



**WELCOME TO VOCATIONAL  
REHABILITATION COMMUNITY  
REHABILITATION PROVIDER  
(CRP) SERVICE GUIDE**

## **CRP Service Guide**

This guide outlines Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services provided by Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRP) and imparts pertinent information regarding partnering with the State of North Dakota to provide such services.

### Table of Contents

<b>1. INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>3</b>
Referral Process and Meetings .....	3
Identification of Premium Payments .....	3
Referral Sent Prior to the CRP Service Coordination and Planning Meeting.....	4
Preparing for the CRP Service Coordination and Planning Meeting.....	4
CRP Service Coordination and Planning Meeting .....	5
<b>2. VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (VR) VENDOR CODE OF ETHICS.....</b>	<b>6</b>
Purpose .....	6
Objectivity .....	6
Nondiscrimination .....	6
Professionalism and Competency .....	6
Sound Business Practices .....	6
Integrity and Responsibility .....	6
<b>3. SERVICES .....</b>	<b>7</b>
Service Resolution Process.....	7
<b>4. SERVICE DEFINITIONS .....</b>	<b>8</b>
Trial Work Experience .....	8
Situational Assessment .....	9
Student Work Experience .....	9
Adult Work Experience .....	9
Job Development and Placement.....	10
On-the-Job Supports, Short-term (Job Coaching) .....	11
Supported and Customized Employment .....	12
Competitive integrated employment:.....	12
Extended Services: .....	12
Natural supports: .....	12
Opportunity for career advancement:.....	12
Supported Employment.....	13
Job Loss Prior to Successful Closure .....	15
Case Closure .....	16
Discovery .....	16

Customized Employment .....	17
Extended Services .....	18
Extended Services for Youth (Paid by VR) .....	19
<b>5. BILLING AND REPORTING .....</b>	<b>19</b>
Mileage: .....	20
Additional Service Hours: .....	21
No-shows:.....	21
Reportable Activities:.....	21
Wage Requirement.....	22
Weekly Hour Requirement.....	22
Termination from Program.....	22

# North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation Community Rehabilitation Providers

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The VR Program is part of the State of North Dakota's Department Health and Human Services. The VR Program assists eligible individuals with disabilities to prepare, secure, retain and advance in competitive integrated employment. VR is responsible for providing vocational rehabilitation services in accordance with applicable federal and state regulations.

Some services, because of their unique nature are best provided by CRP. As a service provider, the CRP supports VR's mission to obtain long term employment for individuals with disabilities which meet all requirements for competitive integrated employment as defined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). VR has developed this guide to introduce and inform the CRP of how to partner with the State of North Dakota to provide vocational services. The CRP Service Guide's purpose is to describe available VR services provided by the CRP and establish minimum service delivery expectations for the provision of rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities. Included in this guide are required service report forms, staff training resources, payment structure and staffing qualifications.

### Referral Process and Meetings

Based on the needs of the individual and the individual's informed choice, VR at its sole discretion, will make a referral to the CRP for services. Individuals are informed of the choice of CRPs in their community and may interview each CRP. The individual may require or prefer the VR counselor's assistance with scheduling an in-person "Provider Selection Meeting" to make an informed choice on which provider may best fit their needs.

### Identification of Premium Payments

The VR counselor will identify which premium payments (if any) the individual qualifies for prior to beginning services. Eligibility for each premium must be clearly documented in the case file. For disability specific categories documentation must be included in the eligibility statement and will be identified on the authorization.

### Successful Premiums Payments will be approved for the following six categories:

1. Criminal background (felony and misdemeanors if relevant to employment and based on counselor judgement).
2. Any client who desires to obtain or maintain employment in the community where they live, excluding the eight regional cities, Valley City or Wahpeton.
3. Professional placement (any client with an associate degree or higher and being placed in position requiring this level of education).
4. Brain injury.
5. Substance use disorder.
6. Autism and intellectual disability.

Ex. A client wanting to work in their own community of Killdeer (premium), who has a felony that affects employment (premium) and was determined eligible for services due to having a brain injury (premium), substance use (premium), and has an intellectual disability (premium) would receive the outcome and maximum of five premium payments.

NOTE: For any Supported Employment (SE) or Customized Employment (CE) cases where extended services are being provided by a different provider, premium payments 1-3 above would only go to the provider who placed the individual and premium payments 4-6 would be split evenly between the two providers.

### **Referral Sent Prior to the CRP Service Coordination and Planning Meeting**

The VR counselor will ensure the following paperwork is completed and provided to the CRP prior to meeting:

- [Authorization to Disclose Information \(SFN 1059\)](#)
- The individual's resume or generic application.
- A copy of Individualize Plan for Employment (IPE).
- The [CRP Referral form \(SFN 1626\)](#) that identifies what employment service the CRP will provide and the specific premium payments for which the individual is eligible.
- Authorization for specific services and premium payments.

