



Employment Virtual Office Hour

Using Wrap Around Services to Support
Competitive Integrated Employment

April 24, 2026

Welcome!

Presenting Today:

- Jamie Bonser, Policy Analyst, ODP Central Office
- Mark Costello, Employment Lead, Southeast Region
- Daniel McKinnon, Employment Lead, Western Region
- Eric O'Neill, Employment Lead, Northeast Region

Agenda:

- Things to Remember
- Services that Support Employment
- Request for VOH Topics
- Q&A



Employment First

- **Pennsylvania is an Employment First State.**
 - This means that competitive integrated employment is the first consideration and preferred outcome of all publicly funded education, employment, training, and long-term supports and service programs for working-age Pennsylvanians with a disability.



What is CIE?



- **Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) is employment when an employee with a disability:**
 - Earns minimum wage or higher.
 - Works in an integrated setting and interacts with co-workers and others without disabilities.
 - Receives the same pay, benefits, and opportunities for training and advancement as co-workers without disabilities.

Payor of Last Resort



- **Payor of Last Resort-** under federal regulations ODP is the “payor of last resort” for services.
- **For today’s discussion other funding sources that may need to be considered include:**
 - Medical Assistance, Medicare, or private insurance
 - Employer funded supports (accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act)
 - Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

Please Remember

- **This presentation is a high-level overview of ODP's non-employment related services that can be used to support individuals to obtain or maintain competitive integrated employment.**
- **For questions on how these services may be used to support specific individuals, please consult with the individual's support team.**



Services that Support Employment

In addition to ODP's services which directly support employment, other services may be utilized to support people in obtaining and maintaining competitive integrated employment.

These services are available even if an individual:

- **Receives employment services funded by ODP.**
- **Has employment services funded by another source, like OVR.**
- **Maintains their employment without any direct employment supports or services.**

▶ Today's Discussion

While any service can have the potential to support an individual in obtaining or maintaining employment, we will focus on the following services for today's presentation:

- **Assistive Technology**
- **Behavioral Support**
- **Companion**
- **Community Participation Support**
- **Shift Nursing**
- **Transportation**



▶ What is Assistive Technology?

Assistive Technology allows an individual to purchase equipment or other forms of technology that are used to increase, maintain, or improve the individual's functioning or ability to exercise choice and control.

Assistive Technology services are available in:

- **Consolidated Waiver**
- **Community Living Wavier**
- **Person/Family Directed Supports**
- **Adult Autism Waiver**

Things to Consider About Assistive Technology

- **What technology is assistive?**
 - There are many types of technology and supports that can fall under assistive technology, both high tech and low tech solutions. Mobility, vision, hearing, and other supports; computers, tablets, and software, and more.
- **Are there limits?**
 - There is no lifetime limit. For consolidated waiver participants, there is a \$3,000 annual limit.
 - Solutions must be cost effective. Single expenses over \$750 must be independently evaluated. Multiple expenses totaling more than \$750 do not require this evaluation.
 - ODP is the payor of last resort.

How Can Assistive Technology Support CIE?

- **Assistive Technology services can provide individuals with flexible support in pursuit of employment goals. Here are some examples of how it can be used:**
 - Communication software and tablets.
 - Specialized or customized training and orientation materials.
 - Modified workspaces or worksites, like adjusted desk heights or accessible chairs.
 - Talk-to-text software.
 - Screen magnifiers and color adjustment for better visibility.
 - Tools for tracking and managing time and tasks, like smart watches.

▶ What is Behavioral Support?

Behavioral Supports support creation and implementation of specialized interventions that assist an individual to increase adaptive behaviors to replace or modify challenging behaviors that prevent or interfere with an individual's inclusion in their home or community, which includes their place of employment.

Behavioral Support services are available in:

- **Consolidated Waiver**
- **Community Living Wavier**
- **Person/Family Directed Supports**

*** Behavioral Specialist Services are a component of the Specialized Skill Development Service in the Adult Autism Waiver.**

Behavioral Support and CIE

- **Behavioral Support may be provided at the same time as:**
- **Advanced Supported Employment,**
- **Supported Employment, or**
- **Small Group Employment**

If the participant needs the service at their place of employment to maintain employment as documented in the service plan.

Things to Consider About Behavioral Support

Behavioral Support may only be authorized as a discrete service for a participant receiving-

- Residential Habilitation,
- Life Sharing, or
- Supported Living services

When Behavioral Support is used to support the participant to access Community Participation Support

Or

To maintain employment when provided at the participant's place of employment.

Supporting CIE



- **Having a Behavior Support Plan that addresses concerns at work**
- **Reducing behaviors can lend itself to successful employment; at home and at work**

What is the Companion Service?

The Companion service provides supervision or assistance that is designed to ensure an individual's health, safety, and welfare or to perform daily living activities that allow the individual to participate more meaningfully in home and community life, including while at work.

