

	BULLETIN COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA Department of Human Services Department of Labor and Industry		
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SUBJECT: OVR Referral Process for ODP Employment-Related Services			
BY:  Kristin Ahrens, Deputy Secretary for Office of Developmental Programs (ODP)	BY:  Ryan Hyde, Acting Executive Director for Office of Vocational Rehabilitation		

SCOPE:

Individuals and Families
 County/Administrative Entity Administrators and Directors
 State Center Directors
 Supports Coordination Organizations and Agencies
 Providers of Employment-Related Services funded through the Consolidated Waiver,
 Person/Family Directed Support Waiver, Community Living Waiver, Adult Autism
 Waiver and base-funding

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this bulletin is to update guidance regarding requirements for when individuals must be referred to the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) to align with the requirements in the current Consolidated Waiver, Person/Family Direct Support (P/FDS) Waiver, Community Living Waiver and Adult Autism Waiver (the ODP Waivers) and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) (Pub.L. 113-128) and clarify that the guidance in this bulletin applies to employment-related services funded through base-funding provided for by the Mental Health and Intellectual Disability Act of 1966 (50 P.S. §§ 4101-4704).

BACKGROUND:

In accordance with the Employment First Act (62 P.S. §§ 3401-3409), competitive integrated employment is the preferred outcome for individuals receiving services funded through the ODP Waivers or base-funding and OVR services. An employment

outcome¹ includes entering, advancing in, or retaining full-time or, if appropriate, part-time competitive integrated employment (including customized employment, self-employment, telecommuting, or business ownership), or supported employment, that is consistent with an individual's unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice. Competitive integrated employment is full or part-time employment that is fully integrated with coworkers without disabilities for which an individual with a disability receives minimum wage or higher and with wages and benefits similar to the wages and benefits received by coworkers without disabilities that perform the same work. An employment outcome is the first and preferred outcome because it provides many benefits to the individual including, but not limited to: increased opportunities for economic self-sufficiency, an opportunity to contribute to the community, a chance to build a network of social relationships, and the creation of opportunities for lifelong learning.

An employment outcome is also consistent with the overall goals and recommendations in *Everyday Lives: Values in Action*, the document that provides guiding principles for the Office of Developmental Programs (ODP). The employment recommendation in *Everyday Lives: Values in Action* states: "Employment is a centerpiece of adulthood and must be available for every person. The benefits of employment for people with disabilities are significant and are the same as for people without disabilities." In addition, *Everyday Lives: Values in Action* includes the following value statement developed by self-advocates: "I want to work and/or have other ways to contribute to my community. My family, supporters, and community support me to find and keep a real job that I like with good wages and benefits or start and run my own business, and/or volunteer the way I want in my community."

ODP and OVR have been working closely together to ensure that all individuals enrolled in ODP Waivers or receiving base-funded services have access to experiences and services that will enable them to obtain an employment outcome and receive the benefits that come from being employed.

DISCUSSION:

OVR provides vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities to help them prepare for, secure, retain, advance in, or regain employment consistent with the individual's unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice. Since OVR has experience in providing employment services to individuals with disabilities, including intellectual disabilities or autism, Supports Coordinators are responsible for making referrals to OVR to help individuals access OVR's valuable services.

Supports Coordinators must refer an individual to OVR for OVR to determine the individual's eligibility for OVR services when an individual who is enrolled in an ODP Waiver or is receiving base-funded services indicates an interest in seeking

¹ The term "employment outcome" was amended by WIOA for purposes of describing the goal or end-result of OVR's services for people with disabilities. Employment Outcome is defined in 34 CFR § 361.5(c)(15).

employment or requests that the following employment-related services be added to his or her Individual Support Plan (ISP):

- Consolidated, P/FDS and Community Living Waivers:
 - Advanced Supported Employment;
 - Supported Employment;
 - Small Group Employment;
 - Community Participation Support; and
 - Education Support.
- Adult Autism Waiver
 - Supported Employment;
 - Career Planning; and
 - Transitional Work.

All other services offered by the ODP Waivers do not require a referral to OVR.

