



Department of
Human Services

Community Rehabilitation Provider Manual

Community Rehabilitation Provider (CRP) Manual

This manual outlines vocational rehabilitation services provided by Community Rehabilitation Providers and imparts pertinent information regarding partnering with the State of Tennessee to provide such services.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Vocational Rehabilitation Program (VR) is part of the State of Tennessee Department of Human Services, Division of Rehabilitation Services. The VR Program assists eligible individuals with disabilities to prepare for and secure competitive integrated employment through person-centered, outcome-driven, education, employment, and support services. VR is responsible for providing vocational rehabilitation services in accordance with applicable federal and state regulations. Specialized VR services not provided in-house are provided by Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRP).

As a service provider, the CRP supports VR's mission to obtain long term employment for individuals with disabilities which meet all requirements for competitive integrated employment as defined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). VR has developed this manual to introduce and inform the CRP of how to partner with the State of Tennessee to provide vocational rehabilitation services. The CRP Manual's purpose is to describe available VR services provided by the CRP and establish minimum service delivery expectations for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities. Included in this manual are required service report forms, staff training resources, payment structure and staffing qualifications.

This manual includes online resources available to assist with understanding requirements and processes. On the VR website, there is a page dedicated to CRPs. It can be found here: <https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/ds/vocational-rehabilitation/>.

The CRP page on the VR website, includes a Links Section. This is where VR houses helpful links and information for CRPs. The links will be referenced throughout the CRP Manual.

1.1. Doing Business with the State of Tennessee

All service providers must first register to do business with the State of Tennessee prior to commencing services. Register online at the State of Tennessee Supplier Portal. CRPs must obtain and maintain a current Tennessee business license. The links for the Supplier Portal and business license can be found in the Links section on the VR CRP website.

1.2. CRP Application Approval Process

To be a part of VR's provider network, start by completing the CRP Application. The CRP Application captures information related to qualifications, experience, and location of services. The application is available in the Link found in the Links section on the VR CRP website. Please visit the Vocational Rehabilitation program's website for pertinent information related to VR.

Service providers will be asked to include the following documentation as part of the CRP Application submission:

- A sample basic vocational assessment report (if applying for vocational assessment services).
- Training Certification Documentation (if applicable).
- Verification staff meets qualification criteria.
- Staff Roster

VR will review the CRP Application and notify the CRP by electronic mail once complete. The notification will include Links for the CRP to submit an attestation form confirming the following:

- Background checks. The CRP is required to complete background checks in accordance with Section 1.9 of the CRP Manual. The CRP will also be asked to acknowledge all future CRP staff will complete a background check pursuant to the rules and regulations set forth in Section 1.9.
- CRP Orientation to VR Training. All CRP staff who will be providing CRP services have completed the required training.
- Staff Qualifications. Current and future staff will meet the staff qualifications for the service(s) they provide in accordance with Section 4.

1.3. Approved CRP Listing

Once a CRP is approved to provide VR services, the CRP point of contact should receive a letter by electronic mail specifying the services provided and counties which the CRP will support. The consolidated list of all approved Community Rehabilitation Providers can be found on the VR CRP website.

1.4. Referral Process

Based on the goals and needs of the individual and the individual's informed choice, VR at its sole discretion, will make a referral to the CRP for services. A referral is made when VR provides the CRP with a Vendor Authorization. The following documentation may accompany the Vendor Authorization:

- Completed VR intake document;
- Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), if the IPE has been completed;
- Medical, psychological, assessments, and training information as needed;

If the CRP needs additional information about the customer, they may discuss the need with the referring VR Counselor. The additional information may be provided at VR's discretion.

Services may only be provided once a signed Vendor Authorization specifying service(s) to be provided is received by the CRP from VR. By signing the Vendor Authorization, the CRP is affirming the service requirements described in the Vendor Authorization have been met.

1.5. Requests to Change Services or Service Areas.

If a CRP would like to make changes to the list of services they are approved to provide or the counties they are approved to support, they must submit an application to change services and/or service locations request in Formstack and provide the following information:

- The specific service(s) the CRP would like to add/remove
- The specific counties the CRP would like to add/remove

Refer to the [Links](#) section found on the VR CRP website to find the Formstack link to the current request form.

Requests to change services or counties will be reviewed based on the needs of VR. Additional services may not be provided until VR approves the request in writing.

1.6. Service Resolution Process

Community Rehabilitation Providers and VR work together to ensure services are completed timely and satisfactorily. Should a dilemma arise during the provision of services, initial attempts should be made to come to a resolution between the CRP and VR Counselor. If direct communication between the VR Counselor and CRP is unsuccessful in coming to a resolution, the VR Counselor's and/or CRP's supervisors in their area should be contacted to set up a meeting to come to a resolution.

