilities who aren’t on Medicaid but need support to work.

## **Questions about expectations and family involvement**

**Q10. What jobs do you expect people with severe disabilities to take when they can't compete with other unemployed people who are more qualified and don't have disabilities?**

**A:** We understand that not everyone will be able to get jobs right away. We also need to start having an expectation – and honoring the career dreams and aspirations of people with disabilities– especially when they include working in the community. We know that a person’s first job is usually not their last job. Customized Employment is an avenue to help carve out or create jobs for people with severe disabilities who may not be able to compete in the same way others compete for jobs. You can learn about Customized Employment at these websites,

<http://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/CustomizedEmployment.htm>

[http://www.griffinhammis.com/customized\\_employ.asp](http://www.griffinhammis.com/customized_employ.asp)

<http://www.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/transition/>

**Q11. How do I convince capable individuals to get out of a sheltered workshop environment into integrated community employment with less favorable hours, when their mentality is "I don't need a job, I have SSI money"? What do I do when parents support this mentality too?**

**A:** Parents may be afraid to try something new; they need to understand the options and how their loved one will be supported. You can do this by providing Benefits Planning early in a person’s life before they get comfortable in a sheltered work environment. Integrated community employment should be their first stop before they are placed in workshops. Funding for these services needs to be available earlier, for this to happen. Benefits Planning is essential to understanding how someone can receive benefits and work. By providing Benefits Planning early, parents will be able to see that their son/daughter will live a better life by earning more and still be able to have what they need. It’s often most powerful for family members to see others’ success stories. Watching someone work in the community is very powerful.

Iowa’s Work Incentive and Self Employment Seminars have produced many successes. Six lowans’ stories are highlighted in two “Success Story” videos, produced by the Iowa Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG). One video features

Iowa wage earners with disabilities, and the other features Iowa business owners with disabilities:

“If Everybody Works-Wage Earners” and “If Everybody Works-New Entrepreneurs” www.iowawins.org

Other stories of Iowans with disabilities who are successful in self-employment can be found at [http://dhs.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/MHDS-Thinking\\_Outside\\_the\\_Employment\\_Box\\_FINAL072914.pdf](http://dhs.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/MHDS-Thinking_Outside_the_Employment_Box_FINAL072914.pdf)

**Q12. Do parents and family members support integrated community employment for their loved ones with disabilities? What about those who have come to rely on facility-based employment for their sons and daughters, what will happen to those folks?**

**A:** Employment in the general workforce is the overwhelming choice for Iowa’s parents of children receiving special education services. A 2009 Department of Education study found that more than 90% of Iowa parents, regardless of their child’s disability, expect them to work in the community after graduating from high school. Many parents are supportive, but they need to be made more aware of the options available. With a change in funding structure and support to providers, we hope to create more choices in our communities. “Systems change” is a slow process, and the change needs to start the day a child with a disability is born. (Iowa Department of Education, Transition Survey 2009)

## **Questions about Providers**

**Q13. How can Iowa’s employment provider agencies lead this change?**

**A:** Community rehabilitation providers throughout Iowa are involved in Employment First conferences, focus group conversations, IA-APSE conferences, activities conducted under our State Employment Leadership Network (SELN) membership, Mental Health and Disability Services Redesign, as well as in the Iowa Coalition for Integrated Employment (ICIE), and the Employment First Leadership State Mentor Program (EFLMP). They provide consultation and data to state leaders.

Employment providers can make sure they hire people with disabilities, have people with disabilities on their board of directors, and ask them to participate in staff recruitment and retention activities. Employment

organizations can stand as a model to other community businesses for how to interact with people with disabilities.

Employment organizations can contribute by sending a consistent message to the community that people with disabilities are competent employees, and valued members of the communities in which they live and work.

**Q14. Is the plan to eliminate the subminimum wages?**

**A:** That is not part of DHS' efforts. However, that is an important topic being discussed across the country, and of course there are strongly held feelings and opinions on both sides of the issue. It is not simply a civil rights issue or simply a business and labor issue; it's complex, with very real implications for persons' lives as well as a businesses' financial well-being.

**Q15. How can we work with Ticket to Work?**

**A:** IVRS can develop Partnership Plus agreements with businesses or agencies interested in becoming an Employment Network (EN). This would allow IVRS to hand-off cases to an EN partner for follow-up services at the time their IVRS case is closed. Benefits Planning services are provided to beneficiaries by IVRS staff to discuss options and incentives available under Ticket to Work. Additionally, IVRS is able to contract for benefits planning services with external vendors as needed.

**Questions that people you serve may have about working**

*These are compliments of Bethel University, St. Paul, Minnesota.*

**Q16. Do I have to disclose to my supervisor if I have a medical condition or disability?**

**A.** No. You do, however, need to make known to your supervisor your needs for accommodation/adjustment resulting from your medical condition or disability. You have the right to self-disclose to those with whom you feel comfortable.

**Q17. What can I do if I believe my supervisor unfairly evaluated my performance in my annual performance review because of my disability?**

**A.** If you believe your performance has been unfairly evaluated because of your disability, you should talk with your supervisor about their appraisal of your

performance to resolve the matter. You may also obtain advice from the company's employee relations office, a union official, or the US Office of Equal Employment Opportunity.

**Q18. I was recently diagnosed with {name illness or disease}. Is that considered a disability?**

**A.** Disability determination is not made by diagnosis alone. The functional limitations associated with your diagnosis are of greater importance in determining whether someone has a "disability" as defined by disability law.

**Q19. What is a "reasonable accommodation"?**

**A.** A reasonable accommodation is an adaptation to the job site or job functions for a person with a disability, to enable them to enjoy equal employment opportunities. However it does not require the employer to lower the work standards or change the job requirements. There are three types of accommodations:

- Modifications to a job application process to permit an individual with a disability to be considered for a job (such as providing application forms in Braille);
- Modifications necessary to enable an individual with a disability to perform the essential functions of the job (such as providing sign language interpreters); and
- Modifications that enable employees with disabilities to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment (such as removing physical barriers in an office cafeteria).

**Q20. I was just diagnosed with a chronic illness, and I'm learning how to cope with my new symptoms. How do I know if there is an accommodation to assist me?**

**A.** Adjustment to a chronic medical diagnosis is challenging. One of those challenges is determining the impact of this condition on your job. You and your team will determine what, if any, reasonable accommodation/ adjustment is suitable, and then facilitate its implementation.

## **Questions about Businesses and Employers**

**Q21. Is the State offering incentives to employers to hire people with disabilities? Businesses need financial incentives to hire. Who provides this?**

**A.** There are incentives available to employers who hire people with disabilities. One example is the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC). Another used frequently by IVRS is On-the-Job Training (OJT). An OJT is a customized program in which a business provides training but other costs (like a stipend) may be covered by IVRS. Some OJT's involve a direct reimbursement of a training wage meaning the employee is hired by the business, but the business is reimbursed up to 50% of the wages during a training period. Additional tax incentives available to employers include tax deductions, such as the Barrier Removal Tax Deduction and/or tax credits like the Small Business Access Tax Credit. Every IVRS office has staff able to discuss incentives available to employers who hire individuals with disabilities (and interested parties).

If Supported Employment Services (SES) are needed to facilitate an individual's employment, IVRS is able to pay a community rehabilitation partner (CRP) to provide these services to a business. IVRS relies on CRPs to help serve job candidates who are most significantly disabled and require SES. Businesses who hire an individual involved in SES derive a benefit in using CRP services (paid in part by IVRS) for training, job coaching and follow-up services.

**Q22. How do I change attitudes of prospective employers?**

**A.** You can connect them with other businesses and employers who have had a good experience employing people with disabilities. You can help educate them that it is "good business": A recent Gallup poll found a strong correlation between companies' diversity efforts and their employees' satisfaction (Bright Hub "Fostering Diversity by Recognizing All the Benefits"<sup>20</sup> . Likewise other research has found that 92% of people view businesses who employ people with disabilities more favorably than those who do not<sup>21</sup> .