### **Preparing for the CRP Service Coordination and Planning Meeting**

After a CRP has been selected, the CRP Service Coordination and Planning Meeting for employment services, as outlined on an IPE, would occur for the following VR services:

- Student and Adult Work Experience if the individual required CRP services.
- Job Development and Placement.
- Supported Employment.
- Customized Employment, after the Discovery Process has occurred.

The VR counselor and the individual will identify who could be invited to the CRP Service Coordination and Planning Meeting. The following are possible individuals who should be invited to the meeting:

- Family members
- Parents
- Legal guardian, if applicable
- CRP employment staff:
  - o the job coach who will be supporting the individual
  - o employment coordinator
  - o other pertinent employment staff
  - o For individuals receiving services through Developmental Disabilities:
    - residential staff
    - program coordinator

- For individual's receiving services through 1915(i)
  - care coordinator
  - others who are providing support to the individual
- Others who may be involved for successful employment.

A current authorization to disclose information should be on file for everyone prior to the meeting being scheduled or signed at the meeting. The VR counselor will schedule the meeting and send out invites to include date, time, and place of the meeting.

Inform and provide information to the CRP regarding hiring incentives such as Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) and other potential tax credits.

### **CRP Service Coordination and Planning Meeting**

The meeting will be client centered, and the individual will be encouraged to participate as much as possible and cover the following:

- Introductions are made and roles identified of each participant.
- The VR counselor will complete the [CRP Service Coordination and Planning Meeting form \(SFN 1627\)](#).
- Copies will be provided to everyone who attends, as well as those who were unable to attend, so everyone understands the agreed upon plan to assist the individual to become employed.

The CRP will:

- Provide only job-related services. If the CRP is unsure of job-related services, they must coordinate with the VR counselor for prior approval to ensure the services are job related and approved by VR.
- Ensure initial services and any additional services are coordinated with VR counselor prior approval.
- Provide the identified services within the time frame specified on VR's authorization. It is the CRP's responsibility to notify the VR counselor prior to the authorization's ending date of service as to the need for additional services.
- Provide VR with a written report on the individual's progress within 30 days of the CRP initiating services, or by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month whichever date is sooner. If the services extend beyond 30 days, progress reports must be submitted monthly. The type of service determines the type of style of report submitted.
- Contact the VR counselor to address any problems or concerns as soon as they become aware of the problem.
- Within 30 days of initiating services, send an itemized original invoice/progress notes or report (depending upon the defined services being authorized) and the VR authorization for the counselor's review and approval for payment. The invoice/progress note must include the CRP's name and address, authorization number, the individual's name, the specific services provided, the date(s) of the services and the amount billed. If the individual is employed, the progress notes must also include the place of employment, job title, rate of pay, hours worked, and percentage of intervention.

## **2. VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (VR) VENDOR CODE OF ETHICS**

### **Purpose**

The North Dakota VR Vendor Code of Ethics seeks to ensure quality services to clients by promoting objectivity, nondiscrimination, and sound business practices in the provision of services. Competent providers who practice with responsibility and integrity is an integral part of assisting individuals whose disabilities result in barriers to employment to succeed at work and live independently.

### **Objectivity**

- Provide professional services with objectivity and respect for the unique needs and values of the individual being provided services.
- Provide sufficient objective information to enable an individual, or the individual's authorized representative, to make informed choices.

### **Nondiscrimination**

- Avoid discrimination on the basis of factors that are irrelevant to the provision of services.
  - Be conscious of VR values and how they influence professional decisions.
- Do not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, type of disability, national origin, gender, or age.

### **Professionalism and Competency**

- Comply with all licensing, credentialing and/or accreditation requirements recognized within their fields of service.
- Provide services only within the scope of their competency, considering their education, experience, and training and recognizing the limits of their skills and knowledge.
- Take on only those professional commitments and agreements that they can fulfill and carry out those obligations in a timely manner.
- Ensure recommendations for clients are first discussed with counselors.

### **Sound Business Practices**

- Do not engage in fraud or abuse when charging for services.
- Be truthful and accurate in all statements about the services provided.
- Stay within the scope of services agreed upon by VR clients and VR.
- Maintain adequate records of evaluations, assessments, services, recommendations, reports and preserve confidentiality of those records, unless disclosure is required by law, or protection of VR client or the public.

### **Integrity and Responsibility**

- Assume responsibility and accountability for all decisions and actions.
- Be honest, keep promises and honor the trust placed in them.
- Do not advertise or market services in a misleading manner.
- Do not engage in uninvited solicitation of potential individuals who are vulnerable to undue influence, manipulation, or coercion.

