# **MEDICAID ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS TO INDEPENDENCE (“MAPs”)**

# **EMPLOYMENT INNOVATION SERVICE DEFINITION**

**Outcome Area:**

Work

**Service Area:**

Employment Innovation

**Description:**

MAPs Employment Innovation Services are developed by the Department of Disability and Aging to identify, promote, and achieve employment-related tasks for MAPs participants. Under this service definition, there are four (4) available milestones from which a MAPs participant may choose which will serve as the foundation for the development of an individualized employment plan targeting Competitive Integrated Employment (“CIE”) for the MAPs participant.

1. **Definitions:**
   1. **Benefits Counseling:** Benefits Counseling is a service of support aimed at helping people with I/DD understand and access various financial and non-financial benefits available to them as they seek and maintain employment. Benefits Counseling is designed to inform people (and family or legal representatives, if applicable) of the multiple pathways to ensuring IIEor SE, as defined in TennCare Rule, which results in increased economic self-sufficiency (net financial benefits) using various work incentives. Benefits Counseling should also repudiate myths and alleviate fears and concerns related to seeking and working in IIE or SE through accurate individualized assessment. The service provides information to the person (and family and/or legal representative, if applicable) regarding the full array of available work incentives for essential benefits programs and regarding income reporting requirements for public benefit programs, including the Social Security Administration. Benefits Counseling provides work incentives counseling and planning services to people actively considering or seeking IIE or SE, or career advancement in either of these types of employment.
2. **Competitive Integrated Employment (“CIE”):** The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (“WIOA”) defines CIE as work which is performed on a full-time or part-time basis for which people are: (a) compensated at or above minimum wage and comparable to the customary rate paid by the employer to employees without disabilities performing similar duties and with similar training and experience; (b) receiving the same level of benefits provided to other employees without disabilities in similar positions; (c) at a location where the employee interacts with other people without disabilities; and (d) presented opportunities for advancement similar to other employees without disabilities in similar positions.
3. **Employment Informed Choice (“EIC”):** During the Pre-Employment Milestone process, all people supported by MAPs need to be informed about employment. During this information session, people supported should be notified that, if they want to work, then they have the opportunity to explore employment services and receive exposure to what employment means. Benefits Counseling, Vocational Rehabilitation (“VR”) information, familiar locations and unfamiliar locations, and activities exploration should all be presented to people supported interested in future/potential employment. In addition to the above-informed opportunities, people supported may also be exposed to job exploration and job shadowing, videos on various career paths/jobs, including:

* Read/watch employment success stories (The Department has several YouTube Videos)
* Benefits of employment (financial, social, physical, etc.)
* VR Information
* Employment Services Overview
* Benefits Counseling Information
* Enabling Technology (“ET”) Information
* Information about other opportunities such as Pre-Employment Transition Services (“Pre-Ets”), Project Search, Institutes of Higher Education (“IHE”) programs, etc.

1. **Job Coaching (“JC”):** JC involves providing personalized support and guidance to help MAPs participants obtain and maintain Individualized Integrated Employment (“IIE”) or Self-Employment (“SE”). The primary goal of job coaching is to assist people in developing the skills and confidence needed to succeed in the workplace. Job coaches work closely with people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (“I/DD”), employers, and other support teams, as applicable, to ensure a successful transition into the workforce.

JC includes identifying, through job analysis, opportunities for the participant to gain independent skills in completing employment tasks and providing services and supports which assist the person in maintaining and advancing in CIE or SE. JC includes supports provided to people and their supervisors and/or co-workers, either remotely (via ET) or face-to-face. ET options include, but are not limited to, mobile technology software using digital pictures, audio, and video guides to teach or remind, GPS guidance devices, wearable technologies, software to support communication, and two-way communication devices to support remote job coaching and fading of paid supports. JC services also include helping people identify and use transportation resources to get to/from work. If appropriate, work-related transportation assistance may include connecting people to a certified Innovation Travel Trainer to learn how to travel to/from work.

* Person starts receiving JC services.
* JC Fading Plan is developed.

