

**RSM 2
VR & IL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL
SECTION 800**

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

Updated: 7/23

801 Supported Employment Overview.....	1
802 Supported Employment Glossary/Key Concepts.....	2
803 Supported Employment Services	8
803.01 Scope of Supported Employment Services	9
803.02 General Requirements.....	10
804 VR Process for DORS Services/Supported Employment	11
804.01 VR Process for Individuals Eligible for BHA-Funded Supported Employment	11
804.02 VR Process for Individuals Eligible or Potentially Eligible for DDA-Funded Supported Employment Funding	15
804.03 VR Process for Eligible Individuals Without Long-Term Funding Available for Extended Supported Employment Services	17
805 Development of the IPE for Supported Employment	18
805.01 Supported Employment Plans for Individuals with BHA or DDA Funding Available for Extended Supported Services.....	18
805.02 Supported Employment Plans for Adults or Youth with Most Significant Disabilities Developed Based on the Reasonable Expectation That Extended Services Will Be Available From Natural Supports	18
805.03 Supported Employment Plans for Youth with Most Significant Disabilities Using DORS Funding for Extended Supported Services.....	19
806 Purchase of Supported Employment Services	19
806.01 Hourly Rate Payment System	19
806.02 Milestone Payment System.....	20
806.03 Additional Requirements.....	20
807 Employment Services Progress Report.....	21
808 Reassessment.....	21
809 Transition to Extended Services.....	22
810 Achievement of Job Stabilization	22
811 Requirements for Rehabilitated Record of Services Closure	22
811.01 Rehabilitated Record of Services Closure for an Adult.....	23
811.02 Rehabilitated Record of Services Closure for a Youth.....	23
812 Requirements for Unsuccessful Record of Services Closure	23
813 Discrete Post Employment Services Provided after Transition to Extended Services – Individuals Eligible for DDA and BHA-funded Supported Employment.....	24
814 Annual Review of Employment Outcomes Not Meeting Definition of “Competitive Integrated Employment”	24
815 Reopening Closed Records of Services.....	25
815.01 Underemployment or Extensive Retraining	25
815.02 Procedures for Reopening a Supported Employment Record of Services.....	25

801 Supported Employment Overview

The State Supported Employment Services program, authorized under Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), provides grants to assist States in developing and implementing collaborative programs with appropriate entities to provide programs of supported employment services for individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with

the most significant disabilities, to enable them to achieve a supported employment outcome in competitive integrated employment (CIE).

Supported employment should not automatically be considered the first choice for individuals with most significant disabilities. DORS supported employment program and supported employment services exist to assist individuals with the most significant disabilities who need intensive services and ongoing supports to maintain an employment outcome and should be considered after a comprehensive assessment of the rehabilitation needs of the individual when determining an individual's employment goal consistent with their unique strengths, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice.

Supported employment means competitive integrated employment (CIE), including customized employment, or employment in an integrated work setting in which an individual with a most significant disability, including a youth with a most significant disability, is working on a short-term basis toward CIE that is individualized and customized, consistent with the unique strengths, abilities, interests, and informed choice of the individual, including with ongoing support services for individuals with the most significant disabilities:

- a. For whom CIE has not historically occurred, or for whom CIE has been interrupted or intermittent as a result of a significant disability; and
- b. Who, because of the nature and severity of their disabilities, need intensive supported employment services and extended services after the transition from support provided by the designated State unit, in order to perform this work.

For purposes of this part, an individual with a most significant disability, whose supported employment in an integrated setting does not satisfy the criteria of CIE, is considered to be working on a short-term basis toward CIE so long as the individual can reasonably anticipate achieving CIE:

- a. Within six months of achieving a supported employment outcome; or
- b. In limited circumstances, within a period not to exceed 12 months from the achievement of the supported employment outcome, if a longer period is necessary based on the needs of the individual, and the individual has demonstrated progress toward competitive earnings based on information contained in the service record.

Supported employment services shall be:

- a. Governed by DORS policies and procedures and authorized under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 701 et seq.), as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) (29 USC 3101).
- b. As appropriate, in accordance with cooperative agreements developed between DORS and those State, public or private organizations which fund and/or provide extended services following the provision of supported employment services, including the Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) and the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA).
- c. As appropriate, funded by DORS as the extended services provider for supported employment services, including extended services, to youth with the most significant disabilities, for up to four years, or until the youth reaches age 25, or until funding is available from a long-term provider (BHA or DDA) or via natural supports, whichever comes first.

802 Supported Employment Glossary/Key Concepts

- a. **ACT** – Assertive Community Treatment is an evidence-based, team-treatment approach designed to provide comprehensive community-based psychiatric treatment, rehabilitation and

support to persons with serious and persistent mental illness such as schizophrenia. Individuals served by ACT teams are served by a team of professionals whose backgrounds and training include social work, rehabilitation, counseling, nursing and psychiatry. Services provided by ACT teams include:

- Case management
 - Initial and ongoing assessments
 - Psychiatric services
 - Employment and housing assistance
 - Family support and education
 - Substance abuse services
 - Other services and supports critical to an individual's ability to live successfully in the community.
- b. **Behavioral Health Administration (BHA)** – an organizational unit of the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) that provides leadership, policy, development, and statewide planning; establishes rates of reimbursement and allocates resources; and trains, monitors, and evaluates community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) that provide supported employment services and other related behavioral health services to individuals with mental illness/psychiatric illnesses in the public mental health system.
- c. **Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP)** – A private organization, usually non-profit, focused on providing services that may include assessments, job development and placement and intensive job skills training. Employment Specialists at the CRP provide the extended services generally required by individuals with the most significant disabilities to maintain their employment.
- d. **Community-Based Assessment** – A holistic assessment of an individual's strengths, interests, needs, and abilities in a job/worksite setting located in the community. Recommended for individuals for whom standard testing may not provide an accurate or valid picture of employment skills or potential. Includes situational assessments, on-the-job evaluations, job try-outs or trials, and supported employment assessment.
- e. **Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE)** – To satisfy the definition of “competitive integrated employment” in section 7(5) of the Rehabilitation Act and §361.5(c)(9) of the implementing regulations, the employment outcome must satisfy the criteria of three major components of the definition, including competitive earnings, integrated location, and opportunities for advancement.

1. **Competitive Earnings**

- i. Wages comparable to the customary wages paid by the employer to employees without disabilities in similar position.
- ii. Benefits provided by the employer to the individual are comparable to the benefits received by an employee without disabilities in the same or similar position.

2. **Integrated Setting**

- i. Employment typically found in the community.
- ii. Employment in which the employee with a disability interacts for the purpose of performing the duties of the position with other employees with the particular work unit and the entire work site, and as appropriate to the work performed, other persons (e.g., customers and vendors) who are not individuals with disabilities (not including supervisory personnel or individuals who are providing services to such employee) to

the same extent that employees who are not individuals with disabilities and who are in comparable positions interact with these persons.

3. **Opportunities for Advancement** – The employment setting provides the individual with opportunities for advancement comparable with those available to employees without disabilities in similar position.
- f. **Code of Maryland Regulation (COMAR)** – Includes State regulation for programs of the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS), and the Maryland Department of Health (MDH), Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) and Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA).
- g. **Customized Employment** – Customized employment is a process for individualizing the employment relationship between a job seeker or an employee and an employer in ways that meet the needs of both. It is based on a match between the unique strengths, needs, job skills and interests of the job candidate with a disability, and the identified business needs of the employer or the self-employment business chosen by the candidate.