### 3. SERVICES

VR may purchase certain vocational rehabilitation services from CRPs. Services purchased from CRPs include:

- Trial Work Experience
- Situational Assessment
- Discovery
- Student Work Experience
- Adult Work Experience
- On-the-Job Supports, Short-term (Job Coaching)
- Job Development and Placement
- Supported Employment
- Customized Employment
- Extended Services for Youth

CRP services are purchased through VR authorizations. VR purchases services only from those providers who comply with the appropriate standards in this document. Each provider is required to undergo an approval process and periodic monitoring to ensure continued compliance with these standards. These standards apply only to those services defined in this document.

VR policies ensure that the provision of services is in accordance with the IPE, jointly developed with the individual. VR provides each individual the opportunity to make informed choices among providers and services.

VR agrees to provide the CRP with a written authorization for services stating the individual's name, the specific service(s) requested, the time period for services, and the amount authorized. VR agrees to pay the CRP for authorized services that are provided.

#### **Service Resolution Process**

CRPs and VR work together to ensure services are completed timely and satisfactorily. Should a dilemma arise during the provision of service, initial attempts should be made to come to a resolution between the CRP and VR Counselor and/or Regional Administrator. If communication is unsuccessful in coming to a resolution, a meeting with the CRP, Regional VR staff and CRP Liaison will be setup to come to a resolution.

The VR counselor, regional administrator, or CRP liaison may propose exceptions to any of these standards to the VR Director or designee, prior to being included in the amended agreement with the CRP. The VR director or designee has the final approval authority for any exceptions to standards. The request for exceptions must be appropriate, well-documented, and expected to result in improved services to the individuals being served.



## 4. SERVICE DEFINITIONS

### **Trial Work Experience**

The purpose of Tribal Work Experience (TWE) is to provide the VR Counselor with information which will be used to decide whether an individual with a disability is unable to benefit from VR services in terms of an employment outcome because of the severity of that individual's disability. TWE services will be conducted via an exploration of the individual's abilities, capabilities, and capacity to perform in realistic work situations.

The TWE must be of sufficient variety and over a sufficient period of time to provide sufficient evidence that the individual can benefit from the provision of vocational rehabilitation services in terms of an employment outcome or that there is clear and convincing evidence that due to the severity of the individual's disability, the individual is incapable of benefitting from the provision of vocational rehabilitation services in terms of an employment outcome. Justification is documented in the report from the TWE service provider.

"Clear and convincing evidence" means that there is "a high degree of certainty" before VR can conclude that an individual is incapable of benefiting from services in terms of an employment outcome.

TWE typically provide information on an individual's:

- Strength and endurance (including mobility and physical limitations)
- Challenging behaviors/social interaction skills
- Time management skills
- Functional limitations
- Communication skills
- Effects of medication on functioning
- Performance of essential job duties (ability to follow directions, quality of work and attention to detail, etc.)
- Special or required accommodations
- Evidence that the individual can or cannot sustain employment

The CRP will conduct the TWE in accordance with the VR developed Plan for TWE which may include accommodations and the appropriate use of assistive technology devices and personal assistance services.

The CRP prepares a typed TWE report from the information gathered at the TWE(s) describing the individual's abilities, capabilities, and capacity to perform in realistic work situations.

Trial Work is designed to explore an individual's abilities, capabilities, and capacity to perform in work situations, including situations in which appropriate support and training are provided. It is a technique where an individual performs the actual job duties in a realistic job situation. Performance is supervised and evaluated by CRP staff throughout the duration of the assessment. There is a pre-determined begin and end date; this

activity is not intended to result in employment. The findings are documented in a report and sent to the VR counselor for review and approval for payment.

### **Situational Assessment**

A situational assessment is a process for evaluating work-related skills, behaviors, interests and needs in a controlled work environment. Although any type of task or situation may be used, real work is most often used in order to add relevance. During the situational assessment the CRP should control and vary the tasks, so an individual can be assessed under a variety of conditions or situations. The findings are documented in a report and sent to the VR counselor for review and approval for payment.

The VR Counselor, CRP, and person participating in the situational assessment collaborate to reach a consensus for the work site location. The assessment must last long enough and include the number of work sites. Each assessment is at least four hours in total duration and may be completed over time. The VR Counselor, individual, and CRP discuss appropriate types of work sites, the expected number of assessment sites, and hours per site, prior to the start of the assessments.

### **Student Work Experience**

Work Experience is an opportunity for students to develop soft skills in a real work environment. The most important aspect of work experience is not necessarily the nature of the work, but rather the opportunity to learn work norms and develop good work habits. The work experience seeks to build skills to get the student closer to their long-term goal.

