



## **Office of Developmental Programs (ODP)**

**A Comprehensive Review of ODP's Employment Services**

**Friday, January 23, 2026**

# Welcome!

Presenting today:

- Jamie Bonser, Policy Analyst, ODP Central Office
- Tom Flynn, Employment Lead, ODP Central Region

## Agenda

- Reminders
  - Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE)
  - CIE Data
  - What is a Waiver?
- Review ODP's Employment Related Services
  - Advanced Supported Employment, Supported Employment, Small Group Employment Services
  - Benefits Counseling
  - Wraparound Services
- Questions
- Resources



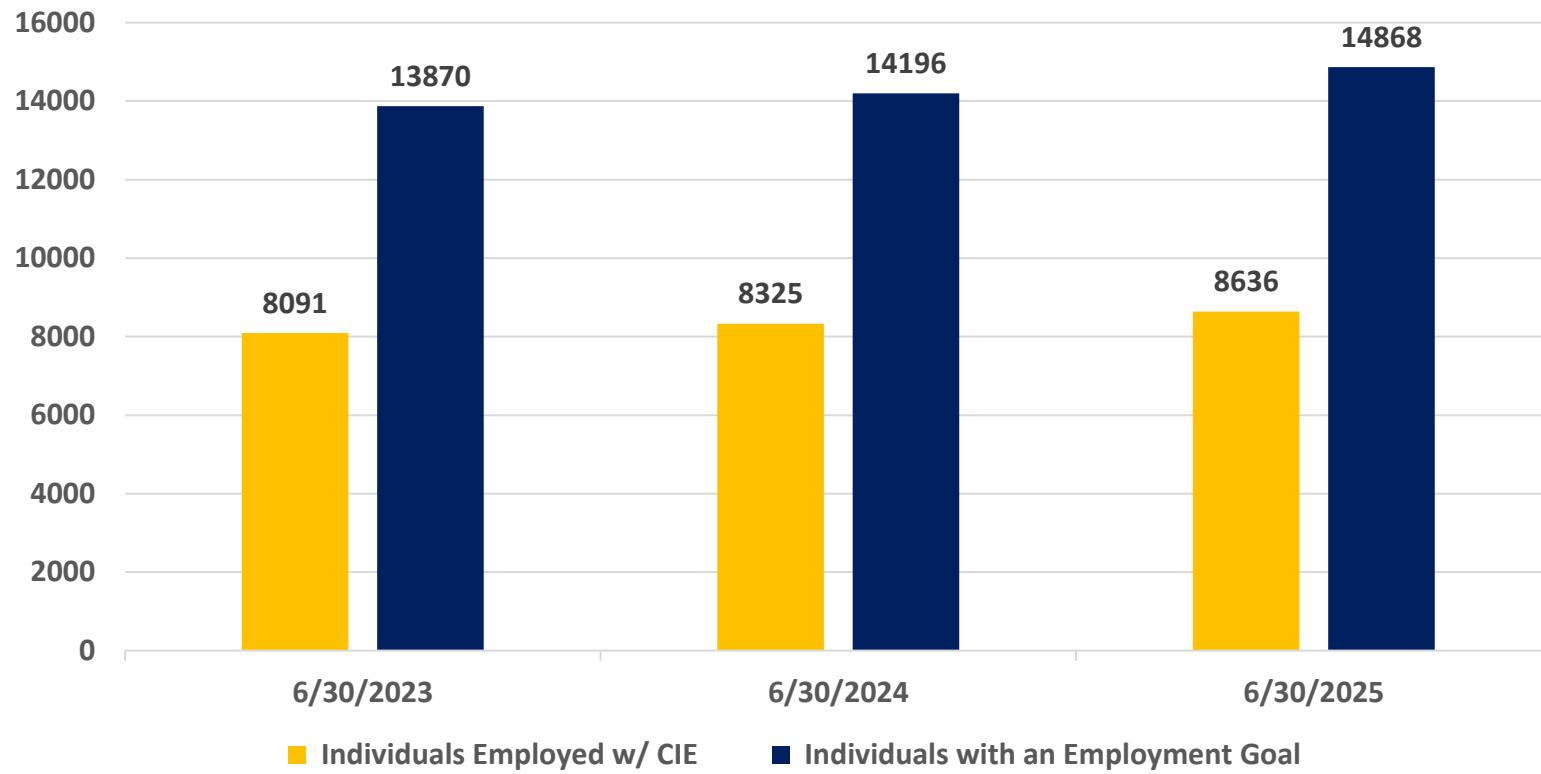
# Things to Remember



- **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.
- **All of ODP's Employment Services require that individuals have a goal to obtain or maintain competitive integrated employment.**