Participation in this process by the employer is always voluntary. If an employer agrees to consider customized employment, staff working with the consumer (usually a job developer or personal representative) negotiate an individualized job that meets the employment needs of the applicant and real business needs of the employer.
- h. **Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA)** – an organizational unit of the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) that approves/negotiates funding, and trains/monitors CRPs to provide supported employment services and other related medical services to individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities.
- i. **Discovery Profile** – A compilation of information gathered from the job seeker and the Customized Employment Team to identify the job seeker's interests, skills, and preferences related to potential employment that guides the job development process, which may include customized employment.
- j. **Evidence-Based Practice Supported Employment (EBPSE)** – A program which implements research-based principles and practices that have proven most effective in facilitating CIE for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness. Behavioral health CRPs which practice EBPSE provide supported employment services that are integrated and coordinated with mental health treatment and rehabilitation. They are assessed and monitored by BHA for fidelity to the model. See **Section 804.02**.
- k. **Employment First** – A national effort, fully supported by Maryland DORS and partner agencies, to assure that individuals with intellectual disabilities/developmental disabilities consider CIE on a preferred basis in planning for their lives.
- l. **Extended Services** – Ongoing services, including natural supports, to support an individual in their employment, beginning after the transition from time-limited intensive DORS-funded supported employment services as indicated by entry of the employment “Stable Date” (see “r” below) in the AWARE™ record. These services are based on the individual’s needs and defined in the **Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)**, and may be funded by DDA or BHA, or, in case of youth with most significant disabilities, by DORS (see “m.” below). The services may be provided by CRPs, Ticket to Work Employment Networks, and/or natural supports such as family, friends or coworkers.
- m. **Extended Services for Youth with Most Significant Disabilities** – Section 604(b)(2) of the Act, as amended by WIOA, mandates that DORS make extended services for youth with the most significant disabilities available for a period not to exceed four years or until the individual reaches age 25, whichever comes first. The Act defines “youth with a disability” in section 7(42) as an individual with a disability who is not younger than 14 years of age, and not older than 24

years of age. Extended Services may not be provided by DORS for individuals who are **not** youth with most significant disabilities.

- n. **Fading Schedule with Intensive Monitoring** – Refers to the level of support of job coaching provided by the CRP on an individual's worksite. Funding responsibilities are transferred to the extended support service agency once the job coach intervention hours are consistently at or less than 25% of the individual's total work hours, and they are working on their own or with natural supports during 75% or more of the scheduled work hours.

Note: There will be exceptions when an individual will require extended services during more than 25% of the work schedule and they may still be ready to transition to extended services provided by long-term funding or natural supports.

- o. **Fidelity** – Refers to the extent to which a CRP has implemented EBPSE with accuracy and consistency to the standardized elements and principles of the practice. Programs that maintain high fidelity implementation of EBPSE, as determined by BHA fidelity assessors, are eligible to receive a higher level of payment through BHA for the additional services required of EBPSE.
- p. **Individual Placement Model** (also called IPS: Individual Placement & Support, and may also be referred to as EBPSE) – Establishes CIE opportunities for individuals with most significant disabilities in local employment settings on a one-person/one-job basis. Typically, a trained job coach develops the job in business, matches an individual to the job, trains the individual on the job until he or she meets employer criteria and has developed social integration skills. The job coach then provides extended services to the individual in their employment setting.
- q. **Job Coaching** – Job coaching services are, for the most part, provided to individuals in competitive integrated paid employment. However, it may include job coaching for unpaid internships as part of an **IPE** leading to CIE. Job coaching is not provided to support students involved in pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS), such as work-based learning experiences.

These services are provided to individuals with a most significant disability by a job coach or employment specialist. They may be provided during intensive service provision (funded by DORS) and/or during extended services provision (funded by the long-term funding source or by DORS in the case of youth with most significant disabilities).

Services include assisting the individual to address employment-related objectives such as:

- Learning specific work duties and performance standards.
- Learning formal and informal site-related behaviors when dealing with supervisors and co-workers
- Acquiring a sense of belonging to the workforce
- Understanding and using the benefits of employment (e.g., spending pay, using leave, participating in employee programs)
- Working under the direction of a supervisor
- Socializing with co-workers
- Developing a community support system that accommodates and positively reinforces the person's role as a worker

See **Section 803.01** and **Attachment 800-4, Job Coaching Fact Sheet**.

Job coaches provide more intensive services initially and when job duties change and gradually diminish the intensity of services ("fading") as the individual learns the job and becomes more confident in performing job duties. See **Attachment 800-3, Job Coaching Fading Schedule**.

- r. **Job Development** – Job development/placement is individualized and shall include:

- Weekly person-to-person job search assistance
- Assistance with identifying job leads
- Interview coaching and support
- Maintaining a log of job search activities for the purposes of obtaining CIE

By mutual consent of the consumer and the CRP, these services may be provided in-person or virtually using online video communication tools.

Job development/placement may also include arranging job trials/job shadowing for individuals with a **DORS Trial Work Experience Plan**, assistance with completing applications, assistance with employer follow-up after interviews, use of personal employment networks in job search, and resume update. It would include time spent calling employers, visiting and educating employers, and similar activities.

Job development/placement shall **not** be paid for using supported employment funding and shall **not** include the Discovery process, which is pre-vocational in nature and may be completed prior to job development.

- s. **Job Stabilization** – Job stabilization is indicated in the AWARE™ record with entry of the “Stable Date” in the employment record, when all of the following have been met:
1. The individual is employed in CIE and has reached a maximum level of work performance, consistent with their unique strengths, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice.
 2. The hours worked per week is consistent with the individual’s preferred approximate number of work hours as agreed upon on the **IPE**.
 3. The consumer’s need for benefits counseling and worksite accommodations have been addressed.
 4. DORS services are no longer needed to “stabilize” the employment outcome or to address consumer and/or employer concerns.
 5. Supported employment job coaching, specifically, has decreased to a predictable level of support which may be provided via extended services, including natural support.
 6. The individual has transitioned from intensive supported employment job coaching to either:
 - i. Extended services for youth with most significant disabilities funded by DORS, or
 - ii. Extended services for either a youth or an adult with most significant disabilities funded by another provider, or
 - iii. Natural supports.

The individual must maintain job stabilization (see **Section 806.01**) for a minimum of 90 days following this transition before the DORS case is closed.

- t. **Job Trial** – A period of time, typically lasting anywhere between one and 90 days, during which an employer might ask a person to do an unpaid trial while they evaluate them for a vacant job. This is used to determine if the person is suitable for the job by getting them to demonstrate their skills, and is sometimes called a Work Trial.
- u. **Liaison** – A liaison is a DORS counselor or designee assigned to collaborate with a specific CRP. Responsibilities may include facilitating communication, reviewing policies and

procedures, and assuring smooth exchanges of information and documentation regarding invoicing and bill payment.

- v. **Local Behavioral Health Authority (LBHA)** – The authority responsible for planning, managing and monitoring public mental health services at the local level, including pre-authorization of supported employment services for individuals with mental illness within their jurisdiction.
- w. **Local Education Agency (LEA)** – In Maryland, refers to the 24 county and Baltimore City school districts.
- x. **Natural Supports** – Includes training support, social skills support, health support, community support, and job retention support, which may be provided by coworkers, mentors, management, supervisors, family members, and/or friends to foster an individual’s independence and integration in the workplace.

