

**Memorandum of Understanding**  
**Between**  
**The Tennessee Department of Human Services, Division of Rehabilitation Services,**  
**Vocational Rehabilitation Services**  
**and**  
**The Tennessee Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities**

**Parties:**

This Memorandum of Understanding (Memorandum) between the Tennessee Department of Human Services, Division of Rehabilitation Services, Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VR) and the Tennessee Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (DIDD) is for the provision of employment services for persons receiving services from the respective parties.

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this Memorandum is to facilitate seamless and cost-effective coordination between the parties to avoid duplication of employment services and comply with interagency mandates set forth in State of Tennessee Executive Order No. 28 which establishes the Employment First Initiative to expand community employment opportunities for Tennesseans with disabilities. This Memorandum is further intended to prevent the duplication of services by ensuring that services which are provided to individuals who are both under the Home and Community-Based (HCBS) Waiver and in secondary training are not otherwise available to the persons through a local educational agency under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

**Target Population:**

For the purposes of this Memorandum, interagency collaboration and cooperation will focus on individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities who are receiving services through a HCBS Waiver and who are determined eligible to receive vocational rehabilitation services with the goal of obtaining competitive integrated employment in the community.

**Principles:**

This Memorandum is entered into and based upon the belief that individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities should be provided opportunities and support to pursue community integrated employment. Individuals will receive support to pursue and retain employment in the community specific to their individualized needs, goals and desires.

Each agency will determine which services will be offered based upon its respective policies and procedures regarding said services; however, every effort will be made to be efficient and effective in making the determination and implementing services.

**Memorandum Objectives:**

In order to accomplish the purposes of this Memorandum, VR will attempt to ensure:

1. Coordination and communication between the parties;
2. That the VR Director and the DIDD State Director of Employment & Day Services, or his/her appointed designee, meet on a regularly-scheduled basis to continue overseeing the Memorandum;
3. That the VR Director and the DIDD State Director of Employment and Day Services, or his/her appointed designee, collaborate as needed on communication to Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs) and VR Counselors to ensure consistent expectations are set for the delivery of employment services;
4. That the Independent Support Coordinator (ISC) or Case Manager (CM), along with Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC), lead the assessment and coordination of employment services;
5. Coordination between the ISC, CM and VRC will be reflected in Individual Support Plans (ISPs) and Individual Plan(s) for Employment (IPE); and
6. Compliance with applicable federal regulations (34 CFR 361.24) of blending funding is coordinated and maintained.

**Resolution of Conflicts:**

This Memorandum recognizes that each party hereto has its own administrative mechanisms for the timely resolution of internal disputes and that each party and its respective staff has specific responsibilities and operating procedures governed by applicable federal and state laws, rules and policies. Nothing in this Memorandum is intended to negate or otherwise render ineffective any such law, rules policies and/or procedure(s).

**Term:**

The term of this Memorandum will begin on the last date of signatures of the parties to the Memorandum. It will be evaluated by the parties on at least an annual basis between July and September each year thereafter and will either: (a) continue in effect until replaced or superseded by an amended or new Memorandum; or (b) be terminated upon request of either party. If at any time either party is no longer able to fulfill its duties and obligations herein for any reason, then this Memorandum may be terminated upon written notice.

**Construction:**

The intent of the parties hereto is to coordinate the provision of their services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. In all instances this Memorandum is to be construed in accordance with requirements of applicable state and federal law. The terms of this Memorandum may only be enforced by the parties hereto.

**Tennessee Department of Human Services/Division of Rehabilitation Services – Vocational Rehabilitation Program Roles and Responsibilities**

1. The Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) will coordinate with the DIDD Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRP) and the Independent Support Coordination (ISC) agency/Case

Manager (CM) to determine the services needed for the individual, based on the individual's abilities, capabilities and interests, to excel in employment to ensure coordination and avoid duplication or gaps in services.

2. At the time of referral, the VRC will document whether or not the individual is receiving waiver services or is on the waiting list and will obtain two (2) release of information forms - one from the DIDD and another from the VR Program.
3. All services will be provided under an IPE. The IPE will indicate the need for on-going job supports necessary for the individual to maintain employment.
4. Prior to or at the time of case closure (successful or unsuccessful) the VRC will coordinate with the CRP and/or the ISC/CM for VR post closure services and/or supports. The needed supports and services will be reflected in the Individual Support Plan (ISP) and the VR IPE. The closure letter to the individual will be copied to the CRP, ISC/CM and anyone else specified by the person receiving services who needs documentation of VR case closure and has authorized release of such information.
5. VR will identify and promote the use of shared partner agency vendors providing quality services related to integrated employment and, to the extent possible, apply to those vendors through Letters of Agreement consistent: (i) service requirements, (ii) professional standards applicable to vendor staff, (iii) staff training requirements, and (iv) performance standards, each as related to integrated employment outcomes. VR will further, identify and implement methods to assess and provide information on the performance of such vendors to individuals with disabilities and their families so that they can make informed choices regarding the selection of service providers.

#### **The Tennessee Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Roles and Responsibilities**

1. Once it has been determined, through Person Centered Planning that the person supported has chosen employment, the CRP will identify whether or not the person supported has received or needs to apply for VR Services. The ISP should reflect the status of the services with the respective department.
2. Through the Letters of Agreement, the CRP will refer and coordinate with the VRC who will communicate with them to determine the services needed for the individual to excel in employment and to identify job retention services needed. The ISC/CM should be kept abreast of case status. The ISP should reflect the individual's need and desire to receive Vocational Rehabilitation Services.
3. In the absence of a CRP, the ISC/CM will refer and coordinate services with VR to assist the Person receiving services to select a CRP who will assist with coordination of VR and waiver services.
4. Upon referral for VR services, the CRP and/or the ISC/CM will provide documentation to the VRC as to whether or not the individual is receiving waiver services or is on the waiting list and will obtain release of information forms for programs as needed.
5. CRP's will document, coordinate and provide services that are agreed upon for the individual.
6. The CRP, ISC/CM will share the ISP, case notes and other pertinent information that can assist in the identification and development of the best supports for the individual.

7. Identify and promote the use of shared partner agency vendors providing quality services related to integrated employment and establishing and, to the extent possible, applying to those vendors' consistent (i) service requirements, (ii) professional standards applicable to vendor staff, (iii) staff training requirements and (iv) performance standards, each as related to Integrated Employment outcomes. Additionally, identifying and implementing methods to assess and provide information on the performance of such vendors to individuals with Disabilities and their families so that they can make informed choices regarding their service providers.

**Signatures**

This Memorandum is effective immediately upon joint signature:

Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Debra K. Payne, Commissioner

11-25-15  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Department of Human Services

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Raquel Hatter MSW, Ed.D, Commissioner

12/14/15  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date