1. **Job Exploration (“JE”):** JE helps a people explore different jobs in the community based on their interests and existing skills. It can include business tours, job shadows, and/or informational interviews with employers for people to fully understand what a job in the community could mean for them and how it could benefit them both financially and otherwise. JE also includes education about work incentives for people receiving Social Security, Medicaid, food stamps, etc. It also includes information on how employment services work. After participating in exploration, people can make informed choices about whether they would like to pursue community employment or try discovery to gain additional information on work opportunities and their employment skills and interests.
2. **Job Discovery (“JD”):** JD assists people who want to work in the community, but who need more information on the best kinds of job matches for them, before they pursue a job. This service helps people identify strong interests which relate to employment, strengths, and skills that each person needs to be successful with employment. Additional information can be located in the waiver service definition.
3. **Job Development:** Job Development is personalized support to obtain an individualized job in an integrated employment setting in the general workforce for which people are compensated at or above the minimum wage, but ideally not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by people without disabilities. The Job Development strategy should reflect best practices and whether customized employment is being sought. Job Development can also include SE start-up which is support in establishing self-employment or a microenterprise, through the implementation of a viable and comprehensive business plan. SE start-up may include (a) aid to people in identifying potential business opportunities; (b) assistance in the development of a business plan, including potential sources of business financing and other assistance in including potential sources of business financing and other assistance in developing and launching a business; (c) identification of the supports which are necessary for people to operate businesses.
4. **EMPLOYMENT INNOVATION SERVICES**

Employment Innovation Services are provided to people who need support to obtain, maintain, and/or advance in CIE, including customized or SE, for which people are compensated at or above minimum wage with consideration of a reasonable start-up period for SE. The expected outcome of these services is CIE, which may be conducted at the workplace remotely or through SE consistent with a person’s personal and career goals.

Employment Innovation Services are designed to be person-centered and take people through all phases of deciding to work, identifying, obtaining, and advancing in their chosen career path.

ET is to be made available at the beginning of the Employment Innovation Services and is to be utilized in a person-centered manner throughout a person’s pre-employment and employment path to supplement and/or supplant in-person services. ET options include but are not limited to, mobile technology software using digital pictures, audio, and video guides to teach or remind, GPS guidance devices, wearable technologies, software to support communication, digital career exploration software, virtual, augmented, and/or mixed reality environments, and two-way communication devices to support remote job coaching and fading of paid supports. In addition to ET, co-worker and/or natural supports are to be utilized to help fade the need for paid job supports.

Unpaid work experiences, such as internships and/or volunteering, are also to be considered as opportunities to help people build their resumes, employment skills, and networks; however, unpaid work experiences are to be time-limited to encourage the pursuit of CIE or SE. The time limitation of services surrounding unpaid work experiences is to be driven by a person’s interest, need, and experience. The opportunity to work is always to be considered and afforded to people; therefore, a person’s choices and interests in participating in the community are always to be considered when supporting a person to find, obtain, and advance at work.

The Department recognizes MAPs participants may choose to work on various employment paths toward employment independence. As a result, the Department will recognize the progression of an employment path where a participant may work towards “Self-Employment” and pursue each of these available milestones while also being able to work a “Traditional Employment” path and still have access to all of the available milestones. This will allow each employment milestone to be available on 2 separate occasions, as long as the milestones are geared towards each path available (i.e., the Pre-Employment Milestone is not available on 2 occasions to work on a Self-Employment Path 2 times. The participant may select the Pre-Employment milestone once for each path available).

The following visual depicts both available paths of employment.

**SELF-EMPLOYMENT PATH**



**TRADITIONAL EMPLOYMENT PATH**



Using the above model, Pre-Employment is an available milestone on 2 occasions as long as a person is working towards both SE AND Traditional Employment (the same applies to Employment Innovation and Independence Achieved).

*Please note, if a MAPS person supported is not interested in both Traditional Employment and SE, then the various paths DO NOT apply, and they would stick to their one desired employment path.*

**Milestones:**

1. **Pre-Employment:** A person has identified employment, volunteering, or internship interests and developed skill sets necessary to pursue the chosen career path. This milestone is expected to be performed by a Job Developer.

**Pre-Employment Milestone Description:** The Pre-Employment Milestone is achieved when a MAPs participant has completed all introductory components of job-related functions. The Pre-Employment Milestone includes exploration and discovery-style approaches to the introduction of employment services. At the conclusion of the Pre-Employment Milestone, the MAPs participant will be able to pursue initial employment opportunities, volunteer opportunities, and/or internship possibilities.

This service is designed to help people prepare for and find employment, which includes, but is not limited to, the following: (anything before hiring is Pre-Employment, including filling out applications, coordinating interviews, etc.