A goal for supported employment is that natural supports replace job coaching to the maximum extent possible. Even those who require onsite job coaching ideally develop some natural supports at the worksite. The expectation is that the job coach will, to the maximum extent possible, include development of natural supports in every participant’s job coaching plan.

When a participant makes the choice to rely on only natural supports to sustain their employment, development of natural supports must be reviewed by the DORS counselor with the job developer and the job coach during each discussion regarding the job coaching plan, job stabilization, and in monthly job development and job coaching reports.

- y. **Ongoing Support Services** – These are supported employment services provided by behavioral health CRPs (see **Section 809**). DORS, using funds under the supported employment program and/or the vocational rehabilitation (VR) program, pays for these services from the time of job placement until the transition to extended services, at which time the individual is considered to have achieved job stabilization.

Thereafter, funding for ongoing support services is provided by an extended services funding provider (usually BHA or DDA) or via natural supports throughout the individual’s term of employment in a particular job placement. For youth with most significant disabilities, DORS may be the extended services funding provider for up to four years, until the youth reaches age 25, until funding is available from an alternative provider (BHA or DDA), or until natural supports are available (whichever comes first).

- z. **Recovery** – A process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential. SAMHSA has also delineated four major dimensions that support a life in recovery (Source: samhsa.gov/recovery):
 1. **Health:** overcoming or managing one’s disease(s) as well as living in a physically and emotionally healthy way.
 2. **Home:** a stable and safe place to live.
 3. **Purpose:** meaningful daily activities, such as a job, school, volunteerism, family caretaking, or creative endeavors, and the independence, income and resources to participate in society.
 4. **Community:** relationships and social networks that provide support, friendship, love, and hope.
- aa. **Resource Coordination** – The regional DDA administrative entity which coordinates services, plans and funding for individuals with developmental disabilities.
- bb. **Short-Term Basis** – The time period during which an individual needs to be employed at less than minimum wage while working in an integrated setting, for the purpose of working up to a

competitive wage. Per 34 CFR §363.1(c), this period of time is within six months of achieving the supported employment outcome (the initial employment start date); or, in limited circumstances, within a period not to exceed 12 months from the achievement of the supported employment outcome, if a longer period is necessary based on the needs of the individual and the individual has demonstrated progress toward competitive earnings based on information contained in the service record.

- cc. **Short-term Job Coaching** – This service is for individuals not funded for long-term supports who require intensive, time-limited services to maximize likelihood of obtaining and maintaining employment. Such job-coaching may be provided at the job site or off-site (see **RSM 2, Section 715.07**).
- dd. **Staffing** – A discussion between DORS staff and a CRP for the primary purpose of reviewing an individual's progress toward achieving employment, and which may or may not include the individual.
- ee. **Transition to Extended Services** – In supported employment, refers to progression from intensive job coaching services funded by DORS once job stabilization has occurred to ongoing supports provided by the long-term funding source (usually DDA or BHA) or to natural supports (see **Section 812**).
- ff. **Youth with a disability** – An individual with a disability who is at least 14 years of age and less than age 25.

803 Supported Employment Services

Per WIOA 34 CFR 361.5(53), supported employment means CIE, including customized employment, or employment in an integrated work setting in which an individual with a most significant disability, including a youth with a most significant disability, is working on a short-term basis toward CIE that is individualized, and customized, consistent with the unique strengths, abilities, interests, and informed choice of the individual, including with ongoing support services for individuals with the most significant disabilities:

- a. For whom CIE has not historically occurred, or for whom CIE has been interrupted or intermittent as a result of a significant disability; and
- b. Who, because of the nature and severity of their disabilities, need intensive supported employment services and extended services after the transition from support provided by the designated State unit, in order to perform this work.

For purposes of this part, an individual with a most significant disability, whose supported employment in an integrated setting does not satisfy the criteria of CIE, is considered to be working on a short-term basis toward CIE so long as the individual can reasonably anticipate achieving CIE:

- a. Within six months of achieving a supported employment outcome; or
- b. In limited circumstances, within a period not to exceed 12 months from the achievement of the supported employment outcome, if a longer period is necessary based on the needs of the individual, and the individual has demonstrated progress toward competitive earnings based on information contained in the service record.

The **Employment Services Referral Form (RS-7f)** form may be used, as appropriate, to make a referral of a consumer to a provider for supported employment services.

Refer to the **CRP Fee Schedule** for information about payment for supported employment services.

803.01 Scope of Supported Employment Services

- a. Supported employment services include:
 1. Supports to maintain an employment outcome satisfying the criteria for CIE.
 2. Supports to maintain integrated employment while working on a short-term basis toward CIE.
 3. Extended services for youth with most significant disabilities.
- b. Supported employment services do not include the following services which must be paid for using funds other than supported employment funds:
 1. Job search, job placement services, and incentive payments
 2. Other rehabilitation services specified in **RSM 2, Section 700** needed to maintain job stability.
- c. Supported employment services may be provided once the individual has been placed in an employment setting, and are often provided at the work site, but may, at the request of the individual, be provided off-site (usually to avoid disclosure of the disability to the employer and/or coworkers), and include but are not limited to the following.
 1. Intensive on-site job skills training and other training provided by skilled job coaches, employment specialists, coworkers and other qualified individuals. This would involve the actual time spent observing, supervising, intervening and assisting the individual in the performance of his or her duties.
 2. Follow-up services, including:
 - i. Regular contact with employers, trainees, parents, guardians or other representatives of trainees, and other suitable professional and informed advisors in order to reinforce and stabilize the job placement.
 - ii. Off-site job coaching, as applicable. If off-site monitoring is requested by the individual or other special circumstances exist preventing provision of ongoing support services at the work site, DORS shall assure that the provider meets in-person at least twice per month with the individual and that necessary services are provided for consumer to maintain employment stability.
 - iii. Facilitation of natural supports at the work site (networking with employer to promote the development and use of natural supports, to include the actual time that the job coach spends working with the regular work-site supervisor, co-workers, parents or others to assist that person toward assuming the function of providing the regular or intermittent job coaching the individual needs in order to maintain the job).
 3. Social skills training, including the enhancement of those behaviors that are needed in order to get along with others at and away from the workplace. Areas of consideration include interpersonal skills; grooming; nutrition and hygiene; budgeting or banking.
 4. Related services, including:
 - i. Advocacy on behalf of the individual related to health and wellness, housing, legal issues, as appropriate.

- ii. Travel training, which teaches individuals how to use public transportation or other means of getting to and from the job.
5. Other supported employment services, including:
- i. Attendance at staffing (up to one hour per month prorated based on the number of consumers discussed during the staffing)
 - ii. Job coach travel time to and between alternate work sites when the travel is outside of regular work hours or the job coach's regular catchment area. If more than one individual is seen at the same location, the job coach must split/prorate the travel time.
- d. Discrete post-employment services following transition to extended services, but prior to exit from the VR program, may be provided by DORS when necessary to maintain the job placement and not available from the extended services provider (see **Section 814**).