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<sup>20</sup> <http://www.brighthouse.com/office/human-resources/articles/90910.aspx>

<sup>21</sup> 2005 study published in the Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, cited at [www.fastcompany.com/3002957/disabled-employee-amendment](http://www.fastcompany.com/3002957/disabled-employee-amendment)

## **Questions case managers or service providers may hear from employers, about hiring people with disabilities.**

*These are compliments of IVRS and the US Office of Personnel Management*

### **Q23. Why should I hire someone with a disability?**

**A.** People with disabilities represent a significant pool of potential applicants who repeatedly get high marks from managers on job related issues. It's good business to hire from a potentially underutilized source of outstanding workers. For more information on the advantages of hiring persons with disabilities, see Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations website at <http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/>

### **Q24. Will employees with disabilities be absent more than employees without disabilities?**

**A.** No. A study by International Telephone and Telegraph of a 2,000-member plant with 125 employees with disabilities found these employees had fewer absences than their co-workers. Sears Credit of West Des Moines, Iowa found their associates with disabilities had above average attendance records.

### **Q25. Will hiring people with disabilities cause my workers compensation rates to rise?**

**A.** No. Workers Compensation rates are based upon injury experience for a company, not upon the composition of the workforce. Given the excellent safety record of people with disabilities, there is no reason to expect rates to increase.

### **Q26. Do employees with disabilities perform as well as employees without disabilities?**

**A.** Yes. According to many employers who've hired people with disabilities, these individuals are motivated, capable and dependable. A local Harris poll found that almost 90% of workers with disabilities received good or excellent performance ratings from their managers.

### **Q27. Do employees with disabilities have good safety records?**

**A.** Yes. National studies find that its employees with disabilities are ranked by supervisors higher on safety issues than their non-disabled peers. U.S. Department of Labor Studies supports this finding.

**Q28. Is it expensive to make adjustments to the workplace for employees with disabilities?**

**A.** Generally, no. In fact, a Harris survey found that nearly 70% of adults with disabilities who are working or are willing to work do not need special equipment or technology. Of those needing accommodation, 20% were at no cost and 51% were less than \$50.00. In addition, there are a number of resources available to employers to assist with accommodations.

**Q29. How do I accommodate a service animal in the office environment?**

**A.** People with disabilities who work in offices have been using service animals successfully for many years. Service animals may accompany a person with a disability to the office, cafeteria, meetings, and on travel. Since service animals are alert to the needs of their owner, it is important not to interfere or distract them while they are working. Most service animals sleep when not providing service and need to have a safe rest area of adequate size located near their owner. The person with a disability should be allowed to provide water and food rewards for their animal. Offices that are already wheelchair accessible usually have wider hallways and doorways that are accessible enough to provide the individual full access while walking with their animal. Individuals with disabilities who use service animals must be allowed time to attend to their basic needs. It is not the responsibility of office colleagues to provide care for the service animal.

**Q30. How do I locate an IVRS office in my area?**

**A.** Please use this link to find the IVRS office nearest you.

<http://www.ivrs.iowa.gov/contactus.html>

**Q31. How can I find out more?**

**A.** Feel free to contact the following staff:

**Iowa Department of Vocational Rehabilitation Services**

Lee Ann Russo

Resource Manager

510 E 12th St., Jessie Parker Bldg.

Des Moines IA 50319

PH 515.281.4144

[leeann.russo@iowa.gov](mailto:leeann.russo@iowa.gov)

**Iowa Department of Human Services, Medicaid:**

LeAnn Moskowitz  
IME Bureau of Long Term Care  
100 Army Post Road  
Des Moines, IA 50315  
PH 515.256.4653  
FAX 515. 725.1360  
[Imoskow@dhs.state.ia.us](mailto:Imoskow@dhs.state.ia.us)

**Iowa Department of Human Services, Mental Health:**

Lin Nibbelink  
Division of MHDS  
Hoover Bldg. 1305 E Walnut St.  
Des Moines IA 50319  
PH 515.281.3023  
FAX 515.242.6036  
[lnibbel@dhs.state.ia.us](mailto:lnibbel@dhs.state.ia.us)

There are many other good questions and answers you may want to look at-- this link from the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is specific to persons with intellectual disabilities:

[http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/types/intellectual\\_disabilities.cfm](http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/types/intellectual_disabilities.cfm)



# Acronyms

AAA	Area Agency on Aging
ABLE	Achieving a Better Life Experience
ACT	Assertive Community Treatment
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
ADD	Administration on Developmental Disabilities (federal)
ADD	Attention Deficit Disorder
ADRC	Aging and Disability Resource Center
APSE	Association for Persons Supporting Employment-1st
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorders
AT	Assistive Technology
ATD	Assistive Technology Device
BI	Brain Injury
CCO	Consumer Choice Option
CDAC	Consumer Directed Attendant Care
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CM	Case Manager
CMS	Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
DD	Developmental Disabilities
DHS	(Iowa) Department of Human Services
DOJ	(U.S.) Department of Justice
DRI	Disability Rights Iowa
E1st	Employment First
EFSLMP	Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program

HCBS	Home and Community Based Services
HoH	Hard of Hearing
ICF	Intermediate Care Facility
ICF/ID	Intermediate Care Facility for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities
ICF/PMI	Intermediate Care Facility for Persons with Mental Illness
ICIE	Iowa Coalition for Integrated Employment
ID	Intellectual Disability
IDB	Iowa Department for the Blind
IDD	Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IDHR	Iowa Department of Human Rights
IEP	Individualized Education Program
IHH	Integrated Health Home
IME	Iowa Medicaid Enterprise
IRWE	Impairment Related Work Expense
ISP	Individualized Service Plan
IT	Information Technology
IVRS	Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services
IWD	Iowa Workforce Development
LD	Learning Disability

ME	Medically Exempt
MEPD	Medicaid for Employed Persons with Disabilities
MFP	Money Follows the Person
MH	Mental Health
MHDS	Mental Health and Disability Services
MI	Mental Illness
MIG	Medicaid Infrastructure Grant
OCTF	Olmstead Consumer Task Force
ODEP	(U.S.) Office of Disability Employment Policy
PASS	Plan to Achieve Self-Support
PD	Physical Disability

PWD	Person with a Disability
SE	Supported Employment
SELN	State Employment Leadership Network
SSA	Social Security Act
SSA	Social Security Administration
SSDI	Social Security Disability Insurance
SSI	Supplemental Security Income
TCM	Targeted Case Management
VR	Vocational Rehabilitation

FINAL 2015 DRAFT

# Appendix A

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## Appendix A: Medicaid Home and Community Based Waivers Habilitation Program Limitations

