

Maryland State Department of Education  
Division of Rehabilitation Services  
**Evidence-Based Practice in Supported Employment (EBPSE)  
Job Coaching Services Milestone Payment System Fact Sheet**

## **Background**

The Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) provides time-limited supported employment job coaching services through approved community providers to individuals with most significant disabilities as needed to achieve competitive employment. Findings from implementation of a two-phase pilot confirmed that the Milestone Payment System significantly streamlines provision of services for DORS and provider staff by reducing preparation of authorizations, invoicing and tracking hours of service, and simplifying reporting.

## **Milestone Payment Participants**

The Milestone Payment System applies to all Evidence-Based Practice in Supported Employment (EBPSE) sites, excluding ACT sites (see CRP Fee Schedule).

## **Main Elements of the Milestone Payment System**

### **Milestone Payments and Timing:**

- **Milestone 1:** Prior to initiation of services, DORS forwards an authorization to the provider **for \$1,600 for job development activities.**
  - The provider may send DORS an invoice for **\$1,600 as job development is initiated inclusive of a job placement plan and an updated resume.**
  - The **job placement plan** will include the individual's employment goal as stated on their Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), the agreed-upon number of meetings per week, the responsibilities/activities to be completed by the individual and the provider staff and the signature of the individual.
- **Milestones 2, 3 and 4:** Once a job is secured for the individual and the provider confirms the job with the DORS counselor, DORS forwards an authorization for **\$3,100 to the provider for job coaching.**
  - **Milestone 2:** The provider may send DORS an invoice for **\$1,200 as job coaching is initiated** inclusive of the [EBPSE Employment Verification with Request for Employment Stability Service Fees \(RS-7h\)](#) detailing the individual's placement information.
  - **Milestone 3:** The provider may send DORS an invoice for **\$800 once stabilization of the job** has been achieved for 45 days inclusive of the [EBPSE Employment Verification with Request for Employment Stability Service Fees \(RS-7h\)](#).
  - **Milestone 4:** When the job has been maintained for 90 days post stabilization, the provider may send DORS an invoice **for \$1,100** inclusive of the [EBPSE Employment Verification with Request for Employment Stability Service Fees \(RS-7h\)](#) **with the consumer's signature.** This document provides proof that the services were provided.

It is important to note that DORS will only issue the milestone that is appropriate at the time the plan is signed. If a consumer comes to DORS with a job (due to the provider moving forward prior to DORS IPE development), the counselor will issue a Milestone 2 (intensive job coaching).

## Reporting Requirements

Instead of submitting the DORS Job Coaching Progress Report on a monthly basis, providers submit a copy of the monthly narrative report already being completed as required by BHA, attaching relevant employment information regarding the individual's progress that is available. It is not necessary for provider staff to track and report hours of service.

Three changes to reporting include:

- When the individual becomes employed (Milestone 2), the provider will complete and include the [EBPSE Employment Verification with Request for Employment Stability Service Fees \(RS-7h\)](#) noting the individual's placement information as outlined on the form. **The only signature on the form needed for this milestone is the provider signature.**
- At stabilization (45 days), the provider will provide a paystub or complete the [EBPSE Employment Verification with Request for Employment Stability Service Fees \(RS-7h\)](#). **An individual's signature is not required on the document at Milestone 3.**
- At case closure (90 days post stabilization), the provider submits an invoice and completes the [EBPSE Employment Verification with Request for Employment Stability Service Fees \(RS-7h\)](#) noting the individual's employment information, **inclusive of the provider's and individual's signatures.**

## Case Closure

It is important for DORS counselors to close the individual's case once successful employment has been achieved for 45 days plus an additional 90 days so that the CRP can begin to receive BHA extended funding. DORS will pay a milestone at 45 days (Milestone 3) and again at 90 days post stabilization (Milestone 4) when the final proof of services provided is received ([EBPSE Employment Verification with Request for Employment Stability Service Fees \(RS-7h\)](#)).