# Employment Data

## Individuals between the Ages of 18 – 64 Enrolled with ODP with Competitive Integrated Employment and/or an Employment Goal



# What is a Waiver?

## What is a Waiver?

- **Institutional requirements are “waived” for home and community-based services (HCBS).**
- **Medicaid home and community-based services are authorized in Section 1915(c) of the Social Security Act.**
- **Programs are funded by federal and state dollars.**
- **The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is the federal agency that approves and provides oversight of waivers.**
- **ODP administers four 1915(c) waivers:**
  - Consolidated; Community Living; Person Family Directed Support; and the Adult Autism Waiver.

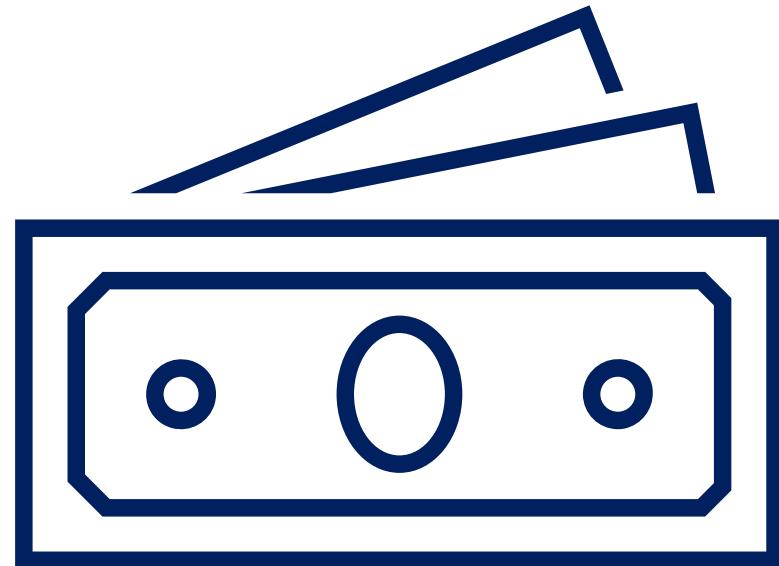


## > Payor of Last Resort

**Under federal regulations, ODP's Waivers cannot pay for anything that another program is responsible for covering (payor of last resort).**

**For waiver funded employment services, the other programs in Pennsylvania that may be required to cover items and services, include:**

- **The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)**
- **Schools under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), for youth enrolled in school up to age 21 or 22.**



# ► ODP's Employment Services

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ODP offers 4 home and community-based waiver services to directly support individuals in obtaining and maintaining competitive integrated employment:

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Advanced Supported Employment

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Supported Employment

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Small Group Employment

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Benefits Counseling

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# Advanced Supported Employment

**Advanced Supported Employment helps people that have limited to no experience in seeking or keeping a job obtain employment with a three-pronged approach:**



## **Discovery**

- Comprehensive analysis of an individual's strongest interests, skills, and strengths, and conditions necessary for successful employment.
- Successful outcome = Creation of a Discovery Profile



## **Job Acquisition**

- Includes both job development and systematic instruction.
- Successful outcome = Securing a Job- documentation of a job offer that meets the definition of competitive integrated employment.



## **Job Retention**

- Provides support to assist individuals in stabilizing a competitive integrated job.
- Successful outcome = Retention of a Job- the individual works a minimum of 5 hours per week for at least 4 months.

# Settings for Advanced Supported Employment

## Discovery Activities

- Can occur in a variety of settings, including:
  - Residential Habilitation settings
  - Vocational Facilities (55 Pa. Ch. 2390)
  - Adult Training Facilities (55 Pa. Ch. 2380)

## Job Acquisition Activities

- The direct provision of Job Acquisition activities may not occur in:
  - Vocational Facilities (55 Pa. Ch. 2390)
  - Adult Training Facilities (55 Pa. Ch. 2380)

## Job Retention Activities

- May not occur in:
  - Vocational Facility (55 Pa. Ch. 2390); Adult Training Facility (55 Pa. Ch. 2380)
  - Child Residential & Day Treatment Facilities (55 Pa. Ch. 3800); Community Residential Rehabilitation Services for the Mentally Ill (55 Pa. Ch. 5310); or licensed or unlicensed homes that provides residential habilitation services funded by ODP.