Work experience can be provided, not only in the summer, but any time of year. It is not meant to replace work experience schools provide. Student work hours may range from 10 – 20 hours per week for six to eight weeks. Once work is secured, the VR counselor, and/or CRP and employer coordinate on-site training on behalf of the student. Work must be:

- Community based
- Integrated
- Paid at least minimum wage

### **Adult Work Experience**

Adult Work Experience (AWE) is a temporary position with an emphasis on training rather than merely employment. It allows the opportunity to acquire additional work skills, to develop and reinforce work competencies, attitudes, and work behaviors needed to prepare for permanent employment.

A paid work experience may lead to permanent employment, an On-the-job Training (OJT) with the same employer, or end without further activities with the employer. The VR counselor must ensure the individual and the work site employer understand there are no obligations to offer permanent employment.

AWE will be utilized with clients who are not Students with Disabilities (SWD) and who are on an IPE. The experience must be consistent with the employment goal.

NOTE: A SWD is not younger than age 14 and in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, and not older than age 21 and is in secondary, post-secondary or other recognized education programs.

AWE should not be used for vocational exploration. It is more appropriate to utilize situational assessments, job shadowing etc. for such a purpose. In addition, it should not be used for individuals who need CE or SE.

AWE may be utilized when:

- The individual does not meet the criteria for SWD.
- There is a gap in employment, and AWE can show stability to future potential employers.
- Individuals have very little, poor, or no employment experience in order to establish a good work history.
- The job is determined to be competitive integrated employment.
- There has been a change in the individual's abilities.
- The individual acquires new vocational barriers.
- When a determination needs to be made regarding the individual's capacity to work in a particular field.
- Others, as it's determined to be an appropriate service in support of the individual's vocational goal.

While AWE is generally designed to prepare the individual for employment without extensive ongoing support, the VR counselor may authorize job coaching hours, in conjunction with AWE if necessary, utilizing On-the-Job Supports, Short-Term (Job Coaching).

### **Job Development and Placement**

This service is intended for those who require some assistance to seek, prepare for and obtain employment. This service is used when the VR counselor determines the individual's need for support to access employers. Job Development and placement services directly assist in preparing an individual to apply and interview for potential employment and eventually obtain successful employment. Successful employment occurs when the individual completes 90 cumulative days of competitive integrated employment in a job that is consistent with the individual's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, informed choice, and economic self-sufficiency.

Job development and placement services include but are not limited to:

- Analysis of employment and economic trends,
- Technical assistance on removal of architectural, communication; transportation, and other barriers to employment,
- Collaboration with local American Job Centers and other State programs aiding with job placement,

- Job analysis and job restructuring,
- Working with the individual to achieve satisfactory adjustment to a job,
- Assistance with resolution of problems or conflicts in the workplace,
- Working with the individual to develop a list of potential employment opportunities,
- Contacting an employer on behalf of the individual,
- Assisting the individual with job applications/interviews, and
- Assisting the individual to revise their resume to target a specific employer/position.

The CRP and the VR Counselor should have consistent contact to ensure placement service expectations are delivered in a timely and person-centered manner. The CRP must clearly describe placement activities in their monthly report.

The result of employment services must be full or part time competitive integrated employment at a location typically found in the community. This service is eligibility for an outcome and applicable premium payments. Payment of these services will occur if VR is able to close the case successfully, and after 90 days of stability with no need of support from the CRP.

### **On-the-Job Supports, Short-term (Job Coaching)**

On-the-Job Supports, Short-term can be provided for individuals who require additional training and support to learn the necessary job skills and maintain employment. The VR counselor, CRP, individual, and employer must work together to understand the expectations of the employer and identify the training needs of the individual.

On-the-Job Supports, Short-term are provided to individuals who have obtained employment but need services in order to stabilize their job placement and to enhance job retention. The VR counselor must consider the required service to address the individual's barriers to employment and structure the intervention accordingly.

Job coaching services may be provided as an on-the-job service on an individualized basis and depending on the individual's needs. A job coach performs the following duties:

- Provide on-site training to familiarize the individual with specific job demands;
- Assist in the development of positive relationships with coworkers/supervisor and
- Intercede when problems or difficulties become known;
- Assist in the development of a standard of production acceptable to the employer;
- Identify and address problems that will affect the individual's ability to maintain employment;
- Implement the most effective and least intrusive techniques to help the individual learn job skills such as using available transportation to and from the job site;
- Assist the individual to be more independent by developing natural supports so that job coaching services can be successfully faded from the job site;

- Workplace orientation;
- Assist in the development of positive work habits and positive behaviors with co-workers and supervisors;
- Provide disability awareness information to the individual's supervisor and co-workers, and
- Provide regular feedback to VR regarding the individual's progress.

The result of employment services must be full or part time competitive integrated employment at a location typically found in the community. This service is eligibility for an outcome and applicable premium payments. Payment of these services will occur if VR is able to close the case successfully, and after 90 days of stability with no need of support from the CRP.

