

## CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT

### POLICY

**Authority - 34 CFR 361.5(b)(11); 34 CFR 361.48; 34 CFR 361.50**

1. Customized employment services may be provided for eligible individuals in accordance with the following guidelines and as described in the individual's IPE to contribute to the achievement of competitive integrated employment.
2. Customized employment means competitive integrated employment, for an individual with a significant disability, that is:
  - a. Based on an individualized determination of the unique strengths, needs, and interests of the individual with a significant disability;
  - b. Designed to meet the specific abilities of the individual with a significant disability and the business needs of the employer; and
  - c. Achieved through flexible strategies.
3. The provision of customized employment services is not based on financial need.
4. Prior to providing services, a determination must be made as to the availability of comparable services and benefits and the extent to which the comparable services or benefits can be utilized to provide or pay for the services.
5. CE services require both placement and training to accomplish the employment objective and therefore constitute multiple VR services requiring at least 6 months to complete. See procedures for IPE for Customized Employment Services.
6. Prior to considering CE services, there must be documentation of one or more significant functional limitations. Conduct and complete an ENA Summary the same as is normally required for any client and determine the client's priority category. PC must be at least 2 to provide CE services.
7. Employment must be competitive integrated employment at a location typically found in the community (in the competitive labor market) where the client:
  - a. Is compensated at not less than the legal minimum wage or at the customary rate for the same or similar work performed by employees who are not individuals with disabilities;
  - b. Is eligible for the level of benefits provided to other employees who are not individuals with disabilities;
  - c. Interacts with fellow employees for the purpose of performing the job duties within the work unit who are not individuals with a disability; and
  - d. Has the opportunity for advancement that is similar for other employees who are not individuals with disabilities and who have similar positions.
8. Customized employment services may include:
  - a. Determination of an individual's unique strengths, needs, and interests.
  - b. Job exploration and development;

- c. Working with the employer to facilitate placement, including:
    - 1) Customizing a job description based on current employer needs or on previously unidentified and unmet employer needs;
    - 2) Developing a set of job duties, a work schedule and job arrangement, and specifics of supervision (including performance evaluation and review), and determining a job location;
    - 3) Using a professional representative chosen by the individual, or if elected self-representation, to work with an employer to facilitate placement; and
    - 4) Providing services and supports at the job location.
  - d. On-the-job skills training; and
  - e. On-the-job supports.
9. Customized employment outcome is often achieved by:
- a. 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.
  - b. Job carving: An existing job description is modified, containing one or more, but not all, of the tasks from the original job description.
  - c. Job sharing: Two or more people share the tasks and responsibilities of a job based on each other's strengths.
10. CE services may be provided by a Community Rehabilitation Provider (CRP) with a current Letter of Agreement (LOA) and in accordance with the Customized Employment Program User Guide (see VRRM). Go to <http://www.tn.gov/humanservices/article/dhs-vr-loa> for a list of current service providers. Click on the current year's LOAs and click on the current year's approved list. Verify that the CRP's LOA has the Customized Employment Services attachment. The CE Program User Guide and CRP Referral Form are under "Forms and Reports". See procedures for Change in CRP.
11. Staffings must be conduct and documented in accordance with the Customized Employment Program User Guide.
12. An individual is considered to have achieved a successful employment outcome of customized employment when the individual has maintained employment for at least 90 days and all other requirements for a 26 closure have been satisfied. If the client is also receiving supported employment services, refer to Supported Employment policy and procedures for closure standards. Refer to Case Closure policy and procedures. See procedures for Post-employment Services.