## ► Questions to Consider for Advanced Supported Employment

- Are you interested in competitive integrated employment?
- Do you need help deciding the type of job you would like, or the type of work you would like to pursue?
- Do you have any prior work-related experience (including volunteer experience)?
- Have you previously had job skills training or development?
- Have you used Supported Employment in the last 2 years, but you were unable to find or keep a job for more than 6 months?

# Advanced Supported Employment Myths vs. Facts



## Myth

- You are required to receive all 3 outcomes available in Advanced Supported Employment.



## Fact

- Depending on the circumstances, you may not have to receive all 3 outcomes in Advanced Supported Employment.

# Supported Employment

- Supported Employment is a waiver service that provides individuals with the training, resources, technology, and other supports needed to obtain and maintain competitive integrated employment.
- Three Major Components of Supported Employment:
  - Career Assessment
  - Job Finding and Development
  - Job Coaching and Support

# Career Assessment & Job Finding & Development

- **Career Assessment**

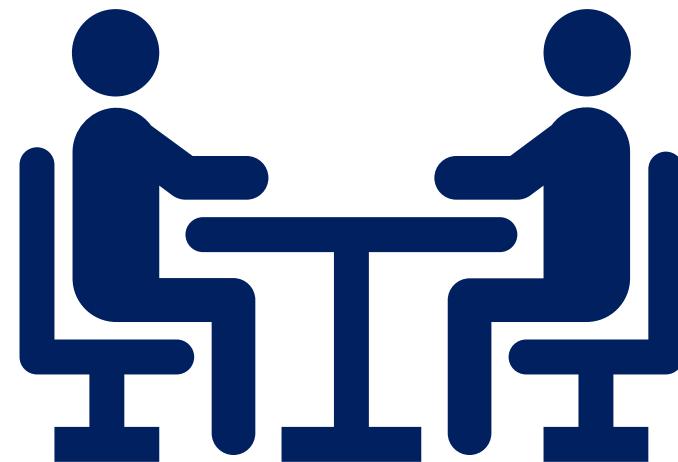
- An individualized, person-centered assessment toward helping an individual find a potential career, based on the individual's personal strengths and interests.
- Can include a range of activities, including discovery and career assessments, identifying potential employers, and coordinating services across various agencies like the Social Security Office and OVR.

- **Job Finding and Development**

- Supports the development of skills needed for job searching, like reaching out to employers, writing resumes, and navigating interview processes.
- Can also include customized job development: negotiating wages, hours, and work tasks.

# Job Coaching & Support

- **Job Coaching and Support**
  - Ongoing supports for an employed individual, geared toward professional skill development and successfully meeting the expectations of the employer.
  - Could include activities such as:
    - Training on new tasks and re-training as needed
    - Worksite orientation
    - Developing job aides
    - Personal and behavioral skills instruction or development
    - Transportation training
    - Coordinating necessary accommodations



# ► Settings for Supported Employment (1 of 2)

## **Supported Employment may occur in the following settings:**

- **Career Assessment**

- Can occur in a variety of settings, including Vocational Facilities (55 Pa. Ch. 2390) and Adult Training Facilities (55 Pa. Ch. 2380), where the person's employment or volunteer experience occurred that is being assessed.

- **Job Finding/Development**

- Can occur at community locations, job sites, places of employment, or residential habilitation settings when identified as a need in the service plan.
  - Direct service may not occur in:
    - Adult Training Centers (55 Pa. Ch. 2380)
    - Vocational Facilities (55 Pa. Ch. 2390)

# ► Settings for Supported Employment (2 of 2)

## Job Coaching & Support

- **May not be provided in:**
  - Vocational Facility (55 Pa. Ch. 2390)
  - Adult Training Facility (55 Pa. Ch. 2380)
  - Child Residential & Day Treatment Facilities (55 Pa. Ch. 3800)
  - Community Residential Rehabilitation Services for the Mentally Ill (55 Pa. Ch. 5310).
  - Any licensed or unlicensed home that provides residential habilitation services funded by ODP.