## Frequency for Consumers

It is the intent of the four-part milestone payment system that each payment be authorized by the VR Specialist for an individual no more often than **once per rolling calendar year**. The VR Specialist may reauthorize a particular milestone payment(s) for a consumer in subsequent calendar years corresponding to the month (or after) in which the initial/previous authorization was issued, should the consumer require intensive services to achieve or maintain employment.

For example: An initial authorization is issued for Milestone 1 in July 2022. The individual will not be eligible for another Milestone 1 authorization until July 2023.

In cases in which a consumer is working with a provider to secure a second position, in addition to a primary position, a new Milestone would not be authorized as long as that individual is being provided services under BHA long-term supports.

## Exceptions

Reauthorization of a milestone payment or consideration of a partial payment within a rolling calendar year requires written justification by the provider and approval of the DORS Regional/Program Director. Partial payments may be considered only when requesting a re-issue within the same rolling calendar year. The justification for reauthorization within the same rolling calendar year must include an explanation of the change in circumstances and/or disability factors which would require additional intensive services in order for the consumer to achieve competitive employment.

**Reissuance of any milestone payment will exceed \$5000; therefore, as that occurs, an administrative approval must be obtained. It is beneficial to plan for reissuances so services are not delayed.**

## Incentives Available

- **Rapid Placement (\$300)**

When job development is included as a service, the provider will be eligible for an additional incentive payment for rapid job placement when a consumer is placed in a position within 30 days from the date of the authorization. The additional incentive is included on the fee schedule and may be paid after the DORS consumer retains competitive employment (integrated setting, earning at least minimum wage) for at least 90 days and meets DORS successful closure standards (e.g., the consumer is satisfied with the position). The job placement must be consistent with the DORS IPE in terms of the employment goal and the anticipated number of hours of employment per week, if indicated.

- **Quality (see Fee Schedule)**

The additional incentives are included on the fee schedule and may be paid after the DORS consumer retains competitive employment (integrated setting, earning at least minimum wage) for at least 90 days and meets DORS successful closure standards (e.g., the consumer is satisfied with the position). The job placement must be consistent with the DORS IPE in terms of the employment goal and the anticipated number of hours of employment per week.

- **Wage: 25% Above Minimum Wage (\$400)**

Note: If the work location address is located in a county where the minimum wage exceeds the state minimum wage, the county's minimum wage will be the benchmark to measure the 25%. The wage that is the highest must be used to measure the 25%.

- **Ex-Offender Status (\$200)**

A consumer who qualifies as an ex-offender has been subject to some stage of the criminal justice process. As a result:

- Employers running a background check against national data will find this individual has a history of arrest, charges, prosecution, and/or conviction, or
- Anyone using the Maryland Judiciary Case Search will find criminal cases in which this individual was a defendant, or
- The Individual requires assistance in overcoming barriers to employment resulting from a record of arrest or conviction.

- **Specialized Disability Populations (\$200)**

A consumer who qualifies with any of these primary disabilities – ABI, Autism, Blind, Deaf, and Deaf/Blind – is placed in a position. The qualifying disability/special population must be noted in the consumer's DORS file and the DORS Job Placement/Coaching Services Progress Report.

- **Specialized Occupational Areas – S.T.E.M. Occupations (\$200)**

The Code, Occupation, and S.T.E.M. Discipline will correspond with the O\*Net on-line listing of S.T.E.M. Disciplines.

To Access a Quality Incentive, a CRP will:

- Demonstrate that the position obtained is eligible to receive the wage incentive prior to accessing other Quality Incentives.
- Provide documentation regarding all applicable incentives identified. – Include at the end of 90 days: age, position title/position description and O\*net code.
- Invoice the DORS counselor for the incentive(s) once the consumer has maintained their position for at least 90 days. Include information supporting wage and occupational title (paystub or wage verification).

Upon receipt of documentation regarding eligibility for a quality incentive, the DORS counselor will:

- Attach verification of wage information in AWARE™ using attachment category: "Verification of Consumer Wages."
- Issue new authorization for applicable incentives.
- Pay the invoice upon receipt at the end of 90 days of successful employment.

## **Inquiries**

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