

The Discovery Process

The Discovery Process is just what it sounds like – thoughtfully structuring time to discover if someone is interested in working – and, if so, what jobs they are interested in pursuing. It is not just important but indeed, critical to note that the Discovery Process is ongoing. Day Service Providers have a continual obligation to ensure that the services they deliver are structured in such a way as to promote and develop opportunities for exploration and learning.

As it pertains to exploring someone’s interest in work, the initial stages of the Discovery Process should be done under DMRS’ community-based services. As explained further in this document, referral to the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) could happen in the later stages of the Discovery Process.

The Discovery Process should happen as an outcome of the Individual Support Plan (ISP) Process. The Independent Support Coordinator (ISC) must coordinate the Discovery Process and write outcomes to implement it.

As you read and use this information, keep in mind the key principle of the Discovery Process - “exposure precedes interest”. In other words, for people to make informed choices, they must know and understand what the community has to offer. As this document will elaborate, the Discovery Process can be facilitated in a number of ways.

The Initial Stages of the Discovery Process

The initial stages of the Discovery Process do not happen in any particular order. The components presented here are presented as tools and resources that providers can use and change based on the needs of each individual.

-Conducting Exploration in the Community: All day activities should be conducted to promote opportunities for productivity, independence and inclusion. With the philosophy that “exposure precedes interest,” community-based activities should be re-structured to place a special emphasis on exploring employment-related activities and concepts. Examples include activities such as volunteering and job shadowing.

- Job Exploration: Recognizing that a person’s idea about a particular job may be quite different from the actual job, providers should seek opportunities for people to experience work in the community. This may occur either through volunteering or through brief, paid work experiences. These experiences must be customized to the person’s interests.

-Discovering the Potential Interest in Employment: In the past, this has been determined to a large extent by asking, “Do you want to work?” Sample questions that may facilitate this discussion can be found in *Attachment One: Sample Resources and Tools*.

The Later Stages of the Discovery Process

If the initial stages of the Discovery Process have resulted in a determination that the person wants to pursue community-based employment and with a consensus of the person’s Circle of Support (COS), the provider needs to make a referral to the Division of Rehabilitation Services. For further explanation, refer to *Attachment Two: The Seamless Transition Process from DRS to DMRS Employment-Based Services*.

Attachment One: Sample Resources and Tools

The following are only examples of questions that may facilitate a discussion of a person's interest in employment.

Use this list as a resource only from which to begin a discussion. This list is to be viewed as only a resource to glean ideas for generating a meaningful discussion of employment – it is not a list of questions to be gone through methodically with a person. It is imperative that the process is done in a thoughtful manner – one which respects the communication needs and styles of the person. Interviews with people who know the person well are also another key component of facilitating clear communication about the person's interests and goals.

Mere conversations are *not* to be used as the sole factor in determining someone's interest or non-interest in work. In adhering to the principle of “exposure precedes interest” the provider must use time in community-based services to allow a person to have meaningful opportunities to explore the possibilities of employment.

1. Service Recipient's Understanding of Work

- A. How do people make money to buy the things they want and need like clothes, movies, cd's, and food?
- B. What does it mean to work?
- C. If you could do any type of work you wanted to do, what kind of work would that be?

2. Service Recipient's Motivation to Work

- A. What makes people want to work?
- B. How would your life be different if you worked? Or, what would your life be like if you didn't work?
- C. How would working make you feel? Or, how would not working make you feel?
- D. Imagine getting paid for working a job, how do you think that would make you feel?
- E. If you had a job to go to, what would be the most important reason you would want to get there?
- F. Do you have friends or family that work?
- G. What parts of their jobs do they like best? Least?

3. Service Recipient's Likes/Dislikes

- A. What is your favorite place to go in _____ (Memphis)? What makes you like this particular place? Have you ever seen anyone working at this particular place? What kind of work did they do? What would it be like to work at or near a place like this?
- B. What is your favorite food? How often do you get to eat this particular food? How would you like to have more money to buy this type of food and similar foods? What is your favorite restaurant? How would you like to have enough money to eat there more often?
- C. Where is your favorite store to shop? How often do you get to shop there? How much money do you usually get to spend there? What would you buy if you had more money because you were working?
- D. Tell me which you prefer: spending time in quiet places with few people or spending time in places where there are lots of people? Describe some places like this that you've been to, what was going on and why you liked or didn't like the place.

