

DSHS/DVR 2016 – 2020 State Plan

The Supported Employment Program

Draft Federal Guidance

Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services

Describe the designated State agency's efforts to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other State agencies and other appropriate entities in order to provide supported employment services and extended employment services, as applicable, to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.

Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI Funds

1. Specify the State's goals and priorities for funds received under section 603 of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of supported employment services.
2. Describe the activities to be conducted, with funds reserved pursuant to section 603(d), for youth with the most significant disabilities, including:
 - a. the provision of extended services for a period not to exceed 4 years; and
 - b. how the State will leverage other public and private funds to increase resources for extended services and expanded supported employment opportunities for youth with the most significant disabilities.

Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services

Include the following:

1. The quality, scope, and extent of supported employment services to be provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.
2. The timing of transition to extended services.

Introduction

DSHS/DVR has elected to combine three distinct state plan attachments required by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (i.e. *Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services*, *Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI Funds*, and *Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services*) into this one section. The intent is for authorities and stakeholders to comprehensively evaluate the Supported Employment Program in one complete narrative.

The cooperative agreements, program goals, funding distribution, and supported employment services described in this section represent the coordinated efforts of DSHS/DVR, its State collaborators, and its service delivery partners to ensure that all Washingtonians with disabilities can access the support services needed to obtain and maintain employment, maximize independence, and experience improved quality of life.

Supported Employment Partners & Agreements

DSHS/DVR primarily provides supported employment services to individuals with developmental disabilities and individuals with mental health disabilities. Of these two customer groups, individuals with developmental disabilities represent the vast majority of supported employment outcomes.

Substantial State resources reductions within the DSHS Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery – Mental Health (DBHR-MR), DSHS/DVR's supported employment partner for customers with mental health disabilities, has significantly limited State capacity to provide extended services to this population.

Diligent efforts continue to address these reductions. DSHS/DVR continues its collaboration with DBHR-MR, the Mental Health Employment Consortium, and the Washington Community Mental Health Council to expand the availability of extended services through alternative resources and innovative approaches. These efforts intend to establish cooperative agreements with all Regional Support Networks (RSNs) responsible for county-level delivery of community mental health services.

DSHS/DVR continues to promote the use of Ticket to Work as a potential income source for developmental disability (DD), mental health (MH), and traumatic brain injury (TBI) service providers to build their capacity for providing extended support services.

DSHS/DVR will renew written agreements with county developmental disabilities programs and Mental Health Regional Support Networks to clarify roles and responsibilities for their provision of extended services to joint customers. Efforts to renew these agreements have been ongoing since FFY 2009 and have proven extremely challenging. County developmental disabilities programs and RSNs have expressed reluctance to commit to any service provision agreements, citing unstable or insufficient funding. During the 2016 – 2020 planning cycle, DSHS/DVR will collaborate with DBHR-MH to leverage the strong state-level partnership to facilitate local-level agreement development.

Supported Employment Goals & Title VI Funds

For 2016 – 2020, DSHS/DVR estimates that between 1,450 and 1,600 customers will be receive supported employment services through Individualized Plans for Employment (IPEs), resulting in 300 - 400 supported employment outcomes per year. At these levels, DSHS/DVR estimates serving approximately 6,100 supported employment IPEs and producing 1,400 supporting employment outcomes during the four-year period of this Combined State Plan.

Supported Employment Services

DSHS/DVR continues to provide supported employment services primarily to individuals with developmental disabilities and individuals with mental health disabilities. While supported employment service delivery to individuals with developmental disabilities is well established, continued and significant systemic challenges must be addressed for DSHS/DVR and its partners to adequately support individuals with mental health disabilities.

Individuals with most significant disabilities, such as individuals living with traumatic brain injuries or individuals with severe cognitive impairments, face service barriers similar to those experienced by individuals with mental health disabilities. Longstanding systemic challenges and inadequate resources throughout the State's service infrastructure limit the availability of much needed supports. Budget reductions in program areas that might otherwise offer supported employment extended services to these other populations exacerbate these challenges.

DSHS/DVR will continue seeking ways to expand the availability of extended services for all individuals who require supported employment by maintaining close collaboration with sister programs within the Department of Social and Health Services as well as local service providers.