803.02 General Requirements

- a. **Assessment for Determining Eligibility and Priority of Services** – In order to determine whether an individual is eligible for vocational rehabilitation (VR) services and the individual's priority under an order of selection for services (if the State is operating under an order of selection), DORS must conduct an assessment for determining eligibility and priority for services, document analysis of the results of the assessment in the individual's record of service, and note information affirming the eligibility and disability priority determinations. The assessment must be conducted in the most integrated setting possible, consistent with the individual's needs and informed choice, and in accordance with the following provisions:

The determination by DORS of an applicant's eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services must be based only on the following requirements:

1. A determination by qualified personnel that the applicant has a physical or mental impairment;
 2. A determination by qualified personnel that the applicant's physical or mental impairment constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment for the applicant; and
 3. A determination by a qualified vocational rehabilitation counselor employed by the designated State unit that the applicant requires vocational rehabilitation services to prepare for, secure, retain, advance in, or regain employment that is consistent with the individual's unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interest, and informed choice. For purposes of an assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs under this part, an individual is presumed to have a goal of an employment outcome.
- b. **Time Frame for Provision of Supported Employment Services** – The time frame for the provision of intensive supported employment services by the VR agency is no longer than 24 months, unless under special circumstances the eligible individual and the rehabilitation counselor jointly agree to extend the time to achieve the employment outcome identified in the IPE. The extension provides additional time for individuals with the most significant disabilities to receive services and supports necessary after placement to achieve job stabilization in CIE or to work toward CIE while working on a short-term basis in an integrated setting.
- c. **Time Frame and Expectations for DORS-Funded Provision of Extended Services for Youth with Most Significant Disabilities** – The timeframe for the provision of DORS-funded extended services for youth with most significant disabilities begins when the individual transitions from intensive services and the job stabilization date has been entered in AWARE™.

Extended services funded by DORS will last no longer than 4 years or until the individual turns age 25, or until alternate sources of extended support funding, or natural supports, are available, whichever comes first. DORS-funded ongoing support services during the extended phase shall include:

1. Sufficient monitoring (at a minimum, twice monthly) at the work site of the individual to assess and verify continued employment stability,
2. Coordination or provision of specific services at or away from the work site that are needed to maintain employment stability.

804 VR Process for DORS Services/Supported Employment

Except as indicated here, policies and procedures in **RSM 2, Section 400, Section 500** and **Section 600** apply to individuals applying for DORS services/supported employment. Community providers of supported employment services are eligible for a placement incentives under certain conditions – see the **Job Placement Incentives Fact Sheet (RS-7j)** for more information on the incentive.

Following are considerations regarding the rehabilitation process for individuals who require supported employment services.

804.01 VR Process for Individuals Eligible for BHA-Funded Supported Employment

DORS and BHA have a collaborative partnership that is based upon the belief that the best use of federal and state resources is on programs and services that research shows produces the outcomes needed in an effective and efficient manner. Both agencies are committed to a streamlined service delivery system that facilitates the recovery process and the employment goals of persons with severe and persistent mental illness, and includes the braiding of responsibilities and funding of each agency in providing supported employment services for individuals with serious mental illness.

A key element in the facilitation of service provision to all eligible individuals referred from behavioral health CRPs to DORS for VR services and supported employment includes established timelines and DORS staff having guest access into the BHA Administrative Service Organization's (ASO) electronic case management system, Incedo (see **Section 804.01(a)1**).

- a. **Following are DORS policy and procedures for individuals referred from CRPs who are eligible for Supported Employment funded through the BHA Public Mental Health System.**

This includes individuals referred by CRPs which have adopted EBPSE (see **Attachment 800-6**), and those who practice more "traditional" supported employment. It also includes individuals referred by ACT teams to designated DORS counselors/supervisors (see **Section 802(a)**).

1. **Referral/Application (RSM 2, Section 400)** – DORS counselors (and supervisors) whose primary caseloads include consumers with severe and persistent mental illness shall use guest access into the BHA case management system, which provides immediate access to DORS referral, application and eligibility information. This includes information required in the **DORS Intake Form** along with supporting documentation related to the disability, and Local Behavioral Health Authority (LBHA) approval for long-term funding.

DORS counselors and supervisors will follow the procedures below for initiating services for individuals referred through the BHA case management system.

- i. **Referral** – The referral is official with the forwarding of an email from the ASO to the DORS counselor advising that an approved authorization is available for the consumer. DORS staff shall only accept an email notification from the ASO, indicating

the individual's eligibility for long-term funding for Supported Employment Services through BHA is in place.

The notification from the ASO will include: The Participant's Name, DOB, and Incedo ID. The notification will also include a link to access the system as well as the name of the provider, the authorization number and the services authorized.

The date of the email notification from the provider shall serve as the referral date as documented in AWARE™.

Note: Since DORS staff do not have access to Maryland Public Health System's case management system for ACT referrals, this official referral process via email does not apply to ACT. See Section iii. below.

- ii. **Application** – The DORS Application and health status information may be downloaded from the ASO electronic case management system by the DORS counselor anytime between the date of referral and the initial interview.

The application date shall coincide with the initial interview, which shall be conducted, as follows:

- a. On an individual basis as opposed to group intake or orientation.
- b. At the provider agency or a mutually agreed upon community location.
- c. Within two weeks of referral. In extenuating circumstances, the DORS supervisor shall assure completion of the initial interview in a timely manner.
- d. The counselor shall have the consumer sign and date the DORS Application downloaded from the BHA electronic case management system. On the rare occasion when the counselor is unable to retrieve the application from the BHA electronic case management system, the counselor shall have the consumer sign and date the **DORS Intake Form** from AWARE™.

The consumer's signature and date will serve to confirm the date of the consumer's application for DORS services.

- e. When the counselor has downloaded equivalent documentation from the BHA case management system, the consumer will not be required to complete the **DORS Intake Form** and **Supported Employment Certification (RS-6e)** to avoid redundancy.
- f. The counselor shall include in the initial interview other information not explicitly a part of the BHA case management system, such as:
 - Voter Registration Certification (RS-1xx)
 - Barriers to Employment Review Form (RS-4s)
 - Beginning the Job Search: Consent for Disclosure (RS-8f)
 - Disclosures:
 - Professional Disclosure Statement (RS-1m)
 - Notification Regarding Email Encryption (RS-2d)
 - Brochures:
 - Opening Doors to Employment
 - Informed Choice
 - Client Assistance Program (CAP)
 - Fact Sheets – as appropriate and related to services requested or predicted, such as:

- Assistive Technology (RS-6q)
 - Self-Employment (RS-6k)
 - Post-Secondary Education (RS-6d)
 - Vehicle Modifications (RS-6n)
 - Home Modifications (RS-6m)
 - Substance Abuse Information (RS-4n)
 - Ticket to Work (RS-1f)
- g. DORS staff will enter the application information into AWARE™ and assure that a copy of the completed **DORS Intake Form** (from AWARE™) is forwarded to the consumer.
- h. Additionally, the DORS counselor will scan into AWARE™ the application, the approved Pre-Placement authorization, diagnostic information, and related functional limitations information retrieved through the Maryland Public Mental Health System's case management system.
- The Diagnostic information is located on the Authorization Page under Diagnosis.
 - The Functional limitation information is located under Clinical Assessments also on the Authorization Page.
- iii. **ACT Referrals** – For individuals referred to DORS from Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams, the DORS counselor will not have guest access into the Maryland Public Mental Health System's case management system. Instead, hard copies of the required information will be forwarded by the ACT program to the DORS counselor with the referral. This will include information required for the DORS application; health status information (e.g., treatment plan signed by a mental health professional); and Local Behavioral Health Authority (LBHA) approval for ACT services (for long-term funding) and other pertinent information. DORS staff will enter application and other information into AWARE™ based on the information provided, and shall provide a copy of the completed DORS application from AWARE™ to the consumer.

