

**Division of Rehabilitation Services**  
**EBP Supported Employment 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 sites, excluding ACT sites (see RSM 5, Section 200).

**Main Elements of the Milestone Payment System**

**Milestone Payments and Timing:**

- Prior to initiation of services, DORS forwards an authorization to the provider for **\$1,400 for job development** activities.
  - The provider may send DORS an invoice for **\$1,400 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.
- Once a job is secured for the consumer and the provider confirms the job with the DORS counselor, DORS forwards an authorization for **\$1,800 to the provider for job coaching.**
  - The provider may send DORS an invoice for **\$1,000 as job coaching is initiated.**
  - The provider may send DORS an invoice for **\$800 once stabilization of the job has been achieved for 45 days.**

**Reporting Requirements:**

Instead of submitting the DORS Job Coaching Progress Report on a monthly basis as previously required, 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 already available. It is no longer necessary for provider staff to track and report hours of service.

**Case Closure:**

It is important for DORS counselors to close the individual's case once successful employment has been achieved for 90 days in order to facilitate the CRP receiving BHA extended funding.

## Frequency for Consumers:

It is the intent of the three-part milestone payment system that each payment be authorized by the VR Specialist for an individual consumer 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 2015. The individual will not be eligible for another Milestone 1 authorization until July 2016.

## 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.

## Incentives Available

### Rapid Placement:

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 (\$300).

### Quality:

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:

**Wage must be achieved prior to accessing incentives for specialized populations, ex-offender status, or specialized occupational areas.** A consumer obtains a position in the area related to their IPE and is paid 25% above the state minimum (\$300).

- **Ex-Offender Status** – 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 (\$200).

- **Specialized Disability Populations** – 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 (\$200).
- **Specialized Occupational Areas – S.T.E.M. Occupations.** The Code, Occupation, and S.T.E.M. Discipline will correspond with the O\*Net on-line listing of S.T.E.M. Disciplines (\$200).

**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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