A Supports Coordinator should not refer an individual to OVR simply to obtain documentation of an eligibility determination or a closure letter so that the individual can receive employment-related services through ODP. Supports Coordinators make referrals to OVR to allow individuals to benefit from OVR's expertise.

An individual should be referred to OVR as soon as that individual indicates any interest in seeking competitive integrated employment or requests an employment-related service. A Supports Coordinator can also refer an individual to OVR when an individual experiences a significant life change that may impact his or her employment or options for employment.

Once an individual is referred to OVR, OVR will determine using its own eligibility standards and criteria if the individual is eligible for OVR services. OVR will not make a determination if employment-related services provided through ODP Waivers or base-funded services are needed or appropriate for the individual. Supports Coordinators should be aware of the time frames for determining if an individual is eligible for OVR services discussed in Section C.

According to federal Vocational Rehabilitation regulations (34 CFR § 361.42) an individual may be determined eligible for OVR services by qualified personnel (an OVR Counselor) if the individual:

- Has a physical or mental impairment that constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment; and
- Requires vocational rehabilitation services to prepare for, secure, retain, advance in, or regain employment consistent with the individual's unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice; and
- Is able to benefit from services in terms of an employment outcome.

A determination that an individual is ineligible for OVR services only means that the individual is ineligible for OVR services at that particular point in time and does not preclude an individual from applying for OVR services again. It also does not mean that

the individual is ineligible for any of ODP's employment-related services or precluded from receiving ODP services intended to lead to an employment outcome.

Individuals may be re-referred to OVR even if OVR had previously closed their case or the individuals had been found ineligible for services. Supports Coordinators should also make individuals aware that they may be re-referred to and re-assessed by OVR as their employment circumstances change.

It is critical that OVR staff and Supports Coordinators engage in ongoing conversations during the OVR referral and eligibility determination process to ensure that timely eligibility determinations are made. Ongoing conversations allow OVR staff and Supports Coordinators to discuss the following topics:

- Whether additional information is needed by OVR staff to make an eligibility determination.
- If OVR staff has any concerns about the individual. For example, OVR staff may report that the individual has experienced a prolonged illness that has impacted OVR staff's ability to set up meetings and determine the individual's eligibility for OVR services.
- The date that OVR staff expects to make an eligibility determination.
- Services and supports that OVR staff is exploring with the individual.

Special Circumstances and Considerations:

In some circumstances, OVR may not have the capacity to serve every individual referred by a Supports Coordinator in a timely manner. In such cases, there are special provisions in the ODP Waivers that allow the Supports Coordinator to access Waiver funding without receipt of an OVR eligibility determination.

If OVR has not made an eligibility determination within 120 days of the referral being sent to OVR, an individual may access Advanced Supported Employment, Supported Employment, and Career Planning services until OVR communicates that the individual is eligible for vocational rehabilitation services. If OVR determines that the individual is eligible for OVR services more than 120 days after the referral was sent to OVR, the individual can choose to receive services from OVR or continue to receive Advanced Supported Employment, Supported Employment, or Career Planning services through the ODP Waivers. ODP added this provision to the ODP Waivers because of the increased demand on OVR's resources.

A. REFERRALS FOR INDIVIDUALS ENROLLED OR ENROLLING IN THE CONSOLIDATED, COMMUNITY LIVING, OR P/FDS WAIVERS, AS WELL AS INDIVIDUALS REQUESTING BASE-FUNDED SERVICES

ADVANCED SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

Prior to adding Advanced Supported Employment services to an individual's ISP, the Supports Coordinator must refer the individual to OVR, regardless of age, unless there is documentation that OVR had previously determined that the individual was

ineligible for OVR services or the individual has a previously closed case from OVR, except if the case was closed for one of the reasons noted below. There is no time limit on how long ago OVR made the determination that the individual was ineligible for OVR services or closed the case. If an individual who must be referred to OVR refuses to be referred to OVR, the individual may not receive Advanced Supported Employment services through a Waiver or base funding. An individual may also not receive Advanced Supported Employment services during OVR's determination of eligibility process, unless 120 days have passed from the date the referral was made to OVR and OVR has not determined eligibility for OVR services. If OVR fails to determine eligibility for services within 120 days of referral, OVR services are considered to not be available to the individual.