DORS policy regarding receipt of paper applications and the official application date applies to ACT referrals (see **RSM 2, Section 404**).

In the event the DORS counselor has significant concerns about a referral who may have received DORS services on a number of occasions without achieving an employment outcome, the counselor shall request consultation with the DORS Staff Specialist for Community Rehabilitation Programs, the referring Provider, and the BHA liaison to DORS. Following this consultation, in the event there are continuing concerns about the referral, staff shall request consultation with the Office of Field Services Director or Office for Blindness & Vision Services Director, as applicable, through supervisory channels.

b. Eligibility/Priority (RSM 2, Section 500):

1. An approved **BHA Authorization for Supported Employment Services** means that the individual's diagnosis fits within the BHA priority population (see **Attachment 800-5**) and that the individual has at least three serious functional limitations. Therefore, DORS staff will utilize supporting documentation provided by BHA (accessed via the OPTUM/Incedo system) to expedite eligibility determination and assignment to the appropriate Order of Selection (see **Section 803.02, General Requirements**). The documentation includes the DORS Application, the approved BHA authorization for long-term Supported Employment Services funding, the BHA diagnostic information, BHA identified functional limitations, psychiatric/psychological reports, and/or treatment records.

2. The DORS counselor shall review medical and psychological/psychiatric information found in the BHA case management system. Disability information, including diagnostic codes, will be entered in AWARE™; the Disability Priority Page shall be used to document the justification of priority category assignment. The DORS counselor shall download the supporting documentation accessed via the OPTUM/Incedo case management system and attach into AWARE™. This information may also be referenced in a case note or revisited at a later date within the Maryland Public Mental Health System's case management system.
3. When there is sufficient information in the OPTUM/Incedo system, the DORS counselor does not need to request additional psychological or medical evaluation to determine eligibility for DORS services, in particular DORS supported employment services.
4. When there is insufficient information in the OPTUM/Incedo system, the DORS counselor shall request additional psychological or medical information from the referring provider to determine eligibility for DORS services, in particular DORS supported employment services.
5. Individuals interested in vocational training (**RSM 2, Section 715**) and/or post-secondary education (**RSM 2, Section 1500**) must still qualify for those services. These services may happen concurrently with supported employment services.
6. Individuals are not screened out because of a history or diagnosis of substance abuse or substance abuse lapses. DORS, along with CRP staff, work with individuals to fully support a recovery lifestyle. Provide the **Substance Abuse Information Sheet (RS-1d)**, as appropriate. DORS staff may not require a specific period of abstinence prior to determining an individual eligible for DORS services.
7. In the event the referral is affected by the waiting list, the DORS counselor shall send the BHA Referrals letter to the provider, indicating an approximate time the services may begin. See "Outside Correspondence" catalog in AWARE™ Letters, Participant module.

c. **Plan (IPE) Development/Services (RSM 2, Section 600 & Section 800):**

1. **IPE** development shall proceed expeditiously from the time of eligibility determination, and include collaboration with CRP staff working with the individual.
2. The IPE Employment Goal may relate to being an employee or establishing a self-employment venture. Self-employment may be a viable option for consideration by individuals who require supported employment services.
3. The **IPE** shall include information about supported employment services as delineated in **Section 803**.
4. It is not necessary for the CRP to complete and forward the **Supported Employment Certification form (RS-6e)** for individuals eligible for BHA-funded supported employment (EBPSE or non-EBPSE site); information confirming Local Behavioral Health Authority (LBHA) approval is available through the Public Mental Health case management system or directly from the ACT program.
5. If the consumer is a student interested in Pre-ETS (rather than immediate supported employment job coaching) and these services appear appropriate, the DORS counselor shall advise that DORS will not be funding supported employment job coaching at that time, indicating the rationale (alternate services).
6. Individuals may receive employment services and training at the same time. On these occasions, the goal of the **IPE** will be the employment expected to result from the training, and employment stability will be achieved after training is complete and the individual has been stabilized in employment related to that training. Once employed, the individual's

employment shall be documented in an employment record, moving the case to “Service-E” status.

Following are DORS policy and procedures for DORS Staff to follow in referring individuals to CRPs for Supported Employment funded through the BHA Public Mental Health System.

This includes individuals referred to CRPs which have adopted EBPSE and those that practice more “traditional” supported employment. In rare circumstances it may also include individuals referred to Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams by designated DORS counselors or supervisors.

- a. If an applicant appears to need supported employment services due to a mental health disability, the counselor shall inquire with the referral source or BHA whether the applicant is currently eligible for or receiving BHA supported employment. If not, a request shall be made to an appropriate BHA provider or, when indicated, a coordinating entity for determination of eligibility for the services being requested. The DORS counselor shall include with the referral any pertinent documentation of the disability including diagnostic information, benefits/insurance status, information that can be re-released from other sources, and history of treatment if available.
- b. If the individual is receiving BHA supported employment services, the counselor will obtain a **Release of Confidential Information** from the consumer and contact the provider to schedule an initial intake.
- c. If eligibility for BHA is not determined as of **IPE** development or the individual is determined ineligible for BHA supported employment, consider provision of short-term job coaching for the individual consistent with **RSM 2, Section 715.07** or develop a supported employment **IPE** using the process indicated in **Section 804.03**.
- d. If, subsequent to **IPE** development including non-supported short-term job coaching, the individual is determined eligible for BHA supported employment, amend the **IPE** to indicate supported employment services and long-term supports, and check the associated Special Programs indicator in AWARE™.

804.02 VR Process for Individuals Eligible or Potentially Eligible for DDA-Funded Supported Employment Funding

- a. **Referral** – DORS counselors shall obtain referrals for supported employment through usual liaison responsibilities and other appropriate means. The DDA provider or Coordinator of Community Services (CCS) referring the individual shall receive a copy of the DORS letter to the individual with the **DORS Intake Packet**, and shall assist the individual with following through with the appointment and application process.
- b. **Application** – Usual application procedures apply (see **RSM 2, Section 400**). The DDA provider and/or Coordinator of Community Services (CCS) will provide the following information, as available, while assisting the individual to apply for DORS services. The DORS counselor will review Application materials:
 1. Documentation of current services as documented in PCIS2 and/or LTSS
 2. Confirmation of availability of long term supports, as applicable
 3. DDA Person-Centered Plan
 4. Name and contact information of CCS and a release for information exchange
 5. Signed release of information and completed DORS referral

6. Most recent pertinent and applicable medical documentation and/or assessments
7. Preliminary documentation related to employment exploration, if applicable (e.g., Discovery Profile, information related to previous employment history, and preliminary benefits planning report when available (and other efforts toward CIE).

c. **Eligibility/Priority (RSM 2, Section 500)**

1. **Assessment for determining eligibility and priority for services** (see **Section 803.02, General Requirements**) – The DORS counselor may use information provided by the DDA provider or CCS to expedite the eligibility determination process. Individuals who have been determined eligible for DDA services and are pursuing CIE are presumed eligible for VR services, but may be subject to an Order of Selection.
2. **Determination of an Individual’s intent to achieve an “employment outcome” which is defined as employment in CIE, including supported employment** – If an individual chooses to pursue work that does not satisfy the definition of “employment outcome” for purposes of the VR program such as sheltered/non-integrated employment or unpaid employment, the individual must seek services from another agency or provider.