**Pre-Employment: Traditional**

1. Providing information, resources, and exposure to different career paths to support making informed decisions about pursuing CIE or SE; (Exploration)
2. Supporting people to choose career paths based on their strengths, skills, interests, and available resources in the community; (Discovery)
3. Planning for logistics related to work, including but not limited to, identifying potential transportation resources which can reliably be accessed to get to/from work; (Discovery/Job Development)
4. If SE is desired, then help a person with developing a business plan (Job Development), connecting a person to business development resources and mentors in the community, and identifying supports which are needed to successfully operate a business.
5. Referral to Benefits Counseling can be made [Benefits Counseling - Formstack](https://stateoftennessee.formstack.com/forms/benefits_counseling).

Approach 1:

If a person supported is not actively in need of any benefits counseling at this time, then a referral will provide the person supported with a general overview of what Benefits Counseling is with the Department’s Benefits Counseling One-Pager being provided for future use. [(Benefits Counseling One-Pager)](https://www.dropbox.com/s/1ypqej83bm8r2ay/BCP%20One%20Pager.pdf?dl=0)

Approach 2:

If a person supported is actively in need of benefits counseling, then the Benefits Counselor will complete the intake assessment and develop a person-specific plan for ongoing and active benefits counseling. As a part of Milestone Validation, this assessment will need to be accessible. NOTE, the Benefits Counselor Intake Assessment is NOT required for pre-employment.

Additionally, exploring work opportunities and preparing for employment using Enabling Technology (“ET”) should be encouraged and considered. ET resources include, but are not limited to, digital career exploration tools, GPS-enabled transportation applications, virtual job boards, online skill and career assessments, video job tutorials, and virtual, augmented, and/or mixed reality environments that may be used to help with job and soft skill development and exposure to different career paths.

An introductory education on work incentives for people receiving publicly-funded benefits (e.g., SSI, SSDI, Medicaid, Medicare, etc.) should be provided to a person and his/her family members or other natural supports to help the person choose to work in CIE or pursue SE. Once a person obtains CIE or SE, a referral to a Benefits Coordinator/Counselor and/or Certified Work Incentives Counselor (“CWIC”) is to be made to ensure the person is educated on how working will impact his/her benefits and receive help with identifying any appropriate tax incentives. Additionally, during the Pre-Employment Innovation services, the MAPs provider is to assist the person with making a referral to VR services.

**CIE**

* A person makes an informed decision whether to pursue CIE or SE.
* A person participates in meaningful activities to learn about his/her strengths, skills, and conditions necessary for successful employment.
* A person receives preliminary benefits information/

counseling.

* A person is referred to Benefits Counseling.
* Job Plan is developed.
  + A person is assisted in applying for jobs which are identified through person-centered activities.
* The person is assisted to interview for jobs.

**Pre-Employment: SE Start-Up**

1. Providing information, resources, and exposure to different career paths to support making an informed decision about pursuing CIE or SE; (Exploration)
2. Supporting people to choose career paths based on their strengths, skills, interests, and available resources in the community; (Discovery)
3. Assisting people with successfully obtaining employment;

(Job Development)

1. Planning for logistics related to work, including but not limited to, identifying potential transportation resources which can reliably be accessed to get to/from work; (Discovery/Job Development)
2. If SE is desired, then help a person with developing a business plan (Job Development), connecting the person to business development resources and mentors in the community, and identifying supports that are needed to successfully operate the business.
3. Referral to Benefits Counseling can be made [Benefits Counseling - Formstack](https://stateoftennessee.formstack.com/forms/benefits_counseling).

Approach 1:

If a person supported is not actively in need of any benefits counseling at this time, then the referral will provide the person supported with a general overview of what Benefits Counseling is with the Department’s Benefits Counseling One-Pager being provided for future use. [(Benefits Counseling One-Pager)](https://www.dropbox.com/s/1ypqej83bm8r2ay/BCP%20One%20Pager.pdf?dl=0)

Approach 2:

If a person supported is actively in need of benefits counseling, then the Benefits Counselor will complete the intake assessment and develop a person-specific plan for ongoing and active benefits counseling. As a part of Milestone Validation, this assessment will need to be accessible. NOTE, the Benefits Counselor Intake Assessment is NOT required for pre-employment.

Additionally, exploring work opportunities and preparing for employment using ET should be encouraged and considered. ET resources include, but are not limited to, digital career exploration tools, GPS-enabled transportation applications, virtual job boards, online skill and career assessments, video job tutorials, and virtual, augmented, and/or mixed reality environments that may be used to help with job and soft skill development and exposure to different career paths.