The Supports Coordinator may also refer an individual who has previously been determined ineligible for OVR services or whose case was previously closed if the individual wants to be referred to OVR again. Supports Coordinators should make individuals aware that they may be re-referred to and re-assessed by OVR if their employment circumstances change.

As stated above, it is critical that OVR staff and Supports Coordinators engage in ongoing conversations during the OVR referral and eligibility process to ensure that timely eligibility determinations are made. In addition, Supports Coordinators should keep in mind the special circumstances and considerations discussed above that apply when OVR does not make a decision within 120 days of the referral being made to OVR. This will ensure that all involved parties are working as a team, making informed decisions, and appropriately planning to help the individual receive needed employment-related services in a timely manner.

As of the effective date of this bulletin, Advanced Supported Employment services can be authorized if OVR has closed the individual's case unless the eligibility determination letter indicates that the case was closed for one of the following reasons:

- Reason Code 17 – Unable to Locate or Contact: Individual has relocated or left the State without a forwarding address, or when the individual has not responded to repeated attempts to contact the individual by mail, telephone, text, or e-mail.
- Reason Code 18 – No Longer Interested in Receiving Services or Further Services: Individuals who choose not to participate or continue in their VR program at this time. Also use this code to indicate when an individual's actions (or non-actions) make it impossible to begin or continue a VR program. Examples would include repeated failures to keep appointments for assessment, counseling, or other services.
- Reason Code to be developed by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (OVR is using Reason Code 19 in the interim): Individual has been determined ineligible for OVR services based on the individual's informed choice to not pursue competitive integrated employment after completing an application for services and an intake interview, being counseled on the benefits of competitive integrated employment, and receiving an overview of OVR services available to support the individual.

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

Prior to adding Supported Employment services to an individual's ISP, the Supports Coordinator must refer the individual to OVR, regardless of age, unless there is documentation of one of the following:

- OVR had previously determined that the individual was ineligible for OVR services. There is no time limit on how long ago OVR made the determination that the individual was ineligible for OVR services.
- The individual has a previously closed case from OVR, except if the case was closed for one of the reasons noted below or OVR has stopped providing services to the individual because the individual has reached job stability or maximum level of job stability as defined in OVR policy. There is no time limit on how long ago OVR closed the case.
- The individual is competitively employed and solely needs the Job Coaching and Support component of Supported Employment services to maintain the individual's current job.
- The individual is competitively employed and is seeking Job Assessment or Job Finding services to find a new job. If the individual is seeking to advance in his or her job, the individual must be referred to OVR.

If an individual who must be referred to OVR refuses to be referred to OVR, the individual may not receive Supported Employment services through a Waiver or base funding. An individual may also not receive Supported Employment services during OVR's determination of eligibility process, unless 120 days have passed from the date the referral was made to OVR and OVR has not determined eligibility for OVR services. If OVR fails to determine eligibility for services within 120 days of referral, OVR services are considered to not be available to the individual.

The Supports Coordinator may also refer an individual who has previously been determined ineligible for OVR services or whose case was previously closed if the individual wants to be referred to OVR again. Supports Coordinators should make individuals aware that they may be re-referred to and re-assessed by OVR if their employment circumstances change.

As stated above, it is critical that OVR staff and Supports Coordinators engage in ongoing conversations during the OVR referral and eligibility process to ensure that timely eligibility determinations are made. In addition, Supports Coordinators should keep in mind the special circumstances and considerations discussed above that apply when OVR does not make a decision within 120 days of the referral being made to OVR. This will ensure that all involved parties are working as a team, making informed decisions, and appropriately planning to help the individual receive needed employment-related services in a timely manner.