	State Plan Habilitation Program	Brain Injury Waiver	Intellectual Disability Waiver
<b>Age</b>	No Age Limit	No Age limit	No Age Limit
<b>Target Population</b>	Adults who meet the needs based and risk based criteria	Diagnosis of brain injury per Iowa Administrative Code (IAC) 83 definitions	Primary disability of intellectual disability determined by a psychologist or psychiatrist
<b>Income Financial Eligibility</b>	Eligible for Medicaid and have income below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level	Eligible for Medicaid	Eligible for Medicaid
<b>Level of Care Non-financial eligibility</b>	Meet Need and risk based criteria	Institutional level of Care Nursing facility (NF), skilled nursing facility (SNF), intermediate care facility for persons with intellectual disabilities (ICF/ID)	Institutional level of Care Intermediate Care Facility for Persons with intellectual disabilities (ICF/ID)
<b>Waiver Cost Limitations</b>	See Iowa Plan for Behavioral Health Contractor	\$2,954.00 per month	N/A
<b>Supported Employment Age and Budget Limitations (Individual SE or Group SE)</b>	Age 16 or older \$3,029.62 per month maximum for all Supported Employment services	Age 16 or older \$2,954.00 per month maximum for all Supported Employment services	Age 16 or older \$3,029.62 per month maximum for all Supported Employment services
<b>Individual Supported Employment Service and Limitations (Job Development/ Initial Coaching &amp; Training)</b>	Initial authorization 160 15-minute units per year; if needed an additional 80 15- minute units may be authorized. Not to exceed 240 units per year.	Initial authorization 160 15-minute units per year; if needed an additional 80 15- minute units may be authorized. Not to exceed 240 units per year.	Initial authorization 160 15-minute units per year; if needed an additional 80 15-minute units may be authorized. Not to exceed 240 units per year.
<b>Individual Long Term Job Coaching</b>	Tier 1: Minimum 1 contact/month Tier 2: 2 -8 hours/month Tier 3: 9 -16 hours/month Tier 4: 17-25 hours/month Tier 5: 26 or more hours per month	Tier 1: Minimum 1 contact/month Tier 2: 2 -8 hours/month Tier 3: 9 -16 hours/month Tier 4: 17-25 hours/month Tier 5: 26 or more hours per month	Tier 1: Minimum 1 contact/month Tier 2: 2 -8 hours/month Tier 3: 9 -16 hours/month Tier 4: 17-25 hours/month Tier 5: 26 or more hours per month
<b>Small Group Supported Employment (2-8 individuals)</b>	Maximum 160 15 min units per week	Maximum 160 15 min units per week	Maximum 160 15 min units per week
<b>Prevocational Service and Time Limitations</b>	Age 16 or older New Entrants: 24 calendar months Existing Participants (as of 5/1/16): 90 days after Career Exploration Exceptions apply	Age 16 or older New Entrants: 24 calendar months Existing Participants (as of 5/1/16): 90 days after Career Exploration Exceptions apply	Age 16 or older New Entrants: 24 calendar months Existing Participants (as of 5/1/16): 90 days after Career Exploration Exceptions apply
<b>Prevocational - Career Exploration Activity and limitation</b>	34 hours over a 90 day period of time One authorization unless member leaves and subsequently reenters prevocational services.	34 hours over a 90 day period of time One authorization unless member leaves and subsequently reenters prevocational services.	34 hours over a 90 day period of time One authorization unless member leaves and subsequently reenters prevocational services.

**NEW RULES** regarding Medicaid funded employment services have been filed which include updated and new service definitions, provider qualifications and quality assurance standards, and new reimbursement methodology and rates for services, to align service provision with E1st and CMS standards. See the new rules in draft form (prior to changes made due to comments received) at <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/aco/arc/2114C.pdf>. The definitions below are from the *new* rules.

## Medicaid Employment Service Definitions

**Benefits education** is providing basic information to understand and access appropriate resources to pursue employment and knowledge of work incentives and Medicaid for employed persons with disabilities (MEPD). Gathering information needed to pursue work incentives, and offering basic financial management information to members, families, guardians and legal representative.

**Career Exploration** is a person-centered, comprehensive employment planning and support service that provides assistance for waiver program participants to obtain, maintain or advance in competitive employment or self-employment. It is a focused, time limited service engaging a participant in identifying a career direction and developing a plan for achieving competitive, integrated employment at or above the state's minimum wage. The outcome of this service is documentation of the participant's stated career objective and a career plan used to guide individual employment support.

**Career Plan** is defined a written plan documenting the member's stated career objective and is used to guide individual's employment support services for achieving competitive, integrated employment at or above the state's minimum wage.

**Customized Employment** is an approach to supported employment which means individualizing the employment relationship between employees and employers in ways that meet the needs of both. It is based on an individualized determination of the strengths, needs, and interests of the person with a disability, and is also designed to meet the specific needs of the employer. It may include employment developed through job carving, self-employment or entrepreneurial initiatives, or other job development or restructuring strategies that result in job responsibilities being customized and individually negotiated to fit the needs of individuals with a disability. Customized employment assumes the provision of reasonable accommodations and supports necessary for the individual to perform the functions of a job that is individually negotiated and developed.

**Individual Employment** is employment in the general workforce where the member interacts with the general public to the same degree as non-disabled persons in the same job, and for which the member is paid at or above 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 persons without disabilities.

**Individual Placement and Support** is an evidenced based supported employment model that helps people with mental illness to seek and obtain employment.

**Individual Supported Employment** involves supports provided to, or on behalf of, the member that enable the member to obtain and achieve stabilization in individual employment. Services are provided to members who need support because of their disabilities and who are unlikely to obtain and advance in individual employment absent the provision of supports.

Individual supported employment strategies include but are not limited to: customized employment; individual placement and support, supported self-employment. Service activities are individualized and may include any combination of the following:

- (1) Benefits education
- (2) Career exploration (e.g. tours, informational interviews, job shadows)
- (3) Employment assessment
- (4) Assistive technology assessment
- (5) Trial work experience
- (6) Person-centered employment planning
- (7) Development of visual/traditional resumes
- (8) Job seeking skills training and support
- (9) Outreach to prospective employers on behalf of the member (e.g. job development, negotiation with prospective employers to customize, create or carve a position for the member, employer needs analysis)
- (10) Job analysis (e.g. worksite assessment or job accommodations evaluation)
- (11) Identifying and arranging transportation
- (12) Career advancement services (e.g. assisting a member to make an upward career move or seek promotion from existing employer)
- (13) Re-employment services (if necessary due to job loss)
- (14) Financial Literacy and asset development
- (15) Other employment support services deemed necessary to enable the member to obtain employment
- (16) Systematic instruction and support during initial on-the-job training
- (17) Engagement of natural supports during initial period of employment
- (18) Implementation of assistive technology solutions during initial period of employment
- (19) Transportation during service hours between work sites

**Integrated Community Employment** means work that is performed (including self-employment) for which an individual with a disability is paid at or above minimum wage and not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by employees who are not disabled, where the employee interacts with other persons who are not disabled to the same extent as others who are in comparable positions, and which presents opportunities for advancement that are similar for those employees who are not disabled. In the case of an individual who is self-employed, the business results in an income

that is comparable to the income received by others who are not disabled and who are self-employed in similar occupations.

**Long-Term Job Coaching** is support provided to, or on behalf of, the member that enables the member to maintain an individual job in competitive, customized, or self-employment in an integrated work setting in the general workforce.

Service activities. Long-term job coaching services are designed to assist the member with learning and retaining individual employment, resulting in workplace integration, and independence with co-workers and supervisors, and which allows for the reduction of long-term job coaching over time. Services are individualized and may include any combination of the following activities with or on behalf of the member;

- (1) Job analysis
- (2) Job training and systematic instruction
- (3) Training and support for use of assistive technology/adaptive aids
- (4) Engagement of natural supports
- (5) Transportation coordination
- (6) Job retention training and support
- (7) Benefits planning and on-going support
- (8) Supports for career advancement
- (9) Financial Literacy and asset development
- (10) Employer consultation and support
- (11) Negotiation with employer on behalf of the member (e.g. accommodations, employment conditions, access to natural supports; wage and benefits)
- (12) Other workplace support services including services not specifically related to job skill training that enable the waiver member to be successful in integrating into the job setting
- (13) Transportation during service hours between work sites

**Small Group Supported Employment** services are training and support activities provided in regular business, industry and community settings for groups of two (2) to eight (8) workers with disabilities. The outcome of this service is sustained paid employment experience, skill development, career exploration and planning leading to referral for services to obtain individual integrated employment 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 without disabilities.

Service Activities. Small group supported employment services may include any combination of the following activities:

- (1) Employment assessment
- (2) Person-centered employment planning
- (3) Job placement (limited to service necessary to facilitate hire into individual employment paid at minimum wage or higher for a member in small group supported employment who receives an otherwise unsolicited offer of a job from a business where the member has been working in a mobile crew or enclave)

- (4) Job analysis
- (5) On-the-job training and systematic instruction
- (6) Job coaching
- (7) Transportation planning and training
- (8) Benefits education
- (9) Career planning services leading to career advancement outcomes
- (10) Other workplace support services may include services not specifically related to job skill training that enable the waiver member to be successful in integrating into the individual or community setting
- (11) Transportation during service hours between work sites

**Supported Self-Employment** includes services and supports that assist the participant in achieving self-employment through the operation of a business; however, Medicaid funds may not be used to defray the expenses of starting up or operating a business. Assistance for self-employment may include aid to the individual in identifying potential business opportunities; assistance in the development of a business plan, including potential sources of business financing and other assistance in developing and launching a business; identification of the supports necessary for the individual to operate the business; and ongoing assistance, counseling and guidance once the business has been launched.

