

## IV. INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT

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## IV. INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT (IPE)

ARS will conduct a thorough assessment for determining VR needs for each eligible individual. The purpose of this assessment is to determine the specific employment outcome, the criteria for evaluation of progress toward an employment outcome, and the nature and scope of VR services to be included in the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE.) The term employment outcome means with respect to the individual, (A) entering or retaining full-time, or if appropriate, part-time competitive employment in the integrated labor market, (B) satisfying the vocational outcome that is determined appropriate, including self-employment, telecommuting, or business ownership.

The IPE may be developed jointly between the counselor and the individual, or the individual may develop all or part of the plan independently, or with the technical assistance from another source. The completed plan must be approved and signed by the counselor and the individual, or if appropriate, the individual's representative, within the framework of a counseling and guidance relationship. Assistance in completing the IPE form, if requested by the consumer will be provided.

The IPE must be designed to achieve the specific employment outcome, which is chosen by the individual consistent with the individual's unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, career interest, and informed choice. The documentation should show that there is adequate labor market demand to support the employment outcome. If relocation would be required, the individual must agree to relocate to an area with sufficient labor market demand for the chosen employment outcome prior to the signature and initiation of the IPE. The individual should acknowledge that they are familiar with the entry-level wages that are common in the chosen vocation.

For supported employment services, an employment outcome should include a description of the extended services needed and the source of extended services. If it is not possible to identify the source of extended services at the time the IPE is developed, a statement must be included explaining the reasonable expectation that extended services will become available prior to closure.

The IPE is developed after a Certificate of Eligibility/Ineligibility for VR Services or a Certificate of Eligibility/Ineligibility for Trial Work Experience or EE Services has been completed. A copy of the IPE will be provided to the individual.

The IPE is amended each time a substantial change or annual (12 months)/periodic review (Status 06, every 90 days) are made in the individual's rehabilitation program. A substantial change could include: 1) a vocational goal change which may require a change in the evaluation criteria (intermediate objective) 2) deletion or addition of services 3) the cost of services 4) termination of the cost 5) periodic or annual review of the case, and 6) extension of an expired IPE. A copy of all Amendments will be provided to the individual.

**Note: A new IPE must be completed when an individual is moved from Trial Work Experience or EE services to an accepted status for VR Services.**

## Counselor's Role:

- provide information, tools, and resources to encourage decision making skills,
- facilitate the decision making process,
- support decision implementation, and
- provide the consumer with information about the parameters, which may affect the range of available career goals or service options.

The mandatory components that the IPE must contain are based on 34 C.F.R. § 361.45 and 34 C.F.R. § 361.46, please see Procedures-Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

The services, service providers, and all activities selected by the individual must be necessary to meet the employment outcome goal.

The individual or representative must sign and date the IPE. The individual or representative must be given a copy of the IPE.

The counselor is the approving authority; therefore, the counselor's signature indicates approval of the individual's IPE.

The IPE for trial work/extended evaluation (status 06) is to be reviewed every 90 days. The counselor and the individual must complete a periodic review of the rehabilitation plan every 90 days to assess the individual's progress. The Amendment to the IPE will be completed to document the periodic review. (See Appendix E: IPE)

Annually, the counselor and the individual must review the rehabilitation plan to assess the individual's progress toward an employment outcome. The IPE Amendment is completed as appropriate to document the annual review in the ECF.

The IPE can be amended at any time utilizing informed choice. IPE Amendment does not take effect until agreed to and signed by the counselor and individual or representative.

## **PROCEDURES – INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT (IPE)**

- The counselor will inform the individual of the **options for developing the IPE.**
- The counselor will inform the individual of the required components of the IPE if the individual chooses to develop the IPE:
  - The mandatory components that the IPE must contain:
  - A specific employment outcome consistent with informed choice,
  - criteria for evaluation of progress toward employment outcome,
  - specific rehabilitation services, (See Appendix E: IPE.)
  - projected timelines for initiation and duration of services,
  - schedule for periodic reviews and evaluations
  - entity to provide services and methods for procurement,
  - responsibilities of the individual,

- need for post-employment services, and
  - need for supported employment services.  
34 C.F.R. § 361.45 and 34 C.F.R. § 361.46
- The counselor will inform the individual that the IPE must be completed and assistance in completing the forms is available upon request.
- Complete IPE (See Forms Appendix E).
- The case management system will generate the status move after required data is keyed for Status 12.
- The counselor will document in the case note the counseling provided at IPE development.
- **Cost Estimate** - Cost estimates cannot be for more than one year.
- Annual Review must be completed.

## INFORMED CHOICE – IPE DEVELOPMENT

ARS will assure that eligible individuals or their representatives are provided information and support services to assist them in exercising informed choice throughout the rehabilitation process. The counselor will inform each eligible individual through appropriate modes of communication about the availability of and opportunities to exercise informed choice, including the availability of support services for individuals with cognitive or other disabilities who require assistance in exercising informed choice in decisions related to the development of an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). Eligible individuals will be given information, or assistance in acquiring the information, to make an informed choice with respect to the selection of the employment outcome, specific vocational rehabilitation services needed to achieve the employment outcome, the vendors that can provide the services, employment setting and the settings in which the services will be provided, and the methods available for procuring the services. Counselor judgment and experience must be used to provide the appropriate information or assistance in acquiring the information to enable the individual to make a reasonable decision regarding the development of the IPE and program of services. A reasonable decision is one that is realistic considering the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, and interests of the individual and that must lead to an employment outcome.

To ensure that the availability and scope of informed choice is consistent, the information must include, at a minimum, information relating to the following:

- 1) Cost, accessibility, and duration of potential services.
- 2) To the extent available, consumer satisfaction with those services.
- 3) Qualifications of potential service providers.
- 4) Types of services offered by the potential providers.
- 5) The degree to which services are provided in integrated settings.
- 6) To the extent available, outcomes achieved by individuals working with service providers. 34 C.F.R. § 361.52

## **PROCEDURES – INFORMED CHOICE – IPE DEVELOPMENT**

- The counselor will maintain a regional and statewide list of vendors that provide services that lead to an employment outcome.
- To the extent available, the counselor will provide, or assist the individual in acquiring, consumer satisfaction surveys and reports regarding the service providers.
- The counselor will provide, or assist the individual in acquiring, accreditation, certification, or other information relating to the qualifications of the providers.
- When appropriate, the counselor will make referrals to other consumers, local consumer groups, or disability advisory councils qualified to discuss the services or service providers.
- The counselor will document in the case note the specific action taken in the above procedures using the Informed Choice heading to assure that informed choice was provided.