As of the effective date of this bulletin, Supported Employment services can be authorized if OVR has closed the individual's case unless the eligibility determination letter indicates that the case was closed for one of the following reasons:

- Reason Code 17 – Unable to Locate or Contact: Individual has relocated or left the State without a forwarding address, or when the individual has not responded to repeated attempts to contact the individual by mail, telephone, text, or e-mail.
- Reason Code 18 – No Longer Interested in Receiving Services or Further Services: Individuals who choose not to participate or continue in their VR program at this time. Also use this code to indicate when an individual's actions (or non-actions) make it impossible to begin or continue a VR program. Examples would include repeated failures to keep appointments for assessment, counseling, or other services.
- Reason Code being developed by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (OVR is using Reason Code 19 in the interim): Individual has been determined ineligible for OVR services based on the individual's informed choice to not pursue competitive integrated employment after completing an application for services and an intake interview, being counseled on the benefits of competitive integrated employment, and receiving an overview of OVR services available to support the individual.

Individuals who participate in the Ticket to Work program offered by the Social Security Administration may receive Career Assessment or Job Development through an Employment Network. Once the provision of these services is complete, the individual may receive extended job coaching through their waiver without being referred to OVR.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION SUPPORT

Requirements for individuals under age 25:

An individual who is authorized for Community Participation Support-prevocational services on or after July 22, 2016, and is under the age of 25 may not receive prevocational services that pay subminimum wage unless OVR has determined that the individual is ineligible for OVR services or OVR has closed the individual's case, except if the case was closed for one of the reasons noted below. There is no time limit on how long ago OVR made the determination that the individual was ineligible for OVR services or closed the case.

The requirement that the individual be referred to OVR applies to prevocational services that pay subminimum wage and are provided in one of the following locations, which is covered by a 14c certificate that allows the employer to pay a subminimum wage:

- A licensed Vocational Facility (55 Pa. Code Chapter 2390),
- A licensed Adult Training Facility (55 Pa. Code Chapter 2380),
- A Community Hub, or
- A Community Location.

An individual who was authorized for ODP funded prevocational services prior to July 22, 2016, does not need to be referred to OVR. In addition, an individual who is under the age of 25, wishes to receive Community Participation Support services and will not be making subminimum wage does not need to be referred to OVR. The individual's Supports Coordinator is responsible for identifying whether the individual intends to seek prevocational services that earn subminimum wage.

An individual who wishes to receive the vocational skill development component of prevocational services also does not need to be referred to OVR. Vocational skill development includes developing the skills and competencies an individual needs to pursue competitive integrated employment. This includes the development and implementation of a preliminary plan for employment that identifies and addresses the individual's work interests and current skills as well as skills the individual needs to develop for his or her work interests. At no point during the provision of vocational skill development may an individual receive a wage.

Once the ISP team determines that an individual is ready to pursue competitive integrated employment, the individual should be referred to OVR.

Effective July 22, 2016, Community Participation Support – prevocational services that pay subminimum wage and are provided in a location covered by a 14c certificate can be authorized if OVR has closed the individual's case unless the eligibility determination letter indicates that the case was closed for one the following reasons:

- Reason Code 17 – Unable to Locate or Contact: Individual has relocated or left the State without a forwarding address, or when the individual has not responded to repeated attempts to contact the individual by mail, telephone, text, or e-mail.
- Reason Code 18 – No Longer Interested in Receiving Services or Further Services: Individuals who choose not to participate or continue in their VR program at this time. Also use this code to indicate when an individual's actions (or non-actions) make it impossible to begin or continue a VR program. Examples would include repeated failures to keep appointments for assessment, counseling, or other services.
- Reason Code 14 - Achieved competitive integrated employment outcome.

If an individual has achieved a competitive integrated employment outcome (OVR Closure Reason Code 14) and wishes to participate in prevocational services that pay subminimum wage as well, prior to the individual participating in prevocational services that pay subminimum wage the individual must be referred back to OVR and OVR must either close his or her case for a reason other than for the reasons listed in Reason Codes 14, 17 and 18 above or the individual must be determined ineligible for OVR services.

