Employment Activities – Strategies & Progress / Outcome Measures

The outcome for a pathway is always paid employment and/or self employment.
The process for obtaining employment is individualized; therefore this information does not indicate a linear process requiring all elements.

ELEMENTS IN PHASES	TOOLS & STRATEGIES	PROGRESS MEASURES
Intake	- Interview job seeker and family - Provide system overview including services and funding - Provide and explain participant handbook - Collect initial paperwork and documents/records/history/information - Collect Social Security information - Provide documentation on rights and responsibilities - Collect release of information - Resource connections (DVR/DDD, SSA, etc.)	- An informed and knowledgeable job seeker and a supportive family with the knowledge of system/agency/supports and an understanding of rights and responsibilities. - A shared understanding of all roles and responsibilities. - Preliminary Benefits Analysis completed. - DVR funding is secured as needed.
Discovery*	- Identify job interests - Interview the person, family, friends, neighbors, teachers and others recommended by the individual/family - Develop a Circle of Support if necessary for the job seeker - Observe the individual in different community and home settings including familiar and unfamiliar venues - Conduct activities that change the time/place/people/environment/sup-ports to	- An employment profile that includes an employment goal, a direction for job development, and a list of specific tasks the individual can perform competitively (goals, methods, strategies). - A list of employment sites in the community that may match the job seekers employment goal. - An employment goal that meets the job seekers skills, talents and interests and fits a market need.

ELEMENTS IN PHASES	TOOLS & STRATEGIES	PROGRESS MEASURES
	learn more about the job seeker in different ways, i.e. time-limited job experiences such as tours/job shadowing/volunteer jobs • Research current job market and employers and compare to current job seekers skills and preferences	• A plan that includes timelines, preferences, potential contributions of the job seeker, responsibilities for the circle of supports members. • Routine (quarterly) review of status/progress toward goals and objectives and update/evaluate next steps.

Assessment	• Develop Community based assessment sites or volunteer positions
	• Support the job seeker on the site in orientation/training
	• Vocational intake Conduct Person Centered Planning
	• Develop an employment plan
	• Develop an assistive technology plan
	• Develop and implement Trial Work Experiences (TWE) that give the job seeker a limited experience in a job to test out preferences, skills, and support needs
		• An assessment report that describes:
		   o Current level of performance in a specific job environment;
		   o Learning and performance characteristics;
		   o Preferences; and
		   o Supports and accommodations necessary.
		• Summary information on potential needs for accessibility, assistance, technology and /or personal assistance in the workplace;
		• Behavioral challenges and strategies to reduce the likelihood of the behavior occurring;
		• Habits, routines and idiosyncrasies;
		• Degree of supports likely to be needed; and
		• Type and amount of negotiation likely to be needed.

Job Preparation	• Conduct travel training • Teach and have job seeker practice interviewing skills • Assist in obtaining required items i.e. food handler's card, first aid card etc. • Portfolio/resume development • Complete employment applications	• A resume/video/portfolio is developed. • Job seeker is using public transportation or has developed private transportation. • A job seeker who has had practice in interviewing. • The job seeker has the information at hand to create a job application.

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ELEMENTS IN PHASES	TOOLS & STRATEGIES	PROGRESS MEASURES
	• Develop a rough draft for an application	
Marketing/ Job Development *	• Develop marketing tools • Conduct labor market analysis • Research/target employers • Conduct tours of business of interest • Develop and present environmental analysis of targeted businesses • Develop and implement targeted employer presentations • Network • Conduct informational interviews • Introduce and market the individual • Educate employers-benefits to employee/business/outline expectations • Evaluate employment site /present proposal to employer • Negotiate with employer • Identify potential natural supports • Assist with interview or working interview • Customize the job by negotiating hours, tasks, wages, accommodations	• Specific goals for marketing and individualized job development are outlined in the individuals' career path plan. • There are marketing tools (i.e. employment proposal) that are appropriate to the job seeker and the business. • Research has been completed for several companies that match the job seeker's skills and preferences. • A relationship has been developed within an appropriate business. • A workplace analysis defining employer needs has been completed. • An employment offer that meets the needs and preferences of the employer and the job seeker. • A satisfying job match that meets employee and employer needs and wants.
Job Coaching Intensive on-the-job-supports *	• Setup transportation (bus training/Access) and coordinate schedule with individual and family/home site • Perform a Job Analysis/task analysis to learn about the tasks employee will be performing • Provide assistance with Training/staff orientation	• Public or private transportation is secured. • A job description is created that the new employee can be expected to perform. • A new employee who has been oriented to the job and has supports/assistive-technology/information and the structure to complete the job either with or without long