**Prevocational Services** means services that provide career exploration, learning and work experiences, including volunteer opportunities, where the member can develop non-job-task-specific strengths and skills that lead to paid employment in individual community settings. Prevocational services include **Career Exploration** activities which are designed to develop a career plan and facilitate the member's experientially based, informed choice regarding the goal of individual employment. Career exploration may be authorized for up to 34 hours, to be completed over a 90-day period in the member's local community or nearby communities and may include but is not limited to the following activities: business tours, informational interviews, job shadows, benefits information, assistive technology assessment, and attendance at career fairs or other job exploration events.

### **Concurrent Services**

A member's individual service plan may include two or more types of non-residential habilitation services (e.g. Individual supported employment, long-term job coaching, small group supported employment, prevocational services, and day habilitation); however, more than one service may not be billed during the same hour.

### **Prevocational Time Limitations**

Prevocational services are intended to lead towards individual employment, per the approved service definition in place in Iowa. **The time limit of 90 days after the completion of Career Exploration only applies to individuals already receiving prevocational services [at the time**

new rules become effective] **and** only applies if the person completes Career Exploration and decided he/she does **not** want to pursue individual community employment. The reason for this time limit is, if an individual makes an informed choice (through the completion of a Career Exploration process) **not** to pursue individual community employment, prevocational services are not appropriate services because the purpose and intended outcome of these services does not fit with the individual's goals. The 90 day period allows sufficient time for the individual to be transitioned into a different service that is more appropriate in relation to the person's goals.

If an **individual, who is already receiving prevocational services [at the time new rules becomes effective], completes Career Exploration and decided s/he **does** want to pursue individual community employment, the 90 day time limit would not typically apply. If any **one** of the following is true, the 90 day time limit would **not** apply:**

1. The member who is in Prevocational Services is also working in either individual or small group community employment for **at least** the number of hours per week desired by the member, as identified in the member's current service plan; or
2. The member who is in Prevocational Services is also working in either individual or small group community employment for **less than** the number of hours per week the member wants, as identified in the member's current service plan and has documented a defined employment goal to increase the number of hours the member is working; or
3. The member is actively engaged in seeking individual or small group community employment or self-employment, and services for this are included in his/her current service plan, or services funded through another identifiable funding source (e.g. IVRS) documented in the member's service plan; and evidence of a plan to obtain individual employment through one of these funding sources is submitted with the request for prior authorization; or
4. The member has requested supported employment services and has been denied and/or placed on a waiting list within the past 24 months by another identifiable funding source (e.g. IVRS); or
5. The member has been receiving supported employment service for at least 12 of the past 24 months without obtaining individual or small-group employment, and evidence of this is submitted with the request for prior authorization; or
6. The member is participating in career exploration activities as described in subparagraph 78.27(9)"a"(1)

**For individuals not receiving prevocational services [at the time the new rules become effective], the time limit for prevocational services is 24 months. This time limit can be extended if any of the above six situations apply.** The 24 month time limit should be sufficient for individuals who wish to participate in Project Search or similar internship programs as part of prevocational services. If an extension of prevocational services is needed to complete Project Search, the member should begin actively seeking individual community employment or individual self-employment no later than 24 months after prevocational services starts so the exception #3 noted above would apply. Note that Project Search should not result in small group community employment as that is inconsistent with the Project Search philosophy and approach.

# Appendix B



## Appendix B: Medicaid HCBS Consumer Choices Option (CCO)

Iowa HCBS Programs offer the **Consumer Choices Option (CCO)** which gives members the opportunity to convert available HCBS services to a monthly budget. Using the CCO budget, the member can then purchase goods and services to assist in meeting their employment goals.

HCBS Services by Program that can be Converted to a CCO Monthly Individual Budget	Brain Injury Waiver	Health and Disability Waiver	Intellectual Disability Waiver	Physical Disability Waiver	How the Service can support community-integrated employment
<b>CDAC</b>	X	X	X	X	This service could be used to meet an individual's personal care assistance needs while on the job such as mealtime assistance, personal hygiene, repositioning and ambulation.
<b>Day Habilitation</b>	N/A	N/A	X	N/A	This service could be used to develop community connections that may lead to employment such as volunteering, networking, attending job fairs.
<b>Home/Vehicle Modifications</b>	X	X	X	X	This service helps make the member's home and/or vehicle accessible.
<b>Prevocational Services</b>	X	N/A	X	N/A	This service may be used to provide career exploration that would lead to discovery of the person's interests, skills and goals. Activities could include networking, attending job fairs to learn about the job market, visiting workforce development office.
<b>Respite: Basic Individual</b>	X	X	X	N/A	This service is intended to give the caregiver a break. If the caregiver directs it, the Respite provider could assist the member to develop community connections, to explore jobs, network, identify employers who are hiring, pick up applications if this is what the primary caregiver would do with the member.
<b>Specialized Medical Equipment</b>	X	N/A	N/A	X	This service could be used to purchase specialized medical equipment that is used in the home and on the job when not covered by the employer reasonable accommodations.
<b>Supported Community Living (SCL)</b>	X	N/A	X	N/A	This service could be used to transport the member to & from work, assist them to make community connections

HCBS Services by Program that can be Converted to a CCO Monthly Individual Budget	Brain Injury Waiver	Health and Disability Waiver	Intellectual Disability Waiver	Physical Disability Waiver	How the Service can support community-integrated employment
					through volunteerism, and networking.
<b>Supported Employment (SE)</b>	<b>X</b>	N/A	<b>X</b>	N/A	<p>This service could be used to transport the member to and from work, assist the member with identifying their employment goals and desires as well as skill evaluation, work with employers on behalf of the job seeker and provide ongoing assistance on the job.</p> <p>Job development uses assessment information about the strengths and interests of the person seeking employment to target the types of jobs available from potential employers in the local labor market. Typical job development activities include reviewing local employment opportunities and developing potential employers/ customers through direct and indirect promotional strategies.</p>
<b>Transportation</b>	<b>X</b>	N/A	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	This service may be used to transport the person to and from work, to pick up and drop off job applications, to apply for jobs, and to go to and from job interviews.

Please visit the Consumer Choice Option (CCO) homepage at: <http://dhs.iowa.gov/ime/members/medicaid-a-to-z/consumer-choices-option>

# Appendix C



## Appendix C: IVRS Services

### Service Item

Apprenticeship training  
Assessment services  
Assistive Technology  
Benefits Counseling  
Career Exploration services  
Consumer/family education and training  
Counseling and Guidance  
Customized Employment services  
Diagnosis and Treatment  
Disability-related training  
Discovery Services  
Employer Development  
Information and Referral  
Interpreter services  
Job Coaching  
Job Development  
Job Readiness training  
Job Shadowing  
Job Search activities  
Job Seeking Skills training  
Occupational Skills Training  
On-the-job supports  
On-the-job training  
Personal Assistant services  
Post-Secondary Training  
Remedial/Literacy training  
Restoration services  
Self-Employment services  
Supported Employment  
Transportation services - Non-medical transportation  
for school, work and community participation  
Transportation training  
Vocational Evaluation services  
Work Adjustment training



# Appendix D



## Appendix D: Iowa Department for the Blind, Services

The Iowa Department for the Blind is responsible for providing most of the services lowans who are blind or visually impaired need to live independently and work competitively. Its mission is to be the means for persons who are blind or visually impaired to obtain for themselves universal access and full participation as citizens in whatever roles they may choose.

Because the Department is funded primarily through state and federal tax dollars, most of the services are provided to eligible lowans at no cost to them.