The counselor will refer the individual to local extended employment providers or local programs (e.g., community rehabilitation programs, State Use programs, and Centers for Independent Living) that can meet the individual’s needs.

- d. **Supported Employment Assessment** – A DORS counselor assessment (interview, review of records including school records, personal and social history, workshop/volunteer and any work related type experiences, consultation with family, service coordination and providers) shall be completed to establish the needs of the individual, addressing rehabilitation, career, and job needs and need for supported employment. The DORS counselor may include trial work experience and/or the purchase of a community-based assessment if necessary to help identify needed employment and community supports.

- e. **Trial Work Experience** – If an initial assessment concludes that the individual may be too severe to benefit from VR services, trial work experiences must be provided to assure clear and convincing evidence before the individual is determined incapable of benefitting from the program and therefore ineligible for the program.

1. In the event that an individual is determined ineligible after trial work is provided, the individual’s record of service will be closed and a list of potential resources will be provided to the individual.
2. In the event that an individual is determined eligible for services after trial work and the individual is in an open disability priority category, the counselor will proceed to develop the **IPE** with the consumer expeditiously.

f. **Identifying Source of Extended Supported Employment Services**

1. When an individual who requires supported employment services has a commitment of DDA funding for extended services available immediately, documentation shall include one of the following:
 - Copy of the DDA Award Letter
 - Copy of the DDA Provider Consumer Information System II (PCIS II) eligibility screen
 - Completed **Supported Employment Certification (RS-6e)**
2. When an adult who evidently will require supported employment services does not yet have a commitment from DDA that funding for extended services will be available within six

months of the **IPE** begin date, possible alternate sources of provision and/or funding of extended supports shall be investigated (see **Section 804.03, VR Process for Individuals Without Long-Term Funding Available for Extended Supported Employment Services**).

3. For high school students, DDA dedicates funding each fiscal year to provide supported employment services for transitioning youth, contingent upon legislative budget approval. When preparing **IPEs** for high school students during their last year and there is a reasonable expectation that long-term DDA funding will be available within six months of high school exit, a supported employment plan may be developed including a step for the transition to extended services provided by DDA. If it is not anticipated that long-term DDA funding will be available within six months of high school exit, then the process in **Section 804.03** must be followed.
4. When an individual appears to have the potential to maintain successful employment after receiving time-limited supports to stabilize the employment, an **IPE** shall be developed including DORS short-term job coaching. Prior to job stabilization, the DORS counselor, individual, and CRP may reevaluate whether the individual will require ongoing supports and whether it is likely that natural supports will be available. If so, administrative approval may be requested to add supported employment services to an amended **IPE** after provision of short-term job coaching to facilitate the development of natural supports (see **Section 804.04**).

g. **Plan Development** – see **Section 805**.

804.03 VR Process for Eligible Individuals Without Long-Term Funding Available for Extended Supported Employment Services

When it is determined that an eligible adult, student, or youth with most significant disabilities meets the requirements for supported employment services and the individual does not have an immediate guarantee of long-term funding availability, DORS shall evaluate whether the individual will have alternative sources available to provide ongoing support services after job stabilization has been achieved:

- a. **Natural Supports** – Examples of sources of natural supports include co-workers, family members, friends, and community groups/volunteers. The counselor may use the **Natural Supports Worksheet (RS-4u)** to facilitate discussion with the consumer regarding the potential for using natural supports in the workplace. Consideration should be given to the consumer's previous experience with natural supports, present comfort with the job developer and job coach assisting with the development of natural supports, and the potential for the consumer's employment goal to be available in a work culture where natural supports are likely to be available.
- b. **Alternate Sources** – Examples of alternate sources of funding for extended services include potential future use of the individual's DDA Individual Support Services (ISS), Impairment-Related Work Expenses (IRWE), or, if the individual received Social Security benefits, Ticket to Work assignment to a Partner EN for continued employment supports.
- c. **Reasonable Expectation** – When there is a reasonable expectation that natural supports or other alternate source will be available, a supported employment plan may be drafted and initiated with prior administrative approval. The DORS counselor shall include the basis for the reasonable expectation on the **IPE**.
- d. **Youth Extended Services** – If, when an employed individual is a youth (less than age 25) in Service-E status who is ready to transition to extended services, and long-term funding, natural supports, other alternative sources are not yet available, DORS may consider amending the **IPE** to include Youth Extended Services funded by DORS. Inclusion of Youth Extended Services on

an amended **IPE** requires administrative approval, and may be granted for one year at a time, for up to a maximum of four years, unless other resources become available first.

805 Development of the IPE for Supported Employment

If assessment results demonstrate potential for CIE and need for supported employment services, an **IPE** shall be developed within 90 days from the date of eligibility determination, unless there has been an agreed upon extension.

805.01 Supported Employment Plans for Individuals with BHA or DDA Funding Available for Extended Supported Services

In addition to the basic requirements of an **IPE** as detailed in **RSM 2, Section 600**, the information below shall be included in the initial **IPE** or amendment:

- a. Provision of Benefits Planning information regarding work incentives provided through the Social Security Administration.
- b. The individual's targeted approximate number of work hours per week (indicate a range of hours, e.g., 20 to 25).
- c. A description of the job development services (see **Section 802(I)**), as applicable.
- d. A description of the intensive, on-site or off-site, supported employment services (see **Section 802(k)** and **Section 806.01**) beginning at placement, to include a provision for decreasing hours over time to reach stabilization (25% or less support required on a continuing basis) prior to transition to extended services. The estimated DORS service cost shall be based on the targeted number of hours in the IPE and the number of hours of job coaching indicated in **Attachment 800-3, Job Coaching Fading Schedule** prior to transition to long-term funding.
- e. A description of the ongoing support services needed (post transition to extended services), as a separate service (include a "planned service" for "Extended Services Provided by DDA Provider" or "Extended Services Provided by BHA Provider"). This shall include, if appropriate, indication of whether the services are on-site or off-site and identification of the public or private programs that will provide the ongoing support services under "my chosen provider."

805.02 Supported Employment Plans for Adults or Youth with Most Significant Disabilities Developed Based on the Reasonable Expectation That Extended Services Will Be Available From Natural Supports

In addition to the basic requirements of an **IPE** as detailed in **RSM 2, Section 600**, the information below shall be included in the initial **IPE** or amendment:

- a. Provision of Benefits Planning information regarding work incentives provided through the Social Security Administration.
- b. The individual's targeted approximate number of work hours per week (indicate a range of hours, e.g., 20 to 25).
- c. A description of the job development services (see **Section 802(I)**), as applicable.
- d. A description of the intensive, on-site or off-site, supported employment services (see **Section 802(k)** and **Section 806.01**) beginning at placement, to include a provision for decreasing hours over time to reach stabilization (25% or less support required on a continuing basis) prior to transition to extended services. The estimated DORS service cost shall be based on the

targeted number of hours in the **IPE** and the number of hours of job coaching indicated in **Attachment 800-3, Job Coaching Fading Schedule** prior to transition to natural supports.