ELEMENTS IN PHASES	TOOLS & STRATEGIES	PROGRESS MEASURES
	• Provide safety/emergency info sheets to employer and safety protocol discussed with employee • Provide Job Coaching and training for the individual, co-workers, supervisors • Develop natural supports with co-workers • Benefits Analysis (contacting SSI) • Develop supports to maintain independence i.e. jigs, checklist, pictorial job map/description • Maintain continuous communication with the family, employee, employer • Maintain continuous evaluation-modifying job-site tasks and supports as necessary • Develop natural supports • Develop fading plan • Identify stabilization • Develop follow-up support plan	term supports. • An informed/trained staff in the new employee's company including a supervisor, co-workers and a/o" contact person that can answer questions on the job for the new employee and know who to contact for outside supports. • Co-worker(s) that will assume a 'natural support" relationship with the new employee. • A fading plan is in place with strategies/natural supports and contacts. • The new employee has reached "stabilization" and funding is switched from DVR to long term funding source. • A follow-up support plan is in place.
Retention - Maintaining Employment	• Check in with manager and employee periodically or as needed • Provide additional job training for either the new employee or for the co-workers and supervisors • Conduct problem recognition/solve communication and/or work or life challenges • Advocate for higher wages, hours and increased responsibilities and advanced career opportunities • Evaluate biannually (minimum) the	• Stable employment and /or advancement on a career path. • An employer feedback system that evaluates both the employee and the support system. • Solid communication loops and expectations with employee, employer, family and others are in place as needed.

ELEMENTS IN PHASES	TOOLS & STRATEGIES	PROGRESS MEASURES
	employment plan • Develop employer evaluation and use for feedback loops to program improvement • Modify job-add tasks-provide additional training support as necessary • Continue to build on the employer relationship • Maintain communication with family/home site • Assess use of Work Incentives such as PASS, IRWE	
Record Keeping	• Maintain files/records • Produce ongoing case notes. Write billing reports for public funders • Create skills assessment reports and recommendations • Document objective observation • Develop measurable outcome based, individualized plans • Manage data and information required for contractual requirements • Completing reports (DVR, DDD)	• There is a complete record of the employee which includes signed and dated plans, progress reports, Incident reports, employer satisfaction surveys, wage, hours, employer information, contacts, and feedback from the employee. • Information and data is documented accurately and comprehensively to be able to see measured progress towards reaching ones individual full work potential. • Required documentation for funders is thorough, comprehensive and fulfills all contractual requirements. • Information for accreditation agencies and other stakeholders is satisfactory and accessible.

GLOSSARY

*__The Discovery Process__   The discovery process is defined as the time prior to job development that occurred for the individuals for whom creating a vocational goal requires intensive individualized efforts to identify a task or tasks the individual could perform at competitive levels as well as other prerequisite information necessary to ensure employment success such as assistive technology needs, environmental supports, and additional support needs that traditional assessments do not provide. The discovery process includes interviewing those who know the individual, observing the individual in different community and home settings that change the time/place/people/environment/supports to learn more about the job seeker in different ways. Multiple trial work experiences that give the job seeker a limited experience in a job to test out preferences, skills, and support needs also provide a mechanism to identify appropriate environmental and support needs as well as identify tasks in which the individual may be competitively employed. **This process generally lasts 2-3 months.** Discovery may be extended if a job task(s) is not identified. Discovery may also be re-entered if the vocational goal identified became outmoded according to market needs or new information is learned about the participant or market that requires intensive investigation. Often volunteer situations are used to give the job seeker some additional time to learn about work culture and to learn more difficult tasks. Volunteer situations are limited to non-profits where others also may volunteer. The Department of Labor has rules that prohibit for profit business from gaining from volunteer work. Should discovery be extended, a review of the status and progress towards the individuals goals and objectives should occur quarterly. During the review process barriers to identifying competitive tasks should be identified and specific, time-limited and measurable actions to overcome the barriers should be created. Volunteer positions during discovery are time-limited and outcome-based. Discovery is complete once a potentially competitive task or set of tasks are identified and an employment profile can be completed. The discovery process will result in an employment profile that includes: an employment goal, list of specific tasks the individual can perform competitively and job development plan. The outcome is documented information regarding the job seeker's: interests; strengths, environments that would foster success, activities, and learning modalities in which the job seeker is at best; types and methods of effective supports; assistive technology needs; Accessibility needs; and present level of performance, employment activities, what was learned by the agency staff and the person and how it contributed toward an employment goal.