### Department services and programs include:

#### •Vocational Rehabilitation Program

- Training to help individuals achieve the vocational goals they have selected
- Assessment, demonstration, and training in the Assistive Technology Resource Center
- Job placement services
- Rehabilitation technology services
- Post-employment follow up

#### •Independent Living Program

The Independent Living (IL) program serves individuals with vision loss caused by a condition that cannot be corrected with glasses and has affected the person's ability to complete daily activities such as driving, reading the mail, dialing a telephone, cooking safely and more. Individuals served under this program do not wish to

pursue paid employment and are at least age 55 or have other disabilities in combination with their vision loss. Rehabilitation Teachers in the IL program travel throughout the state to help individuals obtain the skills needed to live independently and participate in family and community life

#### •Adult Orientation and Adjustment Center

The Orientation Center is a residential training program for adults who are blind or visually impaired. Located in Des Moines, the Center provides in-depth, individualized blindness training to students so that they can return to their home communities to live independently and work competitively in the careers they choose. Students receive training in four areas:

- Development of self-confidence
- Blindness skills
- Job readiness
- Public education

#### •Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

The Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped provides reading materials free of charge to lowans who cannot use standard print because of blindness, physical disability, or reading disability. The library:

- Circulates books and magazines on cassette tape, in Braille, and in large print to eligible borrowers throughout the state. The Library maintains a collection of over 88,000 book titles and makes available to its borrowers over 120 different

magazines. Because the Library is a cooperating member of the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS), its borrowers have access to all NLS services.

- Transcribes print materials into Braille and recorded formats. Employment-related, educational, and leisure materials not already available in alternative media are transcribed upon request. The Library also transcribes other magazines and books appropriate for its collection.
- Acquires instructional and employment materials for students and workers. The Library's instructional Materials Center (IMC) locates textbooks and other educational materials for Iowa's K-12 and college students who cannot use standard print. The IMC also locates job-related materials for employed Iowans for whom standard print is not an option.
- Provides independent access to the Library's collection through the On-Line Public Access Catalog (OPAC). Linked to the Department's web site, OPAC allows borrowers to search the Library's collection, select books, and put them on reserve.
- Circulates videos enhanced with audio descriptions. These videos range in subject from popular movies to documentaries and in audience from children to adults.

#### •Business Enterprises Program

The Business Enterprises Program (BEP) provides opportunities for legally blind clients of the Vocational Rehabilitation program to manage their own businesses.

These blind entrepreneurs manage a wide variety of food-service operations, including restaurants, coffee bars, vending locations, highway rest area vending sites, and catering. These businesses can be found at federal, state, county, municipal, and private locations throughout Iowa.

#### •Aids & Devices Store

Located at the Department's central office in Des Moines, the Aids & Devices Store sells adapted items useful to persons who are blind or visually impaired. White canes, Braille and talking watches and clocks, Braille-writing equipment, magnifiers, measuring devices, Braille and large-print playing cards, games, cooking and sewing aids, and other items are available.

#### •Public Education and In-Service Training

Because it is important to educate the public about blindness and the competence of people who are blind, the Department is eager to participate in public education activities. The Department can make arrangements to:

- Give presentations about the Department's services and blindness to schools, churches, civic organizations, and other interested groups.
- Provide in-service training about the Department's services and blindness skills to care centers, community rehabilitation programs, and other community service providers.
- Participate in fairs, expos, displays, and other public events

# Appendix E



## Appendix E: Resource Sharing between Iowa Medicaid and Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services

### Resource Sharing for Employment Services

People are more likely to succeed in employment when funding and services available through both IVRS and Medicaid are shared. Each program has limitations but together they can provide holistic support for someone with a disability who wants to find and keep community-integrated employment.

The following *Resource Sharing* document was developed between IVRS and the DHS/Iowa Medicaid Enterprise in January of 2015. This “cheat sheet” is the result of a collaborative effort by both agencies to satisfy the requirement each had to explore “comparable benefits and services” and address the “payer of last resort” issue.

By establishing this **Resource Sharing** document, IVRS and DHS/IME have outlined their respective funding obligations when paying for Supported Employment Services (SES) for a mutual client served by both agencies. The document has been updated to reflect the new (2014) IVRS policy to fund the necessary employment services (including Supported Employment Services when needed) to help an eligible individual with a disability **under the age of 24** to get a community-integrated job paying at least minimum wage.

The *Resource Sharing* document also outlines procedural information for individuals on a DHS/IME waiver waiting list who are eligible to be served by IVRS, including options for long-term follow-up services if waiver services are not immediately available.

#### Some additional rules of thumb to be aware of:

- Individuals can receive State Plan Habilitation or Waiver funded services (including employment services) during the same time period that IVRS is also providing services to them as long as the services provided through State Plan Habilitation or Waiver do not duplicate the services provided by IVRS.
- When IVRS closes a case for someone enrolled in State Plan Habilitation or a Waiver, the person may have a need for on-going supports to maintain their integrated community employment. The IVRS Counselor is expected to inform you in advance of the case closure date so that you can submit a timely request for prior authorization for the services that may be needed. **There should be no gap in the availability of supports.** A gap could jeopardize the person’s ability to maintain his/her job; therefore, this should be avoided at all costs.

**Appendix E: Resource Sharing**  
**Between DHS and IVRS for Supported Employment Services**

This document explains how Supported Employment Services (SES) are funded for mutual job candidates who are eligible for both **IVRS** Services and **DHS State Plan HABILITATION or WAIVER** Services. Funding which is sequenced between **IVRS** and **DHS HABILITATION OR WAIVER** for SES depends on whether an individual is on or off a waiting list, their age, and the service responsibilities agreed to by each agency.

**SES for individuals under age 24 (IVRS)**

Effective 11/13/14, for job candidates under age 24 who are eligible for both **IVRS** and **DHS State Plan HABILITATION or WAIVER** and who require Supported Employment Services, **IVRS** implemented a **Memorandum of Agreement** with **DHS** to establish IVRS as the payer of first resort for individualized services necessary to obtain and stabilize in integrated community employment. Services can include any of the following:

Job Development	Customized Employment	Job Coaching **
<p><b>IVRS</b>  <b>15 minute units:</b>  <b>\$16.37/unit</b>            Initial authorization: 160 units with one extension of 80 units, not to exceed 240 units</p> <p><b>\$65.48/hour</b>            Up to 40 hours with one extension of 20 hours, not to exceed 60 hours total</p>	<p><b>IVRS</b>  <b>15 minute units:</b>  <b>\$16.37/unit</b> as part of SES to negotiate with employer up to 40 units</p> <p><b>\$65.48/hour</b>            Up to ten hours</p>	<p><b>IVRS</b>  <b>15 minute units:</b>  <b>\$11.18/unit</b> based on the number of hours a job candidate works - to be negotiated between IVRS and team for up to a two month period of time.</p> <p><b>\$44.72/hour</b>            Up to 120 hours</p>

**There is no requirement that people must get a job of at least 10 hours a week in order to receive services to obtain a job from IVRS. IVRS cases in which a job candidate works less than 10 hours a week require an explanation of why this individual cannot work more than 10 hours and supervisory review/approval prior to closure.**

The MOA between **DHS** and **IVRS** is found on this link:  
<http://www.ivrs.iowa.gov/partners/MOAFORDHSEIVRSAugust262014.pdf>

**\*\*NOTE: THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN IVRS AND THE DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION TAKES PRECEDENCE OVER THIS DHS AGREEMENT FOR STUDENTS IN TRANSITION RECEIVING SES UNDER AN IEP!**

### SES for individuals age 24 and above (DHS/IVRS)

Effective 11/13/14 for job candidates age 24 and above, the **WAIVER** pays for Job Development, and Job Coaching. **IVRS** funds may pay for Customized Employment and employment services not listed (Discovery, Workplace Readiness Assessment, etc.). IVRS also supplements **WAIVER** funds providing Job Development as deemed necessary, such as when **WAIVER** funds end. This is in accordance with the Memorandum of Agreement with **DHS** and **IVRS**.