## ➤ Questions to Consider for Supported Employment?

- Are you interested in competitive integrated employment?
- Do you have prior work or volunteer experience?
- Have you already had job skills training or development?
- Are you currently working, but you are interested in finding a new job?
- Are you currently working, but you need ongoing supports to maintain your employment?

# Supported Employment Myth vs. Fact



## Myth

- Supported Employment cannot be used to support individuals to achieve self-employment.

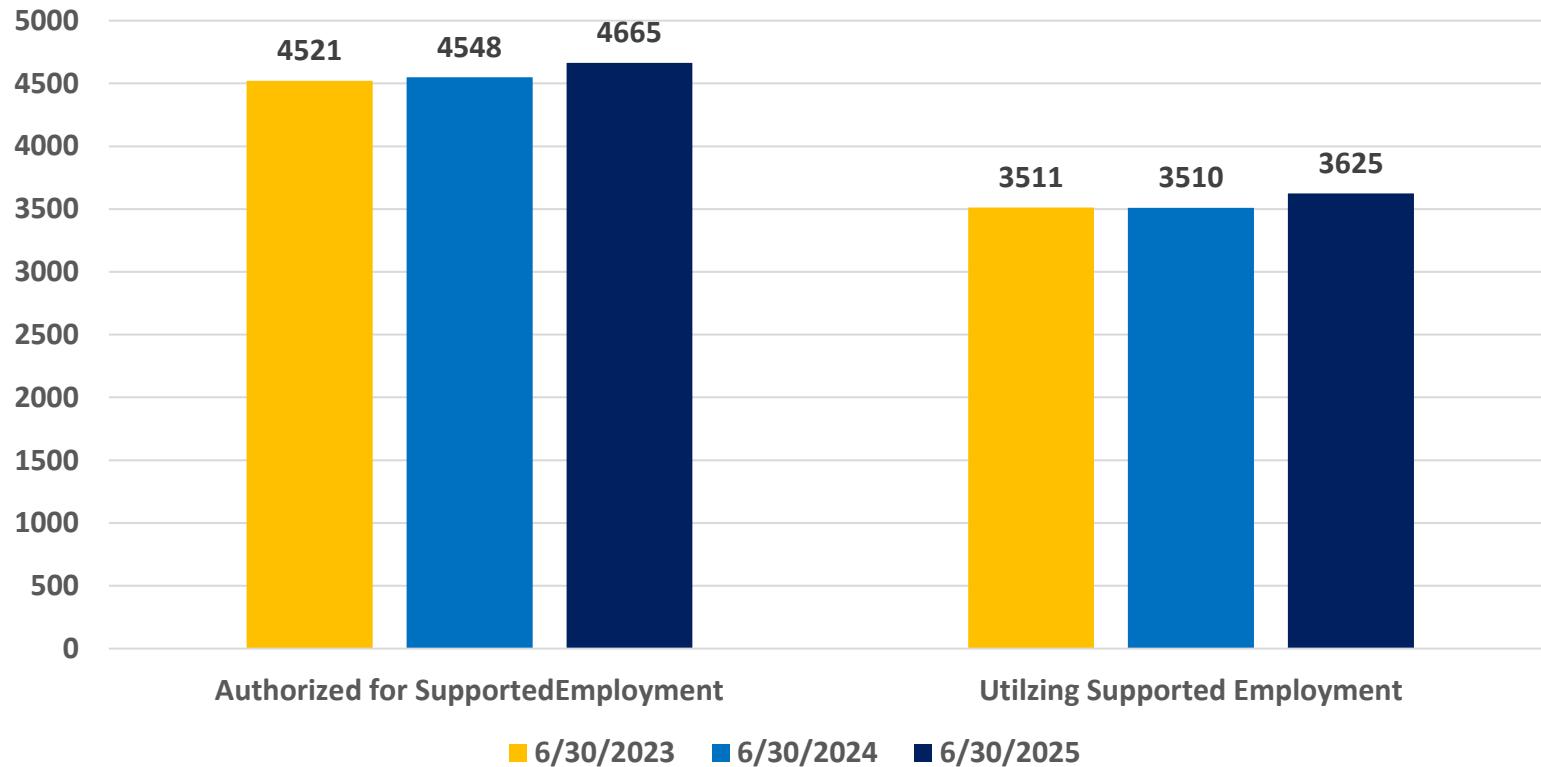


## Fact

- Supported Employment can be used to support individuals achieve self-employment.