## **Supported and Customized Employment**

The following items are defined concerning supported and customized employment:

### **Competitive Integrated Employment:**

- Competitive earnings that are equal to or greater than the federal, state, or local minimum wage rates, whichever is highest. Wages must be comparable to the customary rate paid by the employer to employees without disabilities in similar positions with comparable skills, experience, and training. Finally, the employee with the disability must also receive benefits comparable to those of employees without disabilities in similar positions.
- Integrated location is in a setting typically found in the community. It is in a setting in which the individual with the disability interacts while performing his or her job duties with employees without disabilities. The primary consideration is the interaction among employees with disabilities and their coworkers without disabilities in the work unit and across the employment site. VR cannot decide of integrated location on the basis of an individual's interaction with customers and vendors alone.

### **Extended Services:**

- Extended services and other appropriate services that are needed to support an individual with a most significant disability, including a youth with a most significant disability, receiving SE, and will need support once the VR case is closed.

### **Natural Supports:**

- Extended services provided by a supervisor or co-workers on the jobsite or on a limited basis, family members. Natural supports must be used cautiously as they are often difficult to sustain on a long-term basis.

### **Opportunity for Career Advancement:**

- In many careers, advancement means moving from a current job to a more advanced job with more responsibilities. Along with increased advancement,

people typically earn more income and have greater responsibility in their new positions.

- The path to advancement varies by organization and industry; however, employees must normally develop skills and abilities for the next-level position. Gaining skills that fill the gap between the current level and desired promotion is the key to career advancement.
- “Time-limited services” are support services provided by vocational rehabilitation for a period not to exceed twenty-four months, unless a longer period to achieve job stabilization has been established in the IPE, before the individual transitions to extended services.

### **Supported Employment**

Supported employment (SE) means competitive integrated employment (including customized employment, or employment in an integrated work setting in which an individual with a most significant disability, including a youth with a most significant disability, is working on a short-term basis toward competitive integrated employment) that is individualized and customized consistent with the unique strengths, abilities, interests, and informed choice of the individual, including with ongoing support services for individuals with the most significant disabilities:

- For whom competitive integrated employment has not historically occurred, or for whom competitive integrated employment has been interrupted or intermittent as a result of a significant disability; and
- Who, because of the nature and severity of their disabilities, need intensive supported employment services and extended services after the transition from support provided by VR to successfully perform assigned job tasks.

SE is intended to provide services that lead to competitive integrated employment for individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth, in a “place and train” model. Focus of SE services could include evaluation, job analysis and job matching, job development, job placement, training and stabilization, systematic instruction, fading and development of natural supports. Because of the nature and severity of the disability the individual will need intensive services and support through extended services once the VR case is closed.

SE encompasses the following characteristics:

- Work for pay at the same rate as other employees,
- Promotes social integration, productivity, and maximum use of a person's skills and abilities,
- Takes place in an integrated work setting,
- Assists individuals with developmental disabilities, severe and persistent mental illnesses, or other significant disabilities,
- Includes job coaching, which is often provided after placement on the job,
- Maintains support services to the worker for present and future employment needs, and

- Builds extended, ongoing supports with agencies and partners outside of VR to assist individuals in maintaining employment.

SE services means ongoing support services, that may include CE placement services, and other appropriate services needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability, including a youth with a most significant disability, in supported employment that are:

- Organized and made available, singly or in combination, in such a way as to assist an eligible individual to achieve or maintain competitive integrated employment;
- Based on a determination of the needs of an eligible individual, as specified in an individualized plan for employment;
- Provided for a period not to exceed twenty-four months, unless under special circumstances the eligible individual and the VR counselor jointly agree to extend the time to achieve the employment outcome identified in the IPE.

The CRP provides job coaching services to the individual at the work site. On-site job skills training includes but is not limited to:

- Job orientation
- Development and maintenance of production levels
- Periodic reassessment and alteration of strategies
- Task analysis
- Transportation training
- Building working relationships with co-workers and supervisors

The training is individualized and personalized to meet the support needs of the individual. Job coaching may also include teaching the employer or co-workers strategies of working with the individual. Exploration of workplace supports should occur during this time if it has not been considered earlier. The individual, employer, and VR Counselor are involved in the planning, directing, and evaluating of these services to help ensure that stabilization occurs.

Individuals, once employed, begin the training piece of SE through the assistance of the individual's job coach. The job coach will support the employer, will explore reasonable accommodations, and will provide training to the individual on job tasks to ensure the individual has the skills necessary to perform the work tasks, as independently as possible.

Stabilization is the expected point of transition to extended services. Individuals are considered stabilized in employment if:

- all support needs have been addressed and necessary modifications or accommodations have been made at the worksite.
- the individual is satisfied with the type of work.
- the individual is satisfied with the overall number of hours worked per week.
- the individual is working to one's maximum ability, as independently as possible.