Section 511 of WIOA (29 U.S.C. § 794g) requires that in addition to OVR determining that the individual is ineligible for OVR services or closing the case, an individual under age 25 who wants to engage in employment that pays subminimum wages must also have received transition services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or pre-employment transition services from OVR. In

addition, the individual must have received career counseling from OVR. An OVR counselor will document completion of these services on the OVR-263 and OVR-263A forms. Supports Coordinators are responsible for ensuring that prior to an individual under age 25 engaging in employment that pays subminimum wage the individual has a letter from OVR indicating that he or she is ineligible for services or that the case has been closed and a completed OVR-263, and OVR-263A.

An individual under age 25 may receive Community Participation Support in addition to the employment services the individual is receiving from OVR in a Community Location, Community Hub, and/or an Adult Training Facility (55 Pa. Code Chapter 2380), as long as the individual is not participating in prevocational services and making subminimum wage. The individual may not receive Community Participation Support in addition to the employment services the individual is receiving from OVR in a Licensed Vocational Facility (55 Pa. Code Chapter 2390).

Requirements for individuals age 25 and older:

Individuals who are age 25 and older are not required to be referred to OVR prior to receiving prevocational services that pay subminimum wage.

When the ISP team determines that an individual who is currently receiving Community Participation Support-prevocational services will be ready to pursue an employment outcome that is competitive and integrated within one year of the ISP team's annual meeting to review the ISP the Supports Coordinator must make a referral to OVR if OVR has not previously determined the individual ineligible for OVR services or had previously closed the individual's case. If the individual has previously worked with OVR and there is documentation that OVR had previously determined that the individual was ineligible for OVR services or the individual's case was previously closed, the individual may utilize Supported Employment or Advanced Supported Employment services, or choose to be re-referred to OVR. There is no time limit on how long ago OVR made the determination that the individual was ineligible for OVR services or closed the case. The Supports Coordinator should make individuals aware that they may choose to be re-referred to and re-assessed by OVR, as their employment circumstances change.

An individual that is referred to OVR may continue to receive Community Participation Support services during OVR's eligibility determination process. In addition, if OVR determines that an individual who is 25 years old or older is eligible for services and develops an "Individualized Plan for Employment" (IPE), the individual may continue to receive Community Participation Support services while also receiving OVR services as long as the services do not occur concurrently (on the same day and at the same time).

EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICES

The Supports Coordinator must refer individuals of any age to OVR prior to adding Education Support services to an individual's ISP if the individual will be attending a Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary Program (CTP). A list of CTPs can be accessed at <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/eligibility/intellectual-disabilities>. If the

individual will be using Education Support services to attend a college, community college, technical school or university (institution of postsecondary education) that is an accredited postsecondary institution or program by the United States Department of Education, the individual does not need to be referred to OVR prior to receiving Education Support services.

Supports Coordinators must obtain documentation of any education funding OVR will provide to an individual. If an individual is eligible for Education Support services, the Consolidated, Community Living or P/FDS Waiver funding or base-funding can cover allowable expenses for the individual that are in addition to the amounts covered by OVR's funding. Supports Coordinators and Administrative Entities should be aware that there are limits on Education Support services in the Waivers that must be adhered to when Waiver funding is utilized.

SMALL GROUP EMPLOYMENT

An individual may receive Small Group Employment services without a referral to OVR unless the individual is under the age of 25.

Requirements for individuals under age 25:

An individual under the age of 25 who was authorized for ODP funded Transitional Work or Small Group Employment services prior to July 1, 2016, does not need to be referred to OVR. An individual under the age of 25 who is not currently authorized for Small Group Employment services may not receive Small Group Employment services unless OVR has determined that the individual is ineligible for OVR services or OVR has closed the individual's case, except if the case was closed for one of the reasons noted below. There is no time limit on how long ago OVR made the determination that the individual was ineligible for OVR services or closed the case. Supports Coordinators should make individuals aware that they may choose to be re-referred to and re-assessed by OVR if their employment circumstances change.

