

C. Moseley COMMENT

EMPLOYMENT CERTIFICATION STANDARDS

A DDO seeking certification to provide employment services provides individualized services and supports to participants to help them [become employed in employer paid competitive jobs and](#) achieve their identified employment outcomes, including self-employment. The DDO designs services around the needs [and preferences](#) of individuals seeking employment, and provides individuals with information they can use to make informed choices and career decisions. Services are provided at an appropriate level based on each individual's needs [in integrated employment settings](#).

The array of services and supports offered include:

- Development of realistic employment goals.
- Identification of employment opportunities and resources in the local job market.
- Development of viable work skills that match workforce needs.
- Establishment of service plans to achieve employment outcomes.
- Identification of resources and supports to achieve and maintain employment, and promote career advancement.
- Opportunities for participation in employment-related programs and services in the community.

Certification of Employment Services is based on the following quality standards:

Communication with Participants:

- Individuals and stakeholders are given information in a format and language accessible to them, in a clear, accurate, and consistent manner, wherein special communication needs are identified and addressed.
- The DDO offers information for interested participants and families/support systems that includes the following information:
 - o available services
 - o the roles, rights, and responsibilities of both the individual and the provider, including employment reporting as needed, such as to SSI or Medicaid
 - o other information regarding employment related supports and requirements as needed by the individual

Person-Centeredness:

- Services and supports are individualized, purposeful, and meaningful.
- Services and supports are driven by a person-centered plan, as described in the ISP Guidelines, that accurately reflects an individual's preferences, choices, needs, desires, personal goals, and objectives.
- Each individual has the opportunity to access information about and explore resources within their communities of choice, which may include the process of community mapping.
- Staff supports are based on the informed choice and needs of the individual receiving services and supports.
- Individuals are supported to develop, maintain, and enhance relationships with others, and to develop natural supports, as demonstrated by the presence of personalized relationships or potential for relationship building.
- Individuals are supported to interact and socialize with community members (i.e., helping to make plans within the program and/or outside of the program) in activities of their choosing.
- Individuals are involved in making informed employment-related decisions including the expected outcome for services.
- Individuals served are informed about employment opportunities consistent with their desired outcomes.
- Services are provided at times and in locations that meet the needs of the individuals served.

Autonomy:

- Services optimize autonomy and independence in making life choices, including choices regarding services and supports and the individuals who provide them.
- Individuals are supported to identify and select activities that are aligned with their skills, strengths, and interests.
- Providers support and encourage individuals to access and utilize available communication and mobility devices, assistive technology, and accommodations as needed.
- Individuals express that they feel able to effectively direct their own life to achieve their desired goals, and that services and supports are meeting their expectations.

- Individuals develop, or have input into, their own flexible and individual schedule of activities focused on their needs and desires.
- Individuals have the opportunity to choose with whom to do activities, including with people not receiving any services or not receiving services from the same provider.
- Individuals have privacy for communication.

Addressing Risk:

- Providers assess risk with the individual and others of the individual's choosing to develop, enhance, fade, or remove risk mitigation strategies as needed.
- The assumption of risk is balanced with the individual's ability to assume responsibility for that risk and the promotion of health and safety.

Documentation of Services:

- Case notes are entered in each participant's record whenever a billable service is provided, including the date, time and brief summary of the support provided and signed by the recorder.
- Case notes and other documentation are reflective of each individual's plan and goals, showing an alignment of services and supports provided with the plan.
- All documentation is in accordance with CMS rules.
- Providers are accountable to individuals they serve, as shown by documentation of periodic checks with individuals, formally or informally, on at least a quarterly basis, to gauge if the services and supports being provided are meaningful to them, meet their needs and preferences, and if any changes are needed.
- Providers communicate information that impacts the individual's supports, as outlined in the person-centered plan, to other service areas/providers supporting the individual and promoting continuity of supports.

Satisfaction Survey:

- Providers survey individuals in their program annually to ensure satisfaction with program supports and services.
- Providers use survey results and other data to improve services.

Training

- [All persons involved in the discovery and assessment process, the preparation and implementation of career development plans, and the provision of Supported Employment and Integrated Day Services and Placements have met the Division's pre-qualification requirements and received training and demonstrated competencies as outlined by the State's competency-based and values-based training program.](#)

Staff Qualifications:

- Staff are appropriately hired, trained, and receive ongoing annual training in areas relevant to their job descriptions and the unique needs of the individuals they serve.
- Staff assignments demonstrate respect for individual preferences, including but not limited to the culture and diversity of individuals who receive supports.
- Staff promote and support access and opportunities for individuals to explore and engage their preferences in ways that demonstrate an understanding of each individual's unique needs and goals.
- All staff and supervisors who support individuals with employment services are trained and/or certified to demonstrate competencies and achieve desired outcomes of supported employment.
- New hires or transfers are enrolled in a State-endorsed training program within six months of hire.
- Prior to completing training and/or certification, DDOs will ensure that new hires or transfers can appropriately demonstrate competencies in specific areas of supported employment before providing those services without direct supervision.

Integration:

- Providers encourage individuals they support to [access and participate in take advantage of](#) existing community programs, settings, and resources in the same manner [and along with as](#) people without disabilities, rather than developing programs solely for individuals with disabilities.
- Individuals with disabilities are supported to interact with communities of their choice at the times and frequencies of their choosing.
- Staff identify, encourage, and support opportunities for individuals to use natural supports.