- e. A description of the ongoing support services needed (post transition to extended services), as a separate service (include a “planned service” for “Extended Services Provided by Natural Supports”). This shall include, if appropriate, indication of whether the services are on-site or off-site and identification of the public or private programs that will provide the ongoing support services under “my chosen provider.” This planned service may also include an employment stability follow-along fee (see **RSM 2, Section 915.02**) for the CRP to ensure natural supports continue to succeed in helping the individual maintain job stabilization, and the Supported Employment Natural Supports Placement Incentive (see **RSM 2, Section 915.01**).

805.03 Supported Employment Plans for Youth with Most Significant Disabilities Using DORS Funding for Extended Supported Services

During the initial **IPE**, DORS shall evaluate whether the youth’s natural supports are sufficient to provide the ongoing services and whether alternative sources of extended services funding are available. When it is determined that the youth will require more support than can be provided via natural supports and long-term funding and other alternate sources are not available, the DORS counselor may amend the **IPE** to include Youth Extended Services funded by DORS, with administrative approval. In addition to the basic requirements of an **IPE** as detailed in **RSM 2, Section 600**, the **IPE** amendment shall include the information required in **Section 805.01** as well as the following information:

- a. The number of months that DORS supported employment funding may be used for ongoing support services following the individual’s transition to extended services (see **Section 803.02(c)**).
- b. Possible alternate sources of provision and/or funding of extended supports, including:
 - Natural supports (e.g., family members, friends, co-workers)
 - Purchase by the individual through work incentives such as an Impairment-Related Work Expense (IRWE)
 - Use of the individual's DDA Individual Support Services (ISS) funding
 - Ticket to Work with identification of the extended service provider as an EN.

As soon as possible after the transition to DORS-funded extended support services, identified alternate supports should be phased in, as appropriate.

806 Purchase of Supported Employment Services

806.01 Hourly Rate Payment System

This applies to purchase of supported employment from DDA providers and from BHA providers using a traditional service model and ACT (not EBPSE).

- a. **Job Development Hours** – See **RSM 2, Section 913, Purchase of Job Placement Services**.
- b. **Intensive Supported Employment Job Coaching Hours** – Once employment is obtained, job coaching may be authorized in increments determined by the appropriate **Job Coaching Fading Schedule (Attachment 800-3)** for the number of hours anticipated per work weeks. If the CRP requests additional hours after the initial number indicated by the fading schedule have been used, the provider must provide written justification and the approval of the DORS regional director is required, with a staffing scheduled as determined by the DORS regional director.

- c. **Service Intensity/Job Stabilization** – One of the criteria for "job stabilization" is that DORS funding for intensive job coaching has ceased. The decision regarding when the individual's employment is stable shall be a mutual determination agreed upon by the counselor, consumer, and CRP.

Supported employment job coaching may be provided at the job site or off-site if requested by the individual. It is designed as an intensive service. Over time, it is anticipated that the consumer will need fewer hours of support, as reflected in **Attachment 800-3, Job Coaching Fading Schedule**, until he/she has reached job stabilization.

For individuals who have BHA funding for supported employment, job stabilization occurs on or about the 45th day of employment and the individual transitions to extended services funded by BHA.

- d. **Placement Incentive Availability** – When a CRP authorized by DORS to provide job development assists a consumer to be hired by a business in a position other than one funded by AbilityOne or Maryland Employment Works or one with a CRP as the employer of record, then the CRP may request an authorization for any or all of the placement incentives options available, as applicable (see **RSM 2, Section 915.01, Placement Incentives Availability**).

806.02 Milestone Payment System

As described in the **Milestone Payment System Fact Sheet (RS-7L)**, this applies to purchase of supported employment services from BHA providers of EBPSE. As indicated in the **CRP Fee Schedule**, providers receive payment at four points in the process:

- a. **Milestone 1:** Initiation of job development (using EBP Milestone 1 Funds or, when insufficient, Main VR funds).
- b. **Milestone 2:** Initiation of job coaching after placement (using Supported Employment or EBP Milestone 2 and 3 Funds or, when insufficient, Main VR).
- c. **Milestone 3:** Achievement of sustained job placement, to be paid at 45 days, the earliest date that an individual's employment may be considered stable (using Supported Employment or EBP Milestone 2 and 3 Funds or, when insufficient, Main VR).
- d. **Milestone 4:** Maintenance of employment for 90 days post-stabilization (using Supported Employment or EBP Milestone 2 and 3 Funds or, when insufficient, Main VR).

When the CRP is authorized by DORS to provide job placement services, placement incentives are available. See **RSM 2, Section 915.01, Placement Incentives**, and the **Milestone Payment System Fact Sheet (RS-7L)** for information regarding placement incentive availability.

806.03 Additional Requirements

- a. Supported employment services shall be purchased in accordance with the **CRP Fee Schedule** and the policies and procedures set forth in **RSM 3, Section 1000, Section 1100** and **Section 1400**.
- b. Job coaching services will be purchased only from DORS-approved programs.
- c. If the consumer's employment goal requires attainment of a credential to support advancement in employment, DORS may provide funding in support of the consumer's educational goal, consistent with DORS Post-Secondary Education policy (**RSM 2, Section 1500**), while providing funding for supported employment services in a job closely related to the employment goal until the individual has achieved job stabilization in employment consistent with the IPE goal.

807 Employment Services Progress Report

For DORS consumers of EBPSE job coaching services, the provider submits to the DORS counselor the monthly progress report required by BHA.

CRPs shall use the **Employment Services Progress Report (RS-7d)** when sending the report and invoice for services provided for individuals receiving job development services, intensive job coaching prior to transition to long-term funding for extended services provided by DDA or BHA (Traditional) or by natural supports, and Youth Extended Services.

The CRP shall complete the **Employment Services Progress Report (RS-7d)** after the individual served has completed the first month of supported employment job development and/or coaching and monthly thereafter until job stabilization is achieved or until the CRP is no longer providing DORS-funded Youth Extended Services. The report is required each month whether the CRP is sending an invoice to DORS or not.

- For job development services, the CRP report must include written justification on the **Employment Services Progress Report (RS-7d)** for providing fewer than six hours of service in a month.
- When employment is achieved, the CRP report must include job information (e.g., employer, job title, hours worked, and wages) in the report.
- When providing intensive job coaching prior to job stabilization ahead of the individual's transition to extended services provided by natural supports, the CRP report must be reporting on the development of natural supports.
- When providing Youth Extended Services, the CRP report must routinely report on progress toward obtaining long-term funding or developing natural supports.

See **Attachment 800-1** for additional guidance in using the **Employment Services Progress Report (RS-7d)**.

808 Reassessment

The individual's need for supported employment and most work-related issues are addressed during the comprehensive assessment of VR needs (see **Section 804**).

Additional assessments may be undertaken at any point in the VR process, if needed, to achieve, regain or retain employment. Additional assessment may be needed to re-determine the most suitable placement for an individual and what ongoing supports are needed (e.g., AT, behavioral interventions) or to re-evaluate changes in the consumer's functioning. Procedural requirements follow:

- a. The DORS counselor, individual, provider and others, as appropriate, shall meet to fully assess available information. If there are critical gaps related to placement, and an additional assessment would respond to those gaps, it may be authorized.
- b. The counselor shall forward to the provider specific questions to be answered by the assessment.
- c. Up to two hours of job coaching may be authorized for the job coach to conduct this additional assessment to determine what is required for the individual to achieve, regain or retain employment, with the results to be reported on the **Employment Services Progress Report (RS-7d)**.