An introductory education on work incentives for people receiving publicly-funded benefits (e.g., SSI, SSDI, Medicaid, Medicare, etc.) should be provided to people and their family members, legal representative, and/or other natural supports to help people choose to work in CIE or pursue SE. Once a person obtains CIE or SE, a referral to a Benefits Coordinator/Counselor and/or CWIC is to be made to ensure the person is educated on how working will impact his/her benefits and receive help with identifying any appropriate tax incentives. Additionally, during the Pre-Employment Innovation services, MAPs providers are to assist people with making referrals to VR services.

Self-Employment

* An SE business plan is developed to include the following (note: This is not an all-inclusive list; a business plan may contain additional information specific to the industry and start-up needs).

REQUIRED

* + Executive Summary (example info to include a brief overview of business, mission statement, a summary of objectives, a brief overview of products/services).
  + Company Description (example info to include legal structure of business, history, and background of business, business location.
  + Market Analysis (example info to include potential competitors, sustainability in the market, turnover rate, etc.)
  + Organization and Management (example info to include potential organizational structure, business type, etc.).
  + Products or Services (example info to include a description of goods/services, inventory control considerations, targeted frequency of direct services, etc.).
  + Marketing or Sales Strategy (example info to include potential markets to inform, strategies to promote business/services, social media sites/website development considerations, etc.)
  + Mentors or business connections are developed.
  + Contacting Sources of Start-Up Capital/Establishment of start-up capital planning.
  + Identifying licensure, inspections, liability insurance, etc., needs and beginning the process to obtain licensure.
  + Identifying total costs needed to obtain required licensure and insurance.
  + The business plan must verify resources, funding, licensure, assistive technology, and enabling technology needs, how these items were obtained, and the next steps.
  + Targeted timeline for executing business plan.

1. **Employment Innovation Milestone:** A person obtains a CIE position and works for 30 days with any necessary supports to learn job functions. Performed by a Job Coach and/or Job Developer.

**Employment Innovation Description-** This milestone will ensure the MAPs participant will have access to the necessary support and technology once an employment opportunity has been achieved. The MAPs participant will work with the MAPs provider agency staff to gain greater levels of independence working towards “Independence Achieved”. Within this milestone, the person will receive necessary job coaching and access to technologies aimed at promoting greater levels of independence within the employment setting.

This milestone begins the person procures an employment position and extends to the first date of employment for the participant. Organizations will provide the adequate job coaching supports (while introducing technology) as a function of this milestone to assist the person-supported to achieve independence while employed.

**Employment: Traditional:**

Sustained paid employment in a competitive or customized job with an employer for which people are compensated at or above the state’s minimum wage and is not less than the customary rate paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by other employees who are not people with disabilities, not including supervisory personnel or people providing services to the employee with a disability, and who are similarly situated in similar occupations by the same employer and who have similar training, experience, and skills; or in the case of an self-employed person, yields an income which is comparable to the income received by other people who are not people with disabilities, and who are self-employed in similar occupations or on similar tasks and who have similar training, experience and skills; and who are eligible for the level of benefits provided to other employees; and are engaged, preferably, in full-time work; and is at a location which is typically found in the community; and to be typically found in the community, an employment location should be found in the competitive labor market and not formed for the specific purpose of employing people with disabilities. These settings include, but are not limited to:

* Where the employee interacts with other people who are not people with I/DD (not including supervisory personnel or people who are providing services to such employee) to the same extent that people who are not individuals with disabilities and who are in comparable positions interact with other persons; and
* Is appropriate, presents opportunities for advancement which are similar to those for other employees who are not people with disabilities and who have similar positions; and
* Is not paid employment or training in a business enterprise owned or operated by a provider of the person’s employment services.

*NOTE: IN the event the CMS Waiver definition is altered, changed, or revised, then the updated information according to CMS will take priority and supersede any of the above-mentioned expectations.*

**CIE:**

* The Person applies for and obtains a job.
* The Person works for 30 days on the job.

**Employment: Self-Employment:**

SE:

* Aspects of the SE Business Plan (developed in Pre-Employment) is executed.
* The Person’s SE business is functional and operational.
* See self-employment language from proposed amendments.

1. **Employment Independence Milestone (Fading):** People are successful with their jobs and, outside of technology support, no longer need in-person employment support from the Employment Innovation Service provider.