Job Development	Customized Employment	Job Coaching
<p><b>State Plan HABILITATION or WAIVER (T2018)</b></p> <p>15 minute units: \$16.36/unit Initial authorization: 160 units Limit 240 units per calendar year.</p>	<p><b>IVRS</b></p> <p><b>15 minute units: \$16.37/unit</b> as part of SES to negotiate with employer up to 40 units</p> <p><b>\$65.48/hour</b> Up to ten hours</p>	<p><b>State Plan Habilitation or WAIVER (H2025)</b></p> <p>Unit = One Month Payment varies depending on amount of support needed: Tier 0: Minimum 1 contact/month Payment = \$67/month Tier 1: 2 -8 hours support/month Payment = \$358/month Tier 2: 9-16 hours support/month Payment = \$715/month Tier 3:17-24 hours support/month Payment = \$1,073/month Exception = 25 or more hours support/month Payment: Hourly @ \$44.71/hour</p>

**There is no requirement that people must get a job of at least 10 hours a week in order to receive services to obtain a job from IVRS. IVRS cases in which a job candidate works less than 10 hours a week require an explanation of why this individual cannot work more than 10 hours and supervisory review/approval prior to closure.**

Additional SES information can be found in the 2015 **Menu of Services Manual** on this link: <http://www.ivrs.iowa.gov/partners/partners.html>

**SES for IVRS-Eligible Individuals Waiting for WAIVER**

A job candidate eligible for IVRS who is waiting for services from WAIVER can be served by IVRS.

Until WAIVER funds are available, IVRS may fund all SES employment services which may include Job Development, Customized Employment and Job Coaching. (See table below). Services for SES are authorized by IVRS until the time WAIVER funds become available. If/when that occurs, IVRS would cancel any unused authorization(s) for remaining services so that WAIVER funding could begin, except in IVRS cases involving SES for individuals under age 24.

**SES for IVRS-Eligible Individuals Ineligible for State Plan HABILITATION or WAIVER**

For IVRS-eligible job candidates who do not qualify for State Plan HABILITATION or WAIVER, IVRS may fund all SES employment services which can include Job Development, Customized Employment and Job Coaching. (See table below).

Job Development	Customized Employment	Job Coaching
<p><b>IVRS</b>  <b>15 minute units:</b>  <b>\$16.37/unit</b>                      Initial authorization: 160 units with one extension of 80 units, not to exceed 240 units</p> <p><b>\$65.48/hour</b>                      Up to 40 hours with one extension of 20 hours, not to exceed 60 hours</p>	<p><b>IVRS</b>  <b>15 minute units:</b>  <b>16.37/unit</b> as part of SES to negotiate with employer up to 40 units</p> <p><b>\$65.48/hour</b>                      Up to ten hours</p>	<p><b>IVRS</b>  <b>15 minute units:</b>  <b>\$11.18/unit</b> based on the number of hours a job candidate works - to be negotiated between IVRS and team for up to a two month period of time.</p> <p><b>\$44.72/hour</b>                      Up to 120 hours</p>

Identified source for long-term job coaching services, to the extent needed by the individual, is required for IVRS Supported Employment Services. Funding (or sources) to provide these services can include county funding, natural supports, PASS, IRWE, MH worker, Independent Living, or other no-cost resources. The source providing long-term job coaching, to the extent needed by the individual, is identified on the IVRS Plan for Employment (IPE) and SES Placement Agreement (Section IV. of Employment Analysis form). A plan for natural supports requires a detailed description of how the natural support will be trained and the agreement on how to connect with the long-term provider when difficulties arise requiring more continued involvement by the CRP.

# Appendix F



[www.apse.org](http://www.apse.org) "APSE is the only national organization with an exclusive focus on integrated employment and career advancement opportunities for individuals with disabilities. APSE is a growing national non-profit membership organization, founded in 1988 and is now known as Association of People Supporting EmploymentFirst (APSE)."



### **APSE Statement on Employment First**

*Employment in the general workforce is the first and preferred outcome in the provision of publicly funded services for all working age citizens with disabilities, regardless of level of disability.*

#### **Underlying Principles**

- The current low participation rate of citizens with disabilities in the workforce is unacceptable.
- Access to “real jobs with real wages” is essential if citizens with disabilities are to avoid lives of poverty, dependence, and isolation.
- It is presumed that all working age adults and youths with disabilities can work in jobs fully integrated within the general workforce, working side-by-side with co-workers without
- disabilities, earning minimum wage or higher.
- As with all other individuals, employees with disabilities require assistance and support to ensure job success and should have access to those supports necessary to succeed in the workplace.
- All citizens, regardless of disability, have the right to pursue the full range of available employment opportunities, and to earn a living wage in a job of their choosing, based on their talents, skills, and interests.
- Implementation of Employment First principles must be based on clear public policies and practices that ensure employment of citizens with disabilities within the general workforce is the priority for public funding and service delivery.
- Inclusion or exclusion of the specific term “Employment First” does not determine whether a public system or agency has adopted Employment First principles. Such a determination can only be made in examining whether the underlying policies, procedures and infrastructure are designed for and ultimately result in increased integrated employment in the general workforce for citizens with disabilities.

### **Characteristics of Successful Implementation of Employment First**

- There are measurable increases in employment of citizens with disabilities within the general workforce, earning minimum wage or higher with benefits.
- Greater opportunities exist for citizens with disabilities to pursue self-employment and the development of microenterprises.
- Employment is the first and preferred option when exploring goals and a life path for citizens with disabilities.
- Citizens with disabilities are employed within the general workforce, regardless of the severity of disability and assistance required.
- Young people with disabilities have work experiences that are typical of other teenagers and young adults.
- Employers universally value individuals with disabilities as an integral part of their workforce, and include people with disabilities within general recruitment and hiring efforts as standard practice.
- Individuals with disabilities have increased incomes, financial assets, and economic wealth.
- Citizens with disabilities have greater opportunities to advance in their careers, by taking full advantage of their individual strengths and talents.
- Funding is sufficient so that quality services and supports are available as needed for longterm employment success.
- A decision not to consider employment in the community for an individual is re-evaluated on a regular basis; the reasons and rationale for this decision are fully documented and addressed in service provision.

Adopted by the APSE Executive Board on October 11, 2010.

# Appendix G



[www.tash.org](http://www.tash.org) "TASH advocates for human rights and inclusion for people with significant disabilities and support needs.... TASH works to advance inclusive communities through advocacy, research, professional development, policy, and information and resources for parents, families and self-advocates."



## What Matters Most:

### Research on Elevating Parent Expectations

TASH Town Hall, December 2014

Erik W. Carter

As I read the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (2004), my short paraphrase of the central purpose of special education is that our primary charge is to equip young people with disabilities to flourish after high school. This is at the very heart of why we send students to school for up to 21 or 22 years.

So let me begin with a provocative statement:

**The most powerful force** in changing transition outcomes for young people with significant disabilities is not ultimately found in the transition plans we craft, the educational services we offer, the instruction we provide, or the systems we build, but rather in the expectations and aspirations individual parents hold for their sons and daughters. All of these other efforts are no doubt essential, but absent families equipped with a clear and compelling vision for a "good life" after high school, we are missing something utterly essential.

Put simply, efforts to change the post-school landscape must include a heavy investment in equipping families to hold high expectations from an early age, to aspire toward and advocate for enviable outcomes after high school, and to share this vision with every person whose life intersects with the lives of their sons and daughters.

Such a statement should not be at all surprising to this audience. Parents have long assumed the roles of allies and advocates—for their own children and for others traveling a similar road. It is not an overstatement to say that our field—and this organization called TASH—exists because of parents who held a different set of expectations for their sons and daughters that fundamentally challenged prevailing views of what was possible.

Which brings me to my role on this panel. My charge is to emphasize the very strong empirical support for making an investment in elevating parent expectations. And to affirm that what we intuitively know to be so important actually does make a noticeable difference in the lives of young people.