- the individual and employer agree that the person is performing the job, and meeting expectations of employment; and
- the individual has reached a consistent intervention rate.

#### Transfer to extended services

- Prior to transitioning to extended services the VR counselor will schedule a team meeting. The team, which includes the extended services funder, must concur that the individual is stable in the job.
- For individual's, whose extended services funder is the Developmental Disabilities division, the Development Disabilities Program Manager (DDPM) and applicable Program Coordinator (PC) who manages the individual's Overall Service Plan (OSP) must be part of this meeting.
- For individual's whose extended services funder is Rocky Mountain Rehab (RMR), the Counselor must change the status of the client on the RMR site. In the Member Area, the Counselor will select Request Status Change and note the effective date. The status change should occur after the team meeting but prior to the extended services start date.
- If the individual is receiving services through 1915(i), the care coordinator and service provider for Supported Employment through VR will need to be invited to the meeting. If the CRP, who will be providing extended services, is a different agency, then the care coordinator will follow-up with that agency after the meeting.
- The VR counselor and extended services funder will identify the date the case will be transferred from VR to extended services. The date for extended services should start on the 1st of the month. The VR counselor will confirm with the CRP, in writing, the projected date the individual will be ready to transfer to extended services.
- The VR counselor will enter the 'Stable Date' in AWARE ND, upon the start of extended services.
- The VR counselor will review the CRP progress report until the case can be closed to ensure the individual remains stable in a job and address any concerns that may arise.
- The individual must be in extended services for a minimum of 90 days prior to case closure.

#### **Job Loss Prior to Successful Closure**

The CRP, VR counselor, and VR regional administrator will meet to discuss the circumstances surrounding the job loss. Factors to be considered include the reason for the job loss, if a new employment goal is necessary, if the disability has worsened, if there is a new disability, etc.

NOTE: The VR counselor must end the employment record in AWARE ND when the individual loses the job.



## **Case Closure**

Prior to case closure, the VR Counselor will confirm the premium payments. The CRP is eligible to receive for a successful closure. The following requirements must be satisfied before a VR counselor can close a case:

- The individual has maintained employment and achieved stability in the work setting for a minimum of 90 days after transitioning to extended services.
- The job must meet the definition of competitive integrated employment (as outlined in the SE policy) consistent with the strengths, abilities, interests, and informed choice of the individual.
- The VR counselor must have received and reviewed the final progress report and invoice prior to releasing the final payment.
- If successful closure criteria are not met, neither the outcome nor the premium payments will be released.

Re-Employment or Career Advancement for Individuals in Extended Services and the VR Case has been Closed:

- The VR counselor may open a new case and provide SE training and stabilization if the individual requires additional training to advance in a career or needs a different job.
- VR Regional Administrator must approve SE services for re-employment or career advancement.
- Individuals who are receiving employment related services (pre-vocational, small group or Individual Employment Supports) through the DD Division can have an open case with VR and receiving Supported Employment services to find a different job.

## **Discovery**

Discovery is the core of Customized Employment and answers the question, “Who is this person?” Through observations and interviews, identifies the job seeker’s strengths, needs, and interests. It takes information from a job seeker’s entire life and translates it into tasks a person can do for pay, environments where they are at their best, and conditions needed to be successful. It provides the foundation for Employment Planning. Discovery involves observing the individual in the community, work, or volunteer site, and in the home doing activities the individual finds enjoyable. The findings are documented in the Discovery Profile and sent to the VR counselor for review and approval for payment.

The CRP initiates the Discovery process to explore the individual’s strengths and capabilities which may lead to employment options. The information developed through Discovery allows for activities of typical life to be translated into possibilities for employment. Discovery may include:

- Gaining information about routines, hobbies, family supports, and activities.
- Observation of the neighborhood/area near the individual’s home to determine nearby employment, services, transportation, safety concerns, etc.
- Participation in a familiar activity in which the individual is most competent.

- Participation in a novel activity in which the individual is interested in participating but has not yet had the chance to do so.
- Conduct a review of existing records, memorabilia and other documents that are available.

The Discovery Profile Report is subsequently completed and submitted to VR. After VR approval of the Discovery Profile Report, the CRP initiates a planning meeting that includes anyone who may assist the individual in reaching their employment goal to develop a blueprint to guide the efforts to develop a customized job. While the planning meeting is a person-centered, person-directed session facilitated by the CRP that produces a targeted employment objective and a resume for the individual, a key factor is the involvement of the individual's support system.

### **Customized Employment**

Customized Employment (CE) is an option when typical supported employment strategies have not been successful, or when customized employment strategies may more successfully meet a client's individualized support needs.