**Employment Independence Achieved Description**  This milestone will ensure the MAPs people supported have successfully worked towards completing the functions of the employment responsibilities without the support of a Direct Support Professional (“DSP”). When people select and complete the *Independence Achieved milestone*, they have successfully demonstrated they can navigate all the responsibilities associated with their employment (using applicable natural supports, technology supports, OR additional person-specific aids).

**Employment Independence Achieved: Traditional:**

* JC Fading Plan.
* JC hours are reduced incrementally according to the person’s needs.
* JC is no longer needed by the person to be successful at their job.
* Co-worker and/or natural supports are used to fade JC hours.
* The person is assisted in obtaining a new job which is more desirable and aligned with his/her career goals or aspirations. The person holds this job for 30 days.
* Confirmation of Benefits Counseling Intake Assessment is verified for Milestone Validation of Independence Achieved. This assessment shall be accessible via the person-supported Virtual Community Resource Map (“VCRM”).

Approach 1:

If a person supported is not actively in need of any benefits counseling at this time, then the referral will provide the person supported with a general overview of what Benefits Counseling is with the DDA Benefits Counseling One-Pager being provided for future use. [(Benefits Counseling One-Pager)](https://www.dropbox.com/s/1ypqej83bm8r2ay/BCP%20One%20Pager.pdf?dl=0). Confirmation that this asset is still present in the VCRM.

Approach 2:

If a person supported is actively in need of benefits counseling, then the Benefits Counselor will complete the intake assessment and develop a person-specific plan for ongoing and active benefits counseling. As a part of Milestone Validation, this assessment will need to be accessible (if applicable). NOTE, the Benefits Counselor Intake Assessment is NOT required for independence achieved IF it is determined this assessment is NOT needed. This determination is made by DDA Benefits Counselor.

**Employment Independence Achieved: Self-Employment:** Sustained paid SE which is home-based or conducted in an integrated setting(s) where net income reflects consistent cash flowing into and out of the business. The Department recognizes a reasonable amount of time to reflect this cash-flowing process is 90 days.

1. **Career Development Milestone:** People supported have been given greater responsibility, promotion, and/or additional job duties and/or has taken the necessary steps to enroll in a post-secondary program to include, but not be limited to, apprenticeships, technical/trade program, community college, four-year university, inclusive higher education's programs, etc.

**Career Development Description-** This milestone will ensure MAPs participants who wish to advance their career and/or position themselves to advance their career by learning new skills can do so with the assistance of their MAP provider. This milestone is available each year of the MAPs program for MAPs participants. People are encouraged to continue to seek opportunities to advance their careers OR knowledge on specific tasks which could potentially lead to additional employment opportunities. The Department recognizes the space where a person can pursue internships, volunteer opportunities, or other employment path goals which may lead to additional employment opportunities (within competitive, integrated settings).

**Career Advancement Traditional Employment:**

* Person receives a promotion at their job.
* Person receives a pay increase at their job.

**Career Advancement: Self-Employment:**

* Career Development activities: networking, expanding the business, increasing business knowledge and skills.

**Post-Secondary Program:**

If a person supported is not yet enrolled in a post-secondary program but would like to pursue one:

* The person is assisted in exploring post-secondary programs (4-year Universities, Community College, Technical/Trade Programs, etc.) and/or the person is enrolled in a Post-Secondary Program.
* The person will be offered the opportunity to tour post-secondary universities and attend orientation sessions to learn and discover possible enrollment opportunities.
* The person will submit an application for enrollment into FAFSA (financial aid), if applicable.
* The person will work on application submissions for post-secondary programs (Possible supports could include letters of recommendation, cover letters, and gathering information needed for the application).
* The person will be informed about the TN Promise, if applicable.
* The person will be informed about the TN STEP UP Scholarship, if applicable.
* The person will show either an acceptance letter into a post-secondary program OR an Application Submission Packet material to a post-secondary program.

If the person supported is enrolled in a post-secondary program.

* Person maintains enrollment and is in good academic standing with the post-secondary program (as determined by the Student Handbook of the post-secondary program).

**Unpaid Internship and/or Community Volunteering Service Outcomes:**

* The person is assisted in exploring internship and/or community volunteering opportunities.
* The person obtains an unpaid internship and/or volunteering opportunity in the community and works for two (2) weeks.
* Hours of support provided to a person to participate in an internship and/or community volunteering opportunity are reduced incrementally according to the person’s needs.
* Support provided to a person to participate in an internship and/or community volunteering opportunity is no longer needed.