# Supported Employment Data

Individuals between the Ages of 18 - 64 Enrolled with ODP  
who are Authorized for and/or Utilizing Supported  
Employment Services



## Small Group Employment

Small Group Employment supports people in gaining the knowledge, skills, and experiences needed to transition to competitive integrated employment by working in a location other than a facility subject to 55 Pa. Code Chapter 2380 or Chapter 2390 regulations, such as an integrated industry, business, or community setting.

Small Group Employment has 4 service options:

- Mobile Work Force
- Work Station in Industry
- Affirmative Industry
- Enclave

## ➤ Settings for Small Group Employment

**May occur in any place of employment located in the community.**

**May not occur in:**

- Vocational Facility (55 Pa. Ch. 2390)
- Adult Training Facility (55 Pa. Ch. 2380)

## ► Questions to Consider for Small Group Employment

- Are you currently successfully meeting or exceeding your goals in a prevocational program?
- Are you interested in competitive integrated employment, but you would like to work on increasing/improving your job skills?
- Would you benefit from a supportive environment while continuing to work on your job skills?

# Small Group Employment Myths vs. Facts



## Myth

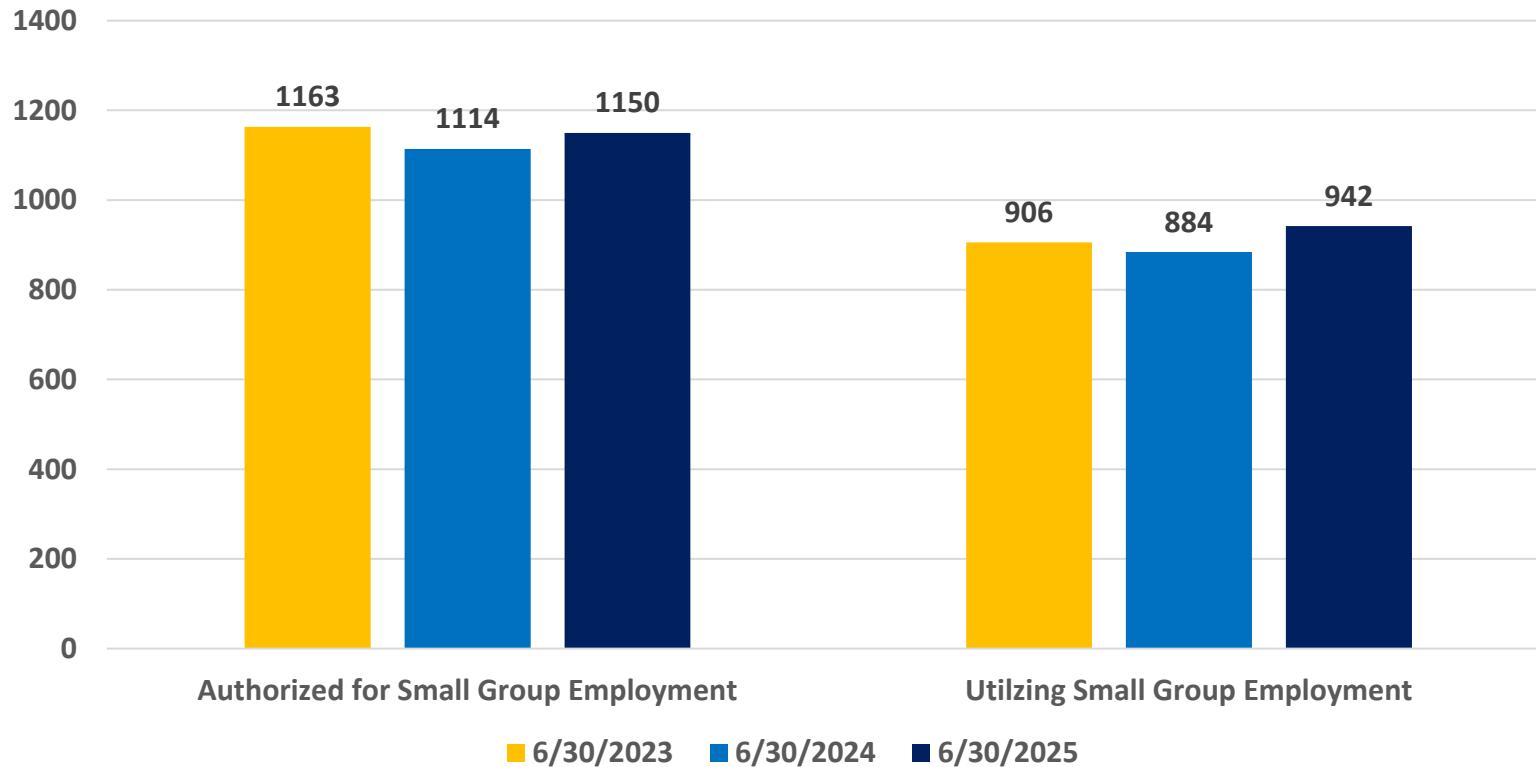


## Fact

- **Small Group Employment is competitive integrated employment.**
- **Small Group Employment does not meet the criteria for competitive integrated employment.**
- **Small Group Employment is designed to help individuals gain the skills and experience needed to transition to competitive integrated employment.**

# Small Group Employment Data

Individuals between the Ages of 18 - 64 Enrolled with ODP  
who are Authorized for and/or Utilizing Small Group  
Employment Services



# Benefits Counseling

- **What is Benefits Counseling?**
  - Helps a person understand how they can be employed in a competitive integrated job and keep benefits such as Medicaid and Social Security
  - Available through OVR, Employment Networks, Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA), or waiver services
- **Who should receive Benefits Counseling?**