4. Service Recipient's self assessment of skills and limitations

- A. What are you really good at doing?
- B. What do you like to do more than anything?
- C. Tell me what other people compliment you on the most?
- D. If you could do better at one thing (improve ability), what would that be?
- E. What is something else that you wish you could do better?
- F. What is one thing that you think that you could do if someone taught you?

If you have questions, please contact your Regional Day Service Coordinator or the State Director of Day Services.

Attachment Two: The Seamless Transition Process from DRS to DMRS Employment-Based Services

Step	Action
1) Person expresses an interest in employment.	<p>ISC and DMRS Provider** initiate a discovery process that provides the person with both the information and experiences to make an informed decision about employment. If there is a guardian or conservator they should be a part of the meeting about whether or not to pursue employment. It is also important that WIPA (formerly BPAO) staff are contacted regarding the effects of work on Social Security benefits.</p> <p>If the person is served exclusively in Facility Based services, the DMRS Provider needs to submit a service request for Community-Based services to the ISC to facilitate the discovery process. It is in the best interest of the DMRS Provider that the request is approved before the provision of services begins.</p>
2) Referral to DRS to open a case.	<p>Once it is confirmed that the person wants to be employed and the guardian or conservator approves and there is a time frame for the initiation of the employment process, either the ISC or the DMRS Provider make a referral to DRS. DRS opens a case. If the DMRS Provider does not have a DRS SE Letter of Understanding, DRS refers the person to a CRP.* In this circumstance, the ISC, the CRP and the DMRS Provider need to meet to coordinate activities and responsibilities.</p>
3) Supplemental Evaluation	<p>After DRS eligibility has been determined, Supplemental Evaluations are the first step in the DRS process. DRS may fund up to 3 evaluations.</p>
4) Employment Meeting	<p>After Supplemental Evaluations have been completed, DRS requires that there be an employment meeting to discuss the results including the person's interests, the levels of support the person will need and any barriers that need to be overcome. If a CRP other than the DMRS Provider has performed the DRS process, then both the ISC and the DMRS Provider need to receive written results of this meeting. Based on the outcome of this meeting, job development begins.</p>
5) Job Placement	<p>Once the person is hired, the ISC submits a service request for the appropriate DMRS employment-based rate that is based on the level of employment support that the person will need. The projected completion date of stabilization should determine the start date of the requested DMRS employment-based services. Once the person starts working, DRS pays the provider for Job Placement, the second step in its employment process.</p>
6) Stabilization	<p>Stabilization is the third phase in the DRS employment process and the last phase of DRS funded employment services. It typically lasts 30 to 60 days but may take longer. The provider and the DRS Counselor must agree that the person has completed stabilization according to the guidelines in the SE LOU. DRS pays the provider for the achievement of stabilization.</p>
7) Provider begins accessing DMRS employment funding	<p>Upon the completion of stabilization, the DMRS Provider may begin accessing DMRS employment-based funding for the provision of extended supports. DMRS funding for extended services can begin on the next service day after stabilization has ended. This process is designed with the expectation that the DMRS service request is already</p>

	approved. This ensures a seamless transition between DRS and DMRS service funding (e.g. no gap between the date of the end of stabilization and the beginning of DMRS employment-based funding). The DMRS Provider must maintain a letter from DRS documenting the stabilization date to justify the date of access to DMRS employment-based funding. However, it is not necessary that the DMRS Provider has either the payment for stabilization or the stabilization letter in hand prior to accessing DMRS employment-based funding.
8) 30/60 Day Report	The DRS provider submits this report to DRS on the status of the person at the appropriate time. DRS's payment for this report is not considered to be a payment for a service. Payment for services ceased with the completion of stabilization.
9) Closure	DRS closes the case based on the 30/60 day report. If the DRS and DMRS providers are different entities, both need to maintain a copy of the closure letter in the person's file.

* For clarity's sake, the terms, DMRS Provider and Community Rehabilitation Provider (CRP-DRS) are used to distinguish providers in the circumstance when the DRS provider and the DMRS provider are separate entities.

General Notes:

- Planning is always the key to success. Make sure you have sufficient, trained staff to provide services.
- If a CRP has provided the DRS phase of the process, ensure that the CRP staff trains the DMRS provider staff in supporting the person.
- If, after you have begun to access DMRS employment-based funding for a person, you request and are granted DRS-funded services such as intensive job coaching or intensive job services, you must cease accessing DMRS employment-based funding for that person. Once you cease accessing the DRS funding, you may resume accessing DMRS employment-based funding.

This document was included with the memo of Deputy Commissioner Stephen H. Norris in December 2006 regarding the Division's policy on stabilization as the point of transition from DRS funded services to DMRS employment-based services.