### Research on Parent Expectations

In a recent study (Carter, Austin, & Trainor, 2012), my colleagues and I analyzed data from a nationally representative, longitudinal study involving more than 11,000 youth in all 13 special education categories. Our interest was in pinpointing which

student, family, school, and community factors predicted the early post-school employment outcomes of young adults with significant disabilities. And so we focused our attention on the subset of students with intellectual disability, autism, or multiple disabilities who were eligible for the alternate assessment and/or who had lower ratings on a set of

questions related to functional skills. We carefully considered a number of factors during high school that might influence whether or not students were working for pay in the community during the first two years after high school. And what we learned surprised us.

We found that young adults with significant disabilities whose parents definitely expected them to obtain post-school work way back in high school were more than five times as likely to have paid, community employment within two years after exiting. When other factors were combined into our model, parent expectations still increased the odds of post-school employment more than three-fold. The unexpected finding was that these expectations

**Efforts to change the post-school landscape must include a heavy investment in equipping families to hold high expectations from an early age, to aspire toward and advocate for enviable outcomes after high school, and to share this vision with every person whose life intersects with the lives of their sons and daughters.**

were a stronger predictor than anything else we examined—student demographics; the social, communication, and independence skills youth possessed; even access to school programs and transition experiences. Do you want to more than triple the odds that students will find a place to share their gifts and talents in the workplace? Focus on the expectations parents hold long before graduation day.

Other studies echo these findings with other groups of students with disabilities and other transition outcome areas. For example, Bonnie Doren and her colleagues (2013) found that parent expectations predicted not only work, but also graduation rates and postsecondary education enrollment for students with high-incidence disabilities.

So what are the aspirations parents hold as they relate to their child's life after high school? In Tennessee, we are in the midst of a five-year systems change project (Carter & McMillan, 2014). And we considered it critical early on to understand what these parental expectations are, to learn what shapes them, and to invest heavily in elevating them.

Over the past 10 months, we have been carrying out a statewide study that has thus far involved more than 2,300 parents living in almost every county in our state. Parents with sons and daughters of all ages served under the special education categories of intellectual disability, autism, and multiple disabilities. Here is what they are telling us.

More than 80% of parents of school-age children with disabilities say they consider it somewhat or very important for their son or daughter to work for real pay, part- or full-time, in the community. Yet only about two thirds (64%) actually expect this to happen. These numbers are almost double those of parents who consider sheltered employment to be an important and likely outcome. The short take-away: More and more parents are aiming for integrated, community employment. A similar portrait emerged in the area of postsecondary education. And so we likewise have to aim our services and supports—both formal and informal—at these inclusive post-school experiences.

### What Do We Know?

Before mentioning a few possible points of influence, let me share some reflections on important aspects of these expectations.

1. **Expectations are formed early and over time.** Waiting until high school to begin casting and supporting a vision of post-school college and careers simply means waiting too late. Early messages—including those heard at first diagnosis and throughout elementary school—can often be “course shifting.”
2. **Expectations shape experiences.** The expectations parents hold influence the types of early exposure and experiences provided to children with significant disabilities. With particular post-school goals in mind, parents may be more likely to require household responsibilities, have conversations about future careers, involve their child in extracurricular and community activities, advocate for rigorous learning opportunities at school, and connect their child to early volunteer and work experiences. All of this takes place long before transition planning emerges at age 14 or 16.
3. **Experiences also shape expectations. The influence is bidirectional.** Involving students in general education courses, hands-on work experiences, and other inclusive activities may help parents (along with others in the community) catch a first glimpse of what might be possible when their child is provided the right opportunities, supports, and encouragement. Particularly when they have seen few other examples of other young people with disabilities involved in these ways.
4. **Expectations are influenced by opportunities and supports.** Expectations tend to dip as families approach the “post-school precipice” and all that can be seen is waiting lists, segregated services, and eligibility requirements. And so these transition years do become all the more critical to work to align services and supports to high expectations, rather than letting expectations re-align to prevailing services and supports. We must make sure we get the direction of the pull right.



## Where Should We Go?

With limited time, let me conclude with four modest suggestions for where we might invest in this area of our work.

1. **We must connect families with ordinary examples of what is possible.** Too often, our parents have seen few examples of young people with significant disabilities working, going to college, or contributing in other ways within their community. Whether by linking parents to families who are a little further along in this journey or showing “success stories” of how others have made it happen, new portraits of possibilities get formed. In our state, for example, we are creating print and video-based “success stories” that illustrate how other Tennessee families are navigating these issues. All can be found at [www.tennesseeworks.org](http://www.tennesseeworks.org). Parents need avenues through which to hear from other parents.
2. **We must invest in expectations.** It strikes me as unethical to encourage parents to catch a vision and pursue it with vigor only to withhold the very services and supports needed to make it happen. An overarching theme of this town hall is that we need a much greater investment in transition if we have any chance of changing the post-school landscape. I absolutely agree.
3. **We must catch and communicate a collective vision.** Parent aspirations are powerful, but so are the expectations of educators, employers, service providers, members of faith-based organizations, community leaders, and youth themselves. Indeed, every child with a significant disability in every state should hear the message from multiple sources—that they have something of value to contribute within the workplace and something essential they bring to their community.
4. **Finally, we must let parent expectations challenge ours.** There is a tension here we must release. Professionals are sometimes reluctant to encourage parents to “hope large” because it ultimately will require us to do things differently, demand us to invest differently. We must be willing to let families show us what is possible when their vision exceeds our own. Indeed this is how the field has always moved forward fastest.

Thank you for investing your time in this town hall. And for your work on behalf of young people with significant disabilities and their families.

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## About the Author

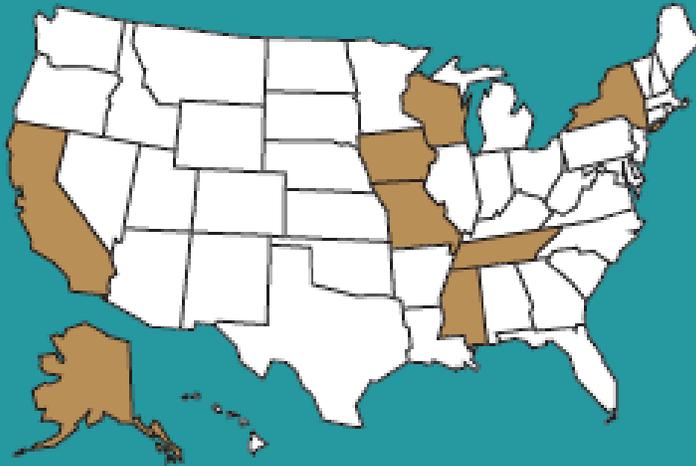
Erik Carter, PhD, FAIDD, is a Professor in the Department of Special Education at Vanderbilt University and a Vanderbilt Kennedy Center



Investigator. His research and teaching focuses on evidence-based strategies for supporting access to the general curriculum and promoting valued roles in school, work, and community settings for children and adults with intellectual disability, autism, and multiple disabilities. He is the the Co-Principal Investigator of the Tennessee Works Partnerships in Employment Systems Change Project.



# partnerships in employment



Projects are occurring in eight states:

- Alaska
- California
- Iowa
- Mississippi
- Missouri
- New York
- Tennessee
- Wisconsin

[www.partnershipsinemployment.com](http://www.partnershipsinemployment.com)

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# Appendix H



## Qualities of a High-Performing Case Manager



For the past year, the State Employment Leadership Network has been hosting a series of online events about the role case managers can play in improving employment outcomes for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

The role of the case manager/support coordinator is changing and becoming more complex. Case management requires knowledge and expertise in many areas, and community-based employment is just one of them.

An effective case manager/services/supports coordinator must demonstrate new competencies to meet community-based employment outcomes. The recent SELN online series, including the September 23, 2014 session, provides an overview of these competencies and examples of best practices of high-performing case managers/support coordinators. You may view the recording and materials, as well as past sessions, at:

<http://selnmembers.org/webinars/casemanagement>

The State Employment Leadership Network (SELN) is a cross-state cooperative venture of state intellectual and developmental disabilities that are committed to improving employment outcomes for adolescents and adults with developmental disabilities. SELN online discussions are chosen based on conversations with individual member states, as well as high profile and critical issues circulating around the country. Summary documents provide an overview of the sessions and highlight the resources available and knowledge required to achieve best practices.