Companion services are available in:

- **Consolidated Waiver**
- **Community Living Wavier**
- **Person/Family Directed Supports**

Companion Services and CIE

How can the Companion Service support competitive integrated employment?

- **Companion services may be used to support individuals at work with non-skilled activities or personal care activities that either cannot be provided by coworkers or are outside the scope of the Supported Employment service.**
- **Companion services can be incorporated as part of fading plans for employment services.**

Supported Employment vs. Companion

Supported Employment	Companion
Assistance in learning new work requirements.	Non-employment related supervision. Example- Making sure a person with Prader-Willi does not eat non-edible substances at work.
Assistance in maintaining job skills.	Personal care needs. Example- eating, washing hands, taking medications, etc.
Assistance in achieving performance expectations of the employer.	Non-skilled activities. Example- prompting returning to work from scheduled breaks, reminders about workplace etiquette, assistance with organizing personal items.



▶ What is Community Participation Support?

Community Participation Support provides opportunities and support for community inclusion and building interest in and developing skills for competitive integrated employment.

Community Participation Support services are available in:

- **Consolidated Waiver**
- **Community Living Wavier**
- **Person/Family Directed Supports**

CPS Supporting CIE 1 of 2

CPS is intended to flexibly wrap around or otherwise support community life secondary to employment, as a primary goal.

- At this services core it is the first step for an individual to gain successful competitive integrated employment

Skill Building

- CPS looks to develop skills whether in social settings or steps to obtain employment
- All skill building can be utilized to obtain employment, including soft skills (being on time, hygiene, appropriate attire, meal prep, planning for future)

CPS Supporting CIE 2 of 2

A key component to this service is that the individual should receive opportunities to interact with and around others in the community.

- Research shows that developing and expanding a social network is one of the easiest ways to get hired for a job.
- **In some instances:**
- Knowing the owner or manager of a store,
- Participating around the community with volunteer activities, and
- Even being a frequent customer can be beneficial to someone in the hiring process.

Knowing more about your passions, personality, and performance means they may be more likely to hire you than someone they have never met.

What is Shift Nursing?

Shift Nursing allows for medically necessary services provided by a registered nurse that are not otherwise covered by private insurance or Medical Assistance.

Shift Nursing services are available in:

- **Consolidated Waiver**
- **Community Living Wavier**
- **Person/Family Directed Supports**

Shift Nursing and CIE

How can Shift Nursing services support competitive integrated employment?

- **Individuals may have medical needs that require the assistance of a trained medical professional and cannot be met by either natural supports or other Direct Support Professionals. The need for these supports should not represent a barrier to competitive integrated employment.**
- **The direct provision of Shift Nursing services may occur at the same time as Supported Employment services.**

Things to Consider About Shift Nursing

- **Is the individual 21 years or older?**
- **Is the need for support medically necessary?**
- **Does the individual need clinical treatment that requires the presence of a nurse?**
- **Is the required service covered by the individual's insurance (Medical Assistance, Medicare, and/or private insurance)?**



What are Transportation Services?

Transportation services allow individuals to access services and activities specified in their Individual Support Plan, including employment.

Transportation services are available in:

- **Consolidated Waiver**
- **Community Living Wavier**
- **Person/Family Directed Supports**
- **Adult Autism Waiver (Transportation Trip and Public Transportation)**

▶ What are Transportation Services cont.

- **Transportation services connect individuals to their community and help provide access to other waiver services -- like competitive integrated employment.**
- **There are three related services under the transportation umbrella:**
 - Transportation (Mile)
 - Transportation (Trip)
 - Public Transportation
- **The service can be rendered by providers and agencies, family members, employers, and other licensed drivers in the individual's network**

Transportation Services Considerations

Transportation is included in the rates for several other services, so it cannot be provided at the same time as them.

- *For example, CPS and transportation cannot be provided at the same time.*
- **Residential habilitation programs receive payment for transportation, but individuals can still use transportation services for traveling to and from competitive integrated employment.**
- **Some costs may not be covered, even if transportation itself is.**
 - *For example, public transit fares are covered, but paying to replace a lost transit card may not be.*

Future Topics

Before we move into today's Q&A portion of the Virtual Office Hour, we would like to request your assistance.

Please let us know in the chat if there are any topics that you would like us to discuss during upcoming Virtual Office Hours.



Discussion & Questions

Now we would like to hear from you!

Please feel free to:

- **Ask questions**
- **Share**
 - **Successes**
 - **Challenges**
 - **Ideas**

Please remember, if your question is about a specific individual or situation, reach out directly to the appropriate ODP Employment Lead.



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Resources

- [Individual Support Plan Manual \(2026\)](#)
- [MyODP Employment Page](#)
- [ODP Announcement 25-117: Employment Service Definition Question and Answer, Version 3, and Employment Services Quick Guide, Version 2](#)
- [ODP ID/A Waiver Services Quick Guide: Version 2](#)
- [2024-2025 ODP Employment First Report](#)
- [Bulletin 00-19-01: OVR Referral Process for ODP Employment Related Services](#)