* __Employment Assessments__ Employment Assessments are short term interventions often requested by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation used when the agency does not know the participant well or doesn't know the ideal conditions of employment or supports for that individual. These assessments must follow Department of Labor rules/timelines.

*__Job Development__ The time lines for job development are dependent on a wide set of variables as is job seeking for any other individual. The general state of the economy, types of jobs available, the talents, personality, skills, tasks sets of the individual, the extent of the geographic range open to the person, preferences/ability to work in different environments, transportation available, the accessibility needs/availability and of course the willingness of the employer to hire the individual. It is also dependent on the job experiences of the individual and the choices acceptable to the job seeker and family.

*__Circles of Support__ A support network of professionals, friends, family, neighbors and others who agree to commit themselves to assisting an individual reach a specific goal often paid employment. Each person agrees to be responsible for part of the plan.

Employment Activities:
Values and Critical Success Factors

The following is offered to support and clarify the intent of both service design and funding parameters associated with providing employment supports within county contracted services.

Services are individually plan driven. Every person experiences a planning process that is inclusive, relevant, timely and documented. The key measures of success should be considered individually and gauged by the content of their plan. A plan in this context refers to the actual process used to generate employment as an outcome. It may be viewed as an employment specific, sub-component of a larger, life-wide support plan, such as a plan of care or Individual Services Plan conducted by DDD.

Services are rate supported. There is a logical relationship between the services delivered contractually and the funding support provided by the contract according to each individual's plan.

Services are progress oriented. Contract language should reflect and assume a process of continuous achievement. Review points should be clearly in place to determine the relevancy of service approaches and/or needed revisions and strategies to the individual's plan. This is not meant to indicate that services are linear in nature, rather a toolbox of options available, targeted toward the ultimate goal of employment.

Services embrace design flexibility. Each person's path and means of obtaining employment may legitimately look different. While best practices and prudent contract oversight should be in place, care must be taken not to over-standardize or immobilize the creative process. Some individuals have no or little experience in the community, or the provider may need to find out more about an individual and may need to see that individual performing in several different environments. That may affect the timelines or the strategies used. Employment also includes the elements of the specific job, business and employer community. This requires a focus on meeting the needs of employers, as well as on the individual with developmental disabilities.

Services and contract guidelines are user friendly. Service dollars are administered in ways that make sense and minimize administrative burden. Simple legislation of outcomes would be too simplistic to account for the significant differences in skills, learning times, individual preferences, the job market and complexity of the job. Mandating that each individual must use each tool or strategy in sequence could mean that some individuals are over-supported (as they do not need to experience every strategy or tool) and others are not supported enough to accommodate their specific needs, timelines and preferences.

To foster maximum customization, simplification of the contracting system, and in all probability better outcomes, it may be beneficial to de-categorize services and eradicate the service definitions that now artificially categorize groups of people as needing a specific service. We can then assume that everyone in employment services needs a "pathway to employment" based on that individual's needs, preferences, current situation and future employment goals.

Services reflect the existence of both output and outcome. Inherent in the provision of employment services, are both the strategies that are more difficult to see and measure, such as job development, as well as solid outcomes, such as job starts, wages, hours, and job retention. All are critical components of a healthy system. Individuals being served possess a wide range of support needs, from minimal to intense and the tools, strategies, methods, timelines and outcomes for each participant would be delivered according to that person's needs and goals.