Effective July 1, 2016, Small Group Employment services can be authorized if OVR has closed the individual's case unless the eligibility determination letter indicates that the case was closed for one of the following reasons:

- Reason Code 17 – Unable to Locate or Contact: Individual has relocated or left the State without a forwarding address, or when the individual has not responded to repeated attempts to contact the individual by mail, telephone, text, or e-mail.
- Reason Code 18 – No Longer Interested in Receiving Services or Further Services: Individuals who choose not to participate or continue in their VR program at this time. Also use this code to indicate when an individual's actions (or non-actions) make it impossible to begin or continue a VR program. Examples would include repeated failures to keep appointments for assessment, counseling, or other services.

Requirements for individuals age 25 or older:

When an individual who is currently receiving Small Group Employment is ready to pursue competitive integrated employment, the Supports Coordinator must make a referral to OVR unless there is documentation that OVR had previously determined that the individual was ineligible for OVR services or the individual has a previously closed case from OVR. If there is documentation that OVR had previously determined that the individual was ineligible for OVR services or the individual's case was previously closed, the individual may utilize Supported Employment or Advanced Supported Employment services, or choose to be re-referred to OVR. There is no time limit on how long ago OVR made the determination that the individual was ineligible for OVR services or closed the case. Supports Coordinators should make individuals aware that they may be re-referred to and re-assessed by OVR again, as their employment circumstances change.

Small Group Employment services may be provided during the OVR referral and eligibility determination process. If OVR determines that an individual is eligible for services and develops an IPE, the individual may receive Small Group Employment services while also receiving OVR services as long as they do not occur concurrently (on the same day and at the same time).

B. REFERRALS FOR INDIVIDUALS ENROLLED OR ENROLLING IN THE ADULT AUTISM WAIVER (AAW)

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT AND CAREER PLANNING

Prior to adding Supported Employment or Career Planning services to an individual's ISP, the Supports Coordinator must refer the individual to OVR, regardless of age, unless there is documentation of one of the following:

- The individual is competitively employed and solely needs the Intensive Job Coaching or Extended Employment Supports component of Supported Employment to maintain the individual's current job.
- The individual is competitively employed and is seeking Career Planning services to find a new job. If the individual is seeking to advance in his or her job, the individual must be referred to OVR.
- OVR had previously determined that the individual was ineligible for OVR services. There is no time limit on how long ago OVR made the determination that the individual was ineligible for OVR services.
- The individual has a previously closed case from OVR, except if the case was closed for one of the reasons noted below or OVR has stopped providing services to the individual because the individual has reached job stability or maximum level of job stability as defined in OVR policy. There is no time limit on how long ago OVR closed the case.

If an individual must be referred to OVR refuses to be referred to OVR, the individual may not receive Supported Employment or Career Planning services through the

AAW. An individual may also not receive Supported Employment or Career Planning services during OVR's determination of eligibility process, unless 120 days have passed from the date the referral was made to OVR and OVR has not determined eligibility for OVR services. If OVR fails to determine eligibility for services within 120 days of referral, OVR services are considered to not be available to the individual.

The Supports Coordinator may also refer an individual who has been determined ineligible for OVR services or whose case was previously closed if the individual wants to be referred to OVR again. Supports Coordinators should make individuals aware that they may be re-referred to and re-assessed by OVR if their employment circumstances change.

As stated above, it is critical that OVR staff and Supports Coordinators engage in ongoing conversations during the OVR referral and eligibility process to ensure that timely eligibility determinations are made. In addition, Supports Coordinators should keep in mind the special circumstances and considerations discussed above that apply when OVR does not make a decision within 120 days of the referral being made to OVR. This will ensure that all involved parties are working as a team, making informed decisions, and appropriately planning to help the individual receive needed employment-related services in a timely manner.

As of the effective date of this bulletin, Supported Employment and Career Planning services can be authorized if OVR has closed the individual's case unless the eligibility determination letter indicates that the case was closed for one of the following reasons:

- Reason Code 17 – Unable to Locate or Contact: Individual has relocated or left the State without a forwarding address, or when the individual has not responded to repeated attempts to contact the individual by mail, telephone, text, or e-mail.
- Reason Code 18 – No Longer Interested in Receiving Services or Further Services: Individuals who choose not to participate or continue in their VR program at this time. Also use this code to indicate when an individual's actions (or non-actions) make it impossible to begin or continue a VR program. Examples would include repeated failures to keep appointments for assessment, counseling, or other services.
- Reason Code being developed by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (OVR is using Reason Code 19 in the interim): Individual has been determined ineligible for OVR services based on the individual's informed choice to not pursue competitive integrated employment after completing an application for services and an intake interview, being counseled on the benefits of competitive integrated employment, and receiving an overview of OVR services available to support the individual.