  - People who meet one of the following:
    - Are considering or seeking competitive integrated employment.
    - Are currently employed or interested in career advancement and need more information about how working impacts benefits programs.

# Benefits Counseling Waiver Services

- **How can I access Benefits Counseling through my waiver?**
  - If Benefits Counseling is not available through WIPA, Employment Networks or OVR
  - If an individual has been waiting for Benefits Counseling through WIPA for more than 30 days
    - Document via a service note when the application was made
  - If an individual does NOT have an open case through OVR, then they can receive Benefits Counseling through their waiver
  - "Payor of last resort"

# Direct vs. Indirect Services

- **Direct Services:**

- Benefits counselors provide information about work incentives, the impact of employment on benefits, and income reporting requirements.

- **Indirect Services:**

- Activities done on behalf of a person such as writing a Benefits Summary and Analysis and communicating with employers and the Social Security Administration to obtain information.

- **Representative Payee:**

- Can receive information as part of the Benefits Counseling service **with the approval of the participant**

# Questions to Consider for Benefits Counseling

- Is the individual considering or seeking competitive integrated employment or career advancement?
  - If no, does the individual need problem-solving assistance to maintain competitive integrated employment?
- Is the individual or their family reluctant to seek competitive integrated employment because they are afraid of the individual losing government benefits?
- Is the individual eligible for services provided by a CWIC through a Pennsylvania-based federal WIPA program?
  - If yes, were services provided by a CWIC through a Pennsylvania-based federal WIPA program sought and determined not available?
- Is the individual receiving services through OVR?
  - If yes, the individual should exhaust any available Benefits Counseling or Planning services available through OVR before receiving ODP funded Benefits Counseling services.