- d. When an assessment is provided by a medical or other specialist, DORS established fees will be paid (see the **CRP Fee Schedule**) and results will be reported using the customary report form or format.

809 Transition to Extended Services

The transition to extended services begins after all supported employment services are complete. The minimum criteria that must be satisfied before an individual makes the transition from DORS to a provider of extended supports are as follows:

- a. Transition must take place no later than 24 months after the individual enters supported employment, unless a longer period of time is established in the **IPE** or an **IPE** amendment to extend the time as agreed between the individual and the DORS counselor.
- b. The individual is working in CIE.
- c. The individual is stabilized in the supported employment placement (i.e., the individual is performing satisfactorily all job duties and is reasonably expected to continue that level of performance).
- d. Necessary and appropriate extended support services, as identified in the **IPE** as needed by the individual, will continue without interruption.

810 Achievement of Job Stabilization

The date that the individual is first considered to have achieved job stabilization shall follow the successful transition from intensive job coaching support funded by DORS to extended services, provided either with DORS funding (for youth with the most significant disabilities only) or another long-term funding source, including natural supports. The DORS counselor will enter the employment "Stable Date" in the AWARE™ employment record upon the mutual agreement of the individual and the DORS counselor in consultation with the CRP.

811 Requirements for Rehabilitated Record of Services Closure

Under 34 CFR §363.54, an individual has achieved a supported employment outcome, which may be a customized employment outcome or supported self-employment, when the following criteria have been met:

- a. The individual is in CIE.
- b. The individual has completed supported employment services, which may be received for up to 24 months, or longer if the DORS counselor and the individual have determined that such services are needed to support and maintain the individual in supported employment.
- c. The individual has transitioned to extended services funded either by DORS (for youth with the most significant disabilities only), or another long-term funding source, including natural supports.
- d. The individual has achieved stability in the work setting for a minimum of 90 days of employment after transitioning to extended services.
- e. The employment is individualized and customized consistent with the strengths, abilities, interests and informed choice of the individual.

- f. The case record must document items "a" through "e" above and must contain job information verified by the individual's signature on the reporting form or by a pay sub for wages earned within the third month of stable employment.

811.01 Rehabilitated Record of Services Closure for an Adult

The DORS counselor shall consider an individual adult to be successfully rehabilitated in supported employment when the following criteria have been met:

- a. The individual is in CIE.
- b. The individual received services for up to 24 months or longer if the DORS counselor and the individual have determined that such services are needed to support and maintain the individual in supported employment.
- c. The individual transitioned to extended services funded by another provider or to natural supports.
- d. The individual achieved stability in the work setting for a minimum of at least 90 days after transitioning to extended services.
- e. The employment has been individualized and customized consistent with the strengths, abilities, interests and informed choice of the individual.
- f. The individual is working the agreed-upon work hours identified in the **IPE**.

811.02 Rehabilitated Record of Services Closure for a Youth

The DORS counselor shall consider an individual youth to be successfully rehabilitated in supported employment when the following criteria have been met:

- a. The individual is in CIE.
- b. The individual received supported employment services for up to 24 months or longer if the DORS counselor and the individual have determined that such services were needed to support and maintain the individual in supported employment.
- c. The individual transitioned to extended services, which may have initially been funded by DORS, and now are:
 - 1. Funded by an alternate provider of long-term supports, or
 - 2. Provided via natural supports.
- d. The individual achieved stability in the work setting for a minimum of at least 90 days after transitioning to extended services.
- e. The employment has been individualized and customized consistent with the strengths, abilities, interests and informed choice of the individual.
- f. The individual is working the agreed upon work hours identified in the **IPE**.

812 Requirements for Unsuccessful Record of Services Closure

The DORS record will be closed unsuccessfully when an individual does one of the following:

- a. Becomes unavailable for or declines further services before achieving employment.

- b. Chooses to pursue employment in a non-integrated setting.
- c. Does not achieve competitive wages prior to the end of the agreed upon short-term period.
- d. Is no longer eligible to receive extended services from DORS because they no longer meet the age requirement for a youth with a disability or they have received extended services for a period of four years.

813 Discrete Post Employment Services Provided after Transition to Extended Services – Individuals Eligible for DDA and BHA-funded Supported Employment

- a. Discrete post-employment services shall be provided in accordance with policy and procedures as outlined in **Section 1100, Post-Employment Services**.
- b. Discrete post-employment services under Supported Employment (Title VI-B) may be provided when necessary to maintain or regain job placement and when the services are not available through comparable services and benefits.
- c. Discrete post-employment services that may be provided by DORS, if not available from the extended services provider, include:
 - 1. Employment stability natural supports follow-along
 - 2. Job station redesign
 - 3. Repair and maintenance of assistive technology
 - 4. Replacement of prosthetic and orthotic devices

The DORS counselor shall document in the record of services that the services needed in order for the individual to maintain employment are not available through comparable services and benefits.

- d. When providing discrete post-employment services, the DORS counselor shall document in the record the following:
 - 1. The services that are requested or necessary are unavailable from the provider.
 - 2. Consideration of comparable services and benefits (see **RSM 3, Section 1300**).
 - 3. Justification of need for discrete post-employment services to maintain, regain or advance in employment.

Note: Necessary post-employment services must be documented on an amended **IPE** after the individual with a disability has achieved an employment outcome and before exiting the VR program.

814 Annual Review of Employment Outcomes Not Meeting Definition of “Competitive Integrated Employment”

DORS shall conduct semi-annual reviews for the first two years and annually thereafter to re-evaluate the status of individuals in supported employment who have achieved an employment outcome not meeting the definition of “competitive integrated employment,” which involves compensation according to Section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act and/or placement in a non-integrated work setting. The review will focus on determining progress toward CIE. It will include input from the individual or, in an appropriate case, the individual’s representative to determine the interests, priorities, and needs of the individual for employment in, or training for, CIE.

815 Reopening Closed Records of Services

815.01 Underemployment or Extensive Retraining

In instances of underemployment or a need for extensive retraining, discrete post-employment services may not be provided. Consideration shall be given to opening a new record of services on an individual basis.

815.02 Procedures for Reopening a Supported Employment Record of Services

In addition to procedures delineated in **RSM 2, Section 1000**, the DORS counselor shall:

- a. Review the objectives of the original **IPE** with the individual.
- b. Discuss with the individual and the job coach the reasons for the job loss or the need for extensive retraining, and the plans if any for additional placement activities.
- c. Document on a Case Note in AWARE™ or obtain the following in a written report from the provider:
 1. Identification of the reason(s) for the job loss or need for extensive retraining.
 2. The type of service/support being provided to the individual at the time of departure, or intended departure, from the job.
 3. The frequency of ongoing follow-up.
 4. A description of the efforts that were made to prevent the failed placement or in the case of retraining, how transferable skills were or were not utilized.
- d. The DORS counselor and individual should determine the appropriateness of using the same provider if the provider, in the counselor's and/or the individual's opinion, failed to provide timely and effective services.