Individuals who participate in the Ticket to Work program offered by the Social Security Administration may receive Career Assessment or Job Development through an Employment Network. Once the provision of these services is complete, the individual may receive extended job coaching through their waiver without being referred to OVR.

TRANSITIONAL WORK SERVICES

An individual may receive Transitional Work services without a referral to OVR unless the individual is under the age of 25.

Requirements for individuals under age 25:

An individual who was authorized for AAW funded Transitional Work services prior to July 1, 2016, does not need to be referred to OVR. An individual under the age of 25 who is not currently authorized for Transitional Work services may not receive Transitional Work services unless OVR has determined that the individual is ineligible for OVR services or OVR has closed the individual's case, except if the case was closed for one of the reasons noted below. There is no time limit on how long ago OVR made the determination that the individual was ineligible for OVR services or closed the case.

Supports Coordinators should make individuals aware that they may be re-referred to and re-assessed by OVR as their employment circumstances change.

Effective July 1, 2016, Transitional Work services can be authorized if OVR has closed the individual's case unless the eligibility determination letter indicates that the case was closed for one of the following reasons:

- Reason Code 17 – Unable to Locate or Contact: Individual has relocated or left the State without a forwarding address, or when the individual has not responded to repeated attempts to contact the individual by mail, telephone, text, or e-mail.
- Reason Code 18 – No Longer Interested in Receiving Services or Further Services: Individuals who choose not to participate or continue in their VR program at this time. Also use this code to indicate when an individual's actions (or non-actions) make it impossible to begin or continue a VR program. Examples would include repeated failures to keep appointments for assessment, counseling, or other services.

Requirements for individuals age 25 or older:

When an individual who is receiving Transitional Work services wishes to seek competitive integrated employment, the Supports Coordinator must make a referral to OVR unless there is documentation that OVR had previously determined that the individual was ineligible for OVR services or the individual has a previously closed case. Transitional Work services may be provided during the OVR referral and eligibility determination process. If there is documentation that OVR had previously determined that the individual was ineligible for OVR services or the individual's case was previously closed, the individual may utilize Supported Employment or Career Planning services, or be re-referred to OVR. There is no time limit on how long ago OVR made the determination that the individual was ineligible for OVR services or closed the case. Supports Coordinators should make individuals aware that they may be re-referred to and re-assessed by OVR again, as their employment circumstances change.

If OVR determines that an individual is eligible for service, and develops an IPE, the individual may receive Transitional Work services while also receiving OVR services as long as the services do not occur concurrently (on the same day and at the same time).

C. OVR REFERRAL PROCESS FOR INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING ODP WAIVER OR BASE-FUNDED SERVICES

Supports Coordinators must do the following when referring an individual to OVR to help expedite OVR's process for determining eligibility:

1. Have the individual or his or her designated representative sign the Supports Coordinator Organization's or Supports Coordinator Agency's standard "Release of Information" form.
2. Provide the individual's current ISP and the following supporting documentation, if available, to the designated OVR liaison:
 - a. Psychological Evaluation containing diagnoses;
 - b. Vocational Evaluations/Assessments; and
 - c. Any other relevant medical/psychological/educational records.
3. Assist the individual in completing Attachment 2, the OVR Pre-Application (Form 810), either online, which is preferred because it will allow the review to be faster, or in hard copy form.
4. Notify their designated OVR liaison when the pre-application has been submitted and verify with their OVR liaison how supporting documentation should be submitted. If the Supports Coordinator helped the individual fill out the hard-copy version of the pre-application, the Supports Coordinator should ask the OVR liaison for his or her preferred method of receipt of the hard copy application and supporting documentation. The Supports Coordinator should also indicate if he or she would like to be notified when the intake interview is scheduled.
5. Document in the individual's ISP the date that the OVR pre-application was submitted to OVR.
6. Complete Attachment 6 – Supports Coordinator's Checklist for a Referral for OVR Services. Submit this attachment to OVR and to their organization's designated medical record system.
7. Completion of Steps 1-6 constitutes a complete referral. Once OVR receives a complete referral they can start the process of determining the individual's eligibility for services.