# Benefits Counseling Myths vs. Facts



## Myth

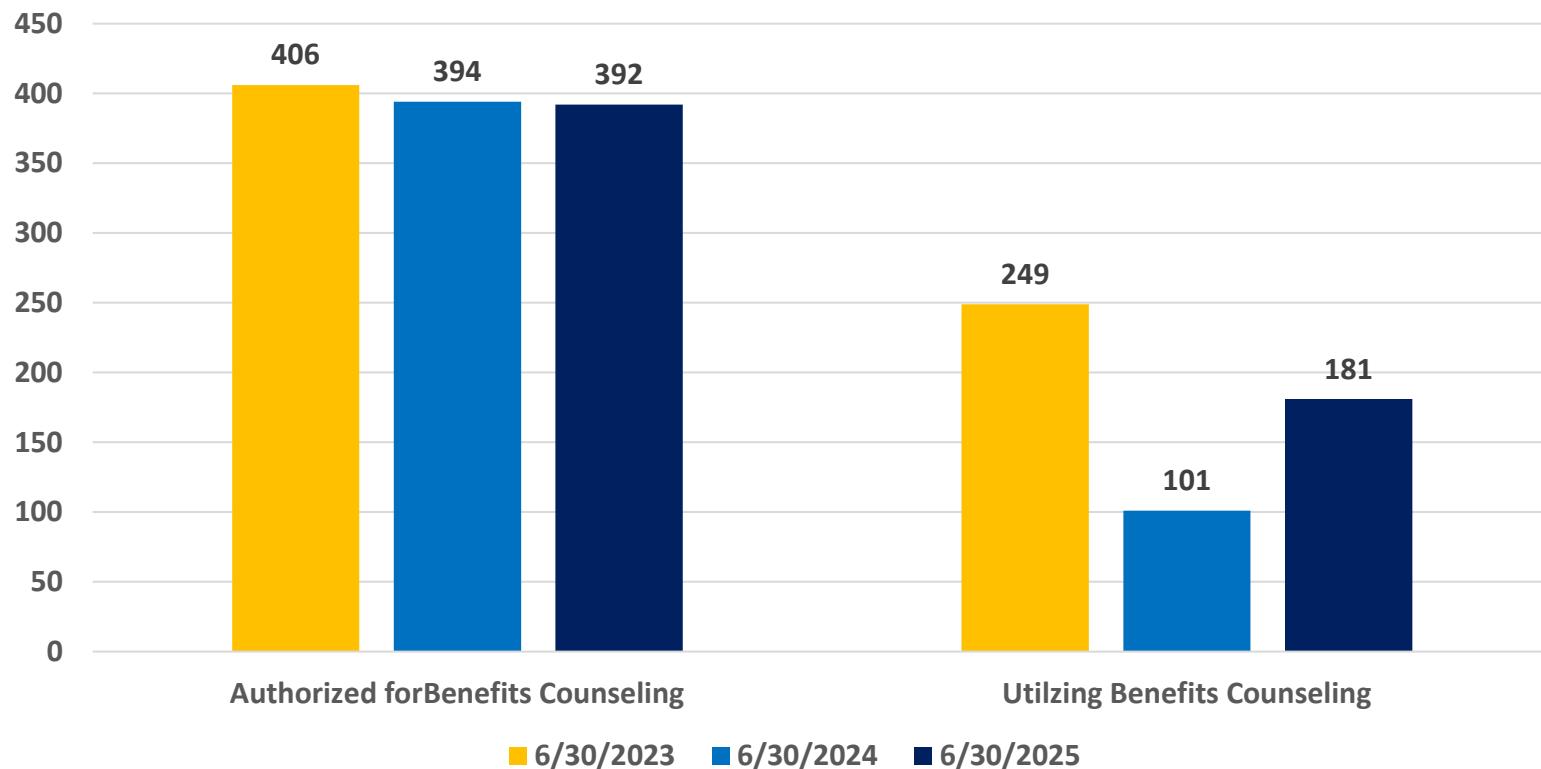


## Fact

- **If I start earning money by finding competitive integrated employment, I will lose all my benefits!**
- **Not true! Individuals almost invariably find that they have more money while working and still retaining their benefits.**
- **Benefits Counseling informs and empowers individuals and/or their rep payees to make informed decisions about work.**

# Benefits Counseling Data

Individuals between the Ages of 18 - 64 Enrolled with ODP  
who are Authorized for and/or Utilizing Benefits Counseling  
Services



# Wrap Around Services

In addition to the Employment Services, ODP offers other services which can support successful employment outcomes. These services, sometimes called “wrap around” services, include:

- Behavioral Supports
- Community Participation Support
- Companion
- Shift Nursing
- Transportation



- **Open Forum**
  - Exchange ideas, challenges, and strategies
- **Guiding Questions**
  - What's working?
  - What's challenging?
  - What supports are needed?
- **Shared Learning**
  - Please share any successes or lessons.
- **Next Steps**
  - Capture feedback to inform future Office Hours.

# Resources

- [MyODP Employment Page](#)
- [ODP Announcement 25-117: Employment Service Definition Question and Answer, Version 3, and Employment Services Quick Guide, Version 2](#)
- [ODPANN 25-001: Guidance for Benefits Counseling Services](#)
- [ODPANN 25-028 Reissue: What the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation's Memo Regarding the Order of Selection and Waiting List Means for the Office of Developmental Services](#)
- [Bulletin 00-19-01: OVR Referral Process for ODP Employment Related Services](#)