CE is a process-driven concept that may involve a blend of flexible strategies which result in the provision of individually negotiated and designed services, supports and job opportunities that lead to an employment outcome. A key factor in this service is the presence of employer negotiation, including customizing a job description based on current needs of the employer and the employee. CE generally comprises of the following components.

CE services may be provided for eligible individuals in accordance with the following guidelines and as described in the customer's IPE:

- CE services must contribute to the achievement of competitive integrated employment.
- The VR Counselor must ensure that the individual or, as appropriate, the individual's representative has a clear understanding of VR policies and requirements for providing customized employment services and available supports and must work with the individual or, as appropriate, the individual's representative to be actively involved in directing, planning, and participating

Strategies to achieve a customized employment outcome may also include:

- Task reassignment. Some of the job tasks of incumbent workers are reassigned to a new employee. This reassignment allows the incumbent worker to focus on the critical functions of his or her primary job. Task reassignment typically takes the form of job creation, whereby a new job description is negotiated based on current, unmet workplace needs.
- Job carving. An existing job description is modified, containing one or more, but not all, of the tasks from the original job description.
- Job sharing. Two or more people share the tasks and responsibilities of a job based on each other's strengths.

CE is a flexible process designed to personalize the employment relationship between a job candidate and an employer in a way that meets the needs of both through flexible strategies including:

- Customizing a job description based on current employer needs or on previously unidentified and unmet employer needs
- Developing a set of job duties, a work schedule, specifics of supervision (including performance evaluation and review), and determining a job location
- Providing services and supports, such as job coaching, at the work location
- Negotiation of job duties — The job duties are set as a result of negotiation with employers, based upon their needs and the clients' abilities • Individualization — Involving a job for one person, often utilizing job-carving, restructuring, modification or creation
- Negotiated pay — The employee's wage is set as a result of negotiation with the employer and results in compensation at the prevailing wage or "going rate," and is at least minimum wage
- CE occurs in businesses in the community or in businesses owned by the individual in the case of self-employment, increasing the employee's integration into their community

Only CRPs who have participated in VR's CE Training Initiative, coordinated through Minot State University, are authorized to provide customized employment.

### **Extended Services**

Extended services are ongoing support services which are:

- Needed to support and maintain an individual with a disability including a youth with a disability, in supported employment;
- Organized or made available, singly or in combination, in such a way as to assist an eligible individual in maintaining supported employment;
- Based on the needs of an eligible individual, as specified in an individualized plan for employment;
- Provided by a State agency, a private nonprofit organization, employer, or any other appropriate resource, after an individual has made the transition from support from VR; and
- Provided to a youth with a most significant disability by the designated State unit in accordance with requirements set forth in 34 CFR 361.5 and 34 CFR 363.54 for a period not to exceed four years, or at such time that a youth reaches age twenty-five and no longer meets the definition of a youth with a disability under 34 CFR 361.5, whichever occurs first. VR may not provide extended services to an individual with a most significant disability who is not a youth with a most significant disability.

The purpose of extended services is to provide those ongoing support services that are necessary to maintain the individual in the job, to restore stability as necessary, and to place the individual in a new job when a job is lost, or when appropriate, conduct career development.

Extended services may be funded by another state agency or other resources, such as a Social Security Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS) or Impairment Related Work Expenses (IRWE); provided by natural supports; or funded by VR for a youth with a disability for up to four years or until the individual turns twenty-five years of age, whichever comes first, provided there are no other means of funding for providing the extended services and the youth has not declined VR providing extended services. If VR funds extended services for a youth with a disability, the case will remain in stabilization and cannot be closed until the time period for VR funded extended services ends.

### **Extended Services for Youth (Paid by VR)**

For youth who qualify for and require supported or customized employment; but will not immediately be able to access extended services funding, VR is able to provide these services for a limited period of time. This is only an option until the youth can access alternative funding for extended services but not to exceed four years or beyond age 24 (their 25th birthday).

Extended services for youth would be the necessary and appropriate supports, including jobsite training, transportation, follow-up family contact, or any services necessary to maintain the individual's competitive integrated position in the community.

## **5. BILLING AND REPORTING**

The established billing unit is fifteen minutes. CRPs may bill for time providing direct services to individuals and for direct contact with potential employers. CRPs cannot bill for travel time between appointments and business. Services can be billed for activities performed either in-person, via telephone, email, or other electronic media. Once an individual is employed, job coaching services may occur on or off the worksite. Job coaching services provided off the work site must be related to the individual's vocational goal or employment site.

The CRP may bill for time staff spends writing reports and ongoing contact with the individual. Billing for communication with contacts such as family members, legal guardians or other support team members is allowed if preapproved by the VR counselor and the communication is vocationally related. The CRP must document formal interactions on the monthly progress report.