The SELN is a joint program of the Institute for Community Inclusion at UMass Boston and the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services.



[www.seln.org](http://www.seln.org)

## Key takeaways:

Today's case managers and service/support coordinators:

- ❖ Recognize that families are the nation's true long-term care systems of support. Case managers must partner with and rely on families by cultivating trust and open communication. Presenting new ideas may take time and might be rejected many times before the ideas are accepted into a family's culture.
- ❖ Understand challenges to community-based employment for people with IDD, including difficulty navigating available resources, which system provides which services, and a local community's cultural attitudes and biases.
- ❖ Listen, interpret, and assimilate the information gathered day to day with individuals and families. Person-centered thinking is evident in all activities with the individual.
- ❖ Emphasize specific and concrete employment goals in the individual service plan (ISP), and uses tools to discover an individual's needs and interests and to plan long-term objectives. These tools include relationship mapping, communication charts, and learning logs.
- ❖ Have a basic understanding of work incentives and Social Security benefits, and know where to point families and individuals to delve deeper into the specifics and details.

State IDD agencies depend upon strong case managers/service coordinators to improve employment outcomes. Therefore, agency leaders must hire people who believe in and are committed to employment for all individuals with disabilities. These staff members must also be able to build relationships, network, negotiate, and manage conflict.

To ensure that case managers are successful, organizations should orient and train new staff, and provide ongoing professional development opportunities. With this support, staff members can build upon their current skills and learn new best practices in the field.

## Raising Awareness & Providing Education Around the Value of Employment



For the past year, the State Employment Leadership Network has been hosting a series of online events about the role case managers/support coordinators can play in improving employment outcomes for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

The role of the case manager/support coordinator is changing and becoming more complex. Case management requires knowledge and expertise in many areas, and community-based employment is just one of them.

An effective case manager/services/supports coordinator must demonstrate new competencies to meet community-based employment outcomes. The session on October 30, 2014 reviewed different communication strategies and provided tips on how to build those skills. You may view the recording and materials, as well as past sessions, at <http://selnmembers.org/webinars/casemanagement>.

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The SELN is a joint program of the Institute for Community Inclusion at UMass Boston and the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services.



NASDDDS

[www.seln.org](http://www.seln.org)

### Key takeaways:

- ◆ The message that needs to be communicated is simple and universal: everyone has the right to, and can, work in the community, regardless of disability type and severity.
- ◆ The case manager/support coordinator understands that different approaches must be used with agencies, employers, or individuals to meet unique needs.
- ◆ Successful communication strategies to share the core message about work use multiple approaches. These may include training and community forums, social media, printed materials, or public service announcements. Before implementation, review current modes of communication to evaluate their effectiveness.
- ◆ Allow stories of real people working in the community to deliver the message. Success stories offer hope and give inspiration. Put them on your website or other distribution outlets.
- ◆ Plug the role of employment in people's lives wherever you can. Mention it at every meeting, in guides, and when exploring future goals with people with disabilities and their families. Use the success stories to convey the creative options used by others. Culturally and generationally, having a job is the "new norm" for people with disabilities, and support staff play a role in outlining what this can and should look like.
- ◆ Raise awareness with individuals and their families through conversations. Case managers/support coordinators should express high expectations about employment, communicate that work is fundamental to earning the means to exercise our freedoms, and emphasize that everyone has the right to work in the community. Conversations about jobs should start at a young age.

## Qualities of a High-Performing Case Manager



For the past year, the State Employment Leadership Network has been hosting a series of online events about the role case managers can play in improving employment outcomes for people with Intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

The role of the case manager/support coordinator is changing and becoming more complex. Case management requires knowledge and expertise in many areas, and community-based employment is just one of them.

An effective case manager/services/supports coordinator must demonstrate new competencies to meet community-based employment outcomes. The session on December 2, 2014 emphasized the importance of earning income through work and understanding the impact of working on public benefits. See the attached word doc. You may view the recording and materials, as well as past sessions, at:

[www.selnmembers.org/events/casemanagement](http://www.selnmembers.org/events/casemanagement)

### Key takeaways

#### Today's case managers and service/support coordinators:

- ❖ Explain that there are various work rules and incentives to help people try and work while protecting their benefits. These rules are complicated, but before people can make a decision about working, they need to understand the big picture.
- ❖ Make sure clients see the potential monetary benefits of employment, which can be a path to long-term financial well-being.
- ❖ Convey the message that work has value beyond a paycheck. A job increases autonomy and choice, improves self-esteem, and promotes skills development. Working also facilitates social connections.
- ❖ Understand that earnings and benefits are not an either/or choice. Articulate the ways individuals can generally maintain necessary benefits while they are adjusting to working and earning a paycheck.
- ❖ Identify some potential work incentive opportunities that could fit the individual's needs.
- ❖ Remain honest and transparent. You don't need to have all the answers, and you shouldn't make guarantees. But reassure the person that you can connect them to resources that will help them make informed decisions about working.
- ❖ Provide individuals and families with a clear and consistent message about the importance of work. While earned income from work may have an impact on public benefits, it is important to realize the potential for the combination of the two to generate a higher total monthly income. The only path out of poverty and toward financial well-being is through employment. A life surviving on benefits means the person will never get ahead—they'll just get by.
- ❖ Build awareness of and a relationship to local benefits specialists, ideally certified work incentive coordinators/specialists.
- ❖ Know that aspects of benefits management vary by state, and people moving from out of state will need assistance ensuring everything is in order.
- ❖ Understand how benefits may fluctuate over time, based on earnings and other circumstances. Benefits specialists can help the individual determine when to seek reinstatement, when to reapply, and how changes in income or other status impact benefits and adjustments that need to be made.

## Terms to be familiar with:

❖ **PASS (Plan for Achieving Self Support)**

[www.ssa.gov/disabilityresearch/wi/pass.htm](http://www.ssa.gov/disabilityresearch/wi/pass.htm)

Plan for Achieving Self Support is an earned income and resource exclusion that allows a person who is disabled or blind to set aside income and/or resources to reach an occupational goal. (Applies to SSI).

❖ **IRWE (Impairment Related Work Expense)**

[www.ssa.gov/ssi/spotlights/spot-work-expenses.htm](http://www.ssa.gov/ssi/spotlights/spot-work-expenses.htm)

Impairment Related Work Expenses allow an individual to deduct certain work-related items and services that are needed to enable the beneficiary to work. The cost of expenses must be paid out of pocket with the income earned, not paid by some other agency providing services. (Applies to SSDI and SSI).

❖ **SGA (Substantial Gainful Activity)**

[www.ssa.gov/redbook/eng/definedisability.htm#a0-1](http://www.ssa.gov/redbook/eng/definedisability.htm#a0-1)

Substantial Gainful Activity is the performance of paid work in which countable income exceeds SGA per month. This monthly SGA amount will change annually based on the national wage index.

❖ **SSDI (Social Security Disability Insurance)**

[www.ssa.gov/planners/disability/](http://www.ssa.gov/planners/disability/)

Social Security Disability Insurance is a program under Title II of the Social Security Act. It is a cash benefit program for individuals who have worked and paid into F.I.C.A. (Federal Insured Contribution Act) and who meet the medical eligibility criteria and the SGA Test.

More definitions are available on the Social Security Administration's online glossary:

[www.ssa.gov/redbook/eng/glossary.htm](http://www.ssa.gov/redbook/eng/glossary.htm)

The State Employment Leadership Network (SELN) is a cross-state cooperative venture of state intellectual and developmental disabilities that are committed to improving employment outcomes for adolescents and adults with developmental disabilities. SELN online discussions are chosen based on conversations with individual member states, as well as high profile and critical issues circulating around the country. Summary documents provide an overview of the sessions and highlight the resources available and knowledge required to achieve best practices.

The SELN is a joint program of the Institute for Community Inclusion at UMass Boston and the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services.



[www.seln.org](http://www.seln.org)