

INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT (IPE)

I. LEGAL AUTHORITY:

Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended in Title IV of the Workforce Investment Act (P.L. 105-200), Title IV, Section 102(b), 34 CFR 361.45, and 34 CFR 361.46, and 29 USC 705(2)(b), 721(a)(8), 721(a)(9), 721(b)(1), 722(b)(2), 722(b)(3), 722(c), 723(a)(1), 795(k).

II. POLICY STATEMENT AND PURPOSE:

ORS will offer eligible individuals a choice in options for the development and content of a plan of action toward an employment outcome, to assist them to achieve their vocational goal. An IPE will be developed and implemented in a timely manner for each individual found eligible for vocational rehabilitation services. The IPE must be designed to achieve the specific employment outcome that is selected by the individual consistent with the individual's unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice.

A. Definition

The Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) is that part of the case record which explicitly outlines the vocational goal and service plan for the individual. It serves as a written document between the eligible individual with a disability, or as appropriate, that individual's parent, guardian, or other representative, and the VR counselor regarding mutual expectations in the rehabilitation process.

B. Conditions and Criteria

The Agency will, in a timely manner, assist each eligible individual who meets the Order of Selection (OOS) criteria (when ORS is under an OOS) to develop and implement an IPE. As a standard, the IPE should be developed within 90 days of determining that the individual is eligible and meets the agency's OOS criteria. There may be circumstances where the period of time needed is significantly shorter or longer, depending upon the nature of the individual's situation. Staff should make every effort to develop plans in a timely manner, with good judgment and care. Implementation includes periodic review of individual plans and appropriate amendments as needed to support the achievement of the employment goal.

1. Initiation and Amendment of the Individualized Plan for Employment

The development of the IPE follows after certification of eligibility for services, order of selection category, and the required assessment of vocational rehabilitation needs. It is continuously developed in the sense that

if substantive changes are needed (i.e., in the employment outcome, or in the type or provider of services), it must be amended to reflect those changes.

2. The individual, or the individual's representative, may develop all or part of the IPE independently with assistance from a qualified rehabilitation counselor (A qualified rehabilitation counselor is required to possess a Master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling or a Master's degree in a closely-related field. See Section 101.4.1. for a complete description of Qualified Rehabilitation Counselor.) or from another source selected by the individual.

3. Components of the IPE

ORS must provide information in writing or in appropriate modes of communication to individuals about the various options for developing an IPE, such as the availability of assistance from a qualified rehabilitation counselor and/or technical assistance from other sources.

The IPE:

- a. Must be developed on ORS forms;
- b. Explains relevant agency guidelines, conditions, and criteria for agency approval of the plan;
- c. Must be designed to achieve a specific vocational outcome that is consistent with the individual's unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice so that such individual may prepare for and engage in gainful employment;
- d. Identifies the employment outcome (vocational goal) and time frame for its achievement;
- e. Outlines the specific vocational rehabilitation services and the service provider(s) (when known) needed to achieve the goal; the projected time frames for the initiation and duration of each rehabilitation service and the expected funding source(s); and objective criteria for measuring progress toward achievement of the goal;
- f. It contains, as appropriate, a statement of the projected need for post-employment services;
- g. Contains the views of the individual toward the goal, services, providers, methods to secure services, and the individual's involvement in making such choices;

- h. Agreed to and signed by the eligible individual or, as appropriate, his/her representative, and approved and signed by a qualified vocational rehabilitation counselor employed by ORS;
- i. Is amended only with the individual's participation to reflect changes in goal, services, and/or service provider(s), and it reflects all services planned;
- j. Is prepared consistent with relevant elements of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) when the individual is also eligible for special education services;
- k. When a supported employment outcome has been identified, it describes the time-limited on-going supports provided by ORS, as well as those extended services provided by other State, Federal, or private programs or the basis for determining that such continuing support is available;
- l. Must be reviewed at least annually by the individual and a qualified vocational rehabilitation counselor employed at ORS or may be reviewed at any time upon the request of the consumer;
- m. Contains assurances that the individual was provided explanations, using appropriate modes of communication, regarding the following:
  - 1) The plan and the terms and conditions for the provision of services;
  - 2) The individual's rights and responsibilities;
  - 3) The appeal process and a description of the Client Assistance Program;
  - 4) The extent of the individual's participation in the cost of services;
  - 5) The extent to which goods and services are provided in an integrated setting consistent with informed choice; and
  - 6) The extent to which comparable benefits and services are available.
- n. It assures that a copy of the plan and any amendments thereto were provided to the individual;

- o. It includes the basis on which the individual has been determined to be rehabilitated;
- p. When an individual has been found ineligible after the IPE has been initiated, the IPE is amended, and includes:
  - 1) A rationale for the ineligibility decision; and
  - 2) A notation regarding the individual's full participation in and views about the decision to close the case, including the individual's rights, remedies, including CAP assistance, and
- q. When the basis of an ineligibility decision is a finding of inability to benefit from VR services leading to an employment outcome, procedures in Section 115.18 are followed.