<u><b>Billable</b></u>	<u><b>Non-Billable</b></u>
<p><b>Direct services to individuals</b> (Job coaching – on site, job coaching – off site, job development, filling out applications with client, onboarding with client, client advocacy with employer with/for client, time spend developing client supports directly related to job, additional service hours as preapproved by VRC, any authorized service)</p> <p><b>Direct contact with potential employers</b> (Direct calls, emails, virtual or in person meetings with employers about a specific client)</p> <p><b>Administrative services</b> (Communications with guardians, family, or other team members directly about employment, reasonable time for staff to complete reporting documentation)</p> <p><b>Mileage</b> (Approved transportation of staff or client to job/service sites where the round trips is 30+ miles)</p> <p><b>Misc.</b> (Client no-shows with onsite staff – max. 15m)</p>	<p>Messages left for client, employer, other team members, etc. SMS is considered a message if there is not a meaningful response chain</p> <p>Missed appointments due to circumstances directly related to the client – staff or employer related</p> <p>Internal CRP staff communication, staffing, case consultation</p> <p>CRP staff training</p> <p>Meal or lodging per diem</p> <p>General communications with employers – fishing for general job leads</p> <p>Local mileage</p> <p>Any non-authorized service or service provided outside of agreed upon service dates</p>

**Mileage:**  
There are some circumstances when the individual lives in and/or desires to work in a rural community. In instances when the provider must travel more than 15 miles one way outside of the metropolitan service area or city limits, whichever area is larger, VR will authorize additional payment to the provider.

Payment is based on the **approved state rate for mileage**. The **number of required trips will be negotiated** between the provider and VR counselor.

Payment for the provider’s staff travel time is the current hourly rate for the service they are providing.

NOTE: VR does not pay a meal or lodging per diem for CRP staff when traveling to outreach communities.

**Additional Service Hours:**

A request for additional service hours must be authorized by the VR counselor in advance to be considered billable. The request must be in writing and approved by the regional administrator.

**No-shows:**

If an individual misses a scheduled appointment with the CRP staff, the CRP must notify the VR counselor or regional administrator via email for each occurrence as soon as possible and include the reason the individual missed the appointment. If the individual misses three consecutive appointments, the CRP is required to stop services and contact the VR counselor to schedule a meeting. The meeting must include the CRP staff, VR counselor and individual. A CRP may bill VR for .25 hours (15 minutes) for each client no-show. (notify VR of any client no show as soon as possible)

If a CRP has its own internal policy regarding no-shows for a customer to continue receiving services, the CRP must make the policy known to the individual at the time of the referral for services.

Services are invoiced monthly. The CRP must send the invoice, monthly progress summary and authorization to VR for payment. These documents should be submitted to VR by the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the following month of service. The monthly invoice must align with the authorization. The invoice on the CRPs letterhead must contain the following information: invoice date, provider's invoice number, name of the provider, dates of services (actual begin and end date of service), description (Name) of Service(s) and invoice total.

Monthly limits for reporting: writing reports or monthly progress reports

- Trial Work, two hours maximum per trial work site
- Job Supports (Work Experience, On-the-job supports, short-term, Specialized Job Placement, SE and CE), .5-hour (30 minutes) maximum per month

**Reportable Activities:**

CRPs must report to the referring VR counselor by close of business the next working day:

- Successful placement of an individual in an employment setting
- Individual job termination
- Emergency medical services requiring hospitalizations
- Death

Report success or concerns to VR counselors as soon as possible, but not later than a week after obtaining the information. Concerns may include:

- Non-cooperation by the individual
- Inability to connect with the individual after two weeks of trying multiple ways

- Individual injury or illnesses
- CRPs inability to serve the individual.

NOTE: The CRP must provide in-writing the reason for their inability to service an individual.

### **Wage Requirement**

The individual must be compensated in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act. For an individual to be closed as a competitive integrated employment closure, the individual must be compensated at or above the minimum wage, but not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by employees who are not disabled.

NOTE: Unpaid work and summer employment do not meet the criteria for a successful closure.

### **Weekly Hour Requirement**

There is **no requirement** that an individual must be employed a certain number of hours per week for a case to be closed successfully employed. Cases where the individual is employed in a competitive integrated position in the community and working less than 10 hours per week, the CRP must provide in writing why the individual cannot work more than 10 hours per week. The case is reviewed by the regional administrator and State office before the case can be closed successfully.

### **Termination from Program**

Every effort must be made to inform the VR counselor before termination of services to an individual. When the counselor cannot be informed before termination, the counselor must be informed within one business day after termination.

Reasons for termination may include:

- behaviors dangerous to self or others,
- serious infraction of the provider's rules,
- frequent unexcused absenteeism,
- frequent unexcused tardiness, or
- lack of cooperation on assigned tasks.