Upon receipt of the pre-application and all necessary supporting documentation, staff from OVR will do the following:

1. Contact the individual referred for services no later than 15 days from the date of receipt of the pre-application and schedule an initial appointment or enroll the individual in an OVR orientation session within 30 days. An initial appointment is an in-person meeting to discuss OVR services and other materials and if the individual is interested in moving forward, formally initiate the application process.
2. Have the individual sign an OVR 132-Release of Information Form to communicate with the Supports Coordinator.

3. Determine eligibility for OVR services within 60 days of submission of a complete application.
4. Send a system-generated letter documenting eligibility or ineligibility for OVR services to the individual or his or her designee, as applicable, and the Supports Coordinator. This letter will be used by Supports Coordinators and Administrative Entities to determine an individual's eligibility for employment-related services through the ODP Waivers or base-funded services.
5. If an individual has been determined eligible for OVR services, complete an IPE within 90 days of the date the individual was determined eligible for OVR services.
6. Notify the Supports Coordinator when the individual is placed into employment so that an estimated time frame for the completion of OVR services can be established.
7. Discuss with the Supports Coordinator when funding for extended, long-term services through ODP will be needed. This discussion should occur at the time of job placement, and, if not, well before the individual reaches OVR service completion and job stability.
8. Provide a copy of the closure letter to the individual and to the Supports Coordinator upon case closure.

Note: There may be times when official documentation from OVR in the form of a closure letter may be delayed. In such circumstances, OVR may provide written documentation in the form of an email that provides sufficient information to identify the need for funding through the ODP Waivers or base-funding for extended services.

For the OVR referral to be most effective there should be ongoing and regular communication between the individual; his or her guardian, if applicable; the Supports Coordinator; the OVR Counselor; the OVR services provider(s) and the provider of any employment-related services funded through the ODP Waivers or base funding.

If the individual is receiving Consolidated, P/FDS, or Community Living Waiver services, or base-funded services, the Supports Coordinator must forward a copy of the OVR letter that documents whether the individual is eligible or ineligible for OVR services to the County/Administrative Entity.

If the individual is receiving AAW services, the Supports Coordinator must send a copy of the OVR letter that documents whether the individual is eligible or ineligible for OVR services to the BAS Regional Office Representative.

The Supports Coordinator and County/Administrative Entity or BAS Regional Office must keep a copy of the letter of "eligibility/ineligibility" in the individual's file as documentation of compliance with the ODP Waivers' requirement for referral to OVR and document the receipt of the letter of "eligibility/ineligibility" in a service note.

It is recommended that the Supports Coordinator maintain contact with the OVR Counselor as appropriate to stay informed throughout the individual's receipt of OVR

services. This will ensure that the ISP contains the most up-to-date information and necessary services.

Questions should be directed to the appropriate ODP Regional Office, BAS Regional Office Representative, or OVR Central Office.

If a Supports Coordinator needs documentation from OVR for any purpose, the Supports Coordinator should contact his or her local OVR liaison and be prepared to discuss the details of the request.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1 – Employment Service Definitions as Approved in the Current ODP Waivers

Attachment 2 – OVR Pre-Application (Form 810)

Attachment 3 – PA CareerLink and OVR Pre-Application Instructions

Attachment 4 – OVR Contact Information for Local ID/Autism Coordinators

Attachment 5 – OVR Referral Timeline Chart

Attachment 6 – Supports Coordinator’s Checklist for a Referral for OVR Services

OBSOLETE BULLETINS:

ODP Bulletin, 00-16-02, *OVR Referral Process for Employment-Related Services*