1.7. Technical Assistance

Technical assistance (TA) is a process that helps with development needs or resource gaps. It can involve advice, training, consulting, or the sharing of knowledge and skills. CRPs and VR staff may contact the VR Provider Relations Team (PRT) for technical assistance related to this manual. Contact information can be found by visiting the VR website listed in the Links section of our website.

1.8. Federal and State Regulations

The CRP must comply with all applicable federal, state and local rules and statutes including, but not limited to, the following:

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
<https://www.doleta.gov/wioa>
- The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended
- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

Code of Federal Regulations Title 34, Subtitle B, Chapter III, Part 361-State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program Section 361.1 to Section 361.89 [Electronic Code of Federal Regulations \(eCFR\)](#). Refer to the [Links](#) section found on the VR CRP website.

- Code of Federal Regulation Title 34, Part 363-The State Supported Employment Services Program Section 363.1 to Section 363.56 [Electronic Code of Federal Regulations \(eCFR\)](#) Refer to the [Links](#) section found on the VR CRP website.

1.9. Employee Background Checks

At no additional cost to the State, the Community Rehabilitation Provider must comply with the background check requirements pursuant to [2019 Tennessee Laws Public Chapter 71](#) and Rules of DHS [1240-08-03-.05 Background Checks for Vocational Rehabilitation Employees, Contractors, and Interns](#), and any written directive the State issues to the Community Rehabilitation Provider pertaining to background checks, for staff whose duties will include unsupervised contact with persons served by VR, unsupervised access to the funds, personal property, or personal identification information of persons served by VR, and those whose duties will include direct responsibility for such individuals. Refer to the [Links](#) section found on the VR CRP website.

1.10. Protection, Use, and Release of Personal Information

All personal information involving individuals applying for or receiving services given or made available to VR employees, in the course of the administration of the VR program, is confidential. Refer to the [Links](#) section found on the VR CRP website.

1.11. Code of Ethics

Community Rehabilitation Providers must adhere to ethical standards for vocational rehabilitation services. Services are expected to be provided in accordance with the Code of Professional Ethics. Refer to the [Links](#) section found on the VR CRP website.

1.12. Definitions

A detailed list of definitions and terms pertaining to the State of Tennessee Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program, can be found on the CRP website in the Reference Materials section.

1.13. Virtual Services

Some services described herein may be provided virtually with prior approval of the referring VR Counselor. Virtual services are authorized by the VR Counselor based on the customer's needs.

1.14. Services to VR Customers Based on Protected Classification

CRPs may not discriminate or decline to work with a VR Customer due to disability, age, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or any other classification protected by Federal, Tennessee State constitution, or statutory law.

1.15. Person Centered Practices

Person centered planning is an integral part of vocational rehabilitation service delivery. The customer should be actively engaged in directing, planning, and participating in making decisions about the provision of services. The National Center on Advancing Person-Centered Practices and Systems (NCAPPS) <https://ncapps.acl.gov/> provides resources to help implement person-centered thinking, planning and practice in line with U.S. Department of Health and Human Services policy. Community Rehabilitation Providers are expected to incorporate person-centered practices into regular operations. For more information about person-centered thinking, planning and practices, refer to the [Links](#) section found on the VR CRP website.

1.16. CRP Assessments

On a recurring basis, the CRP will participate in a CRP assessment by providing information related to CRP services.

1.17. Records Retention

Records shall be maintained for a period of not less than five (5) full years from the date of the final payment. The CRP's records shall be subject to audit at any reasonable time and upon reasonable notice by VR, the Comptroller of the Treasury, or their duly appointed representatives.

1.18. Business Services Unit (BSU)/Community Services Unit (CSU) Collaboration

The BSU within VR is available to support CRPs in successfully placing VR customers in competitive integrated employment by providing job leads to CRPs, invitations to business tours, updates on local labor market, invitations to job fairs/resource fairs, etc. The Business Employment Consultants (BECs) may interact with customers assigned to a CRP for employment related supports not provided by a CRP such as job accommodations and transportation.

The CSU within VR is available to support CRPs by partnering to provide Transition Summer Camps, providing invitations to resource fairs and other community events. The CSU does not work with customers assigned to a CRP but supports the CRP in successfully placing the VR customer in employment.

1.19. State Employees Eligibility to Become a Community Rehabilitation Provider

Per the DGS Rule 0690-03-01-.28, VR cannot contract with or consider a proposal from an individual who is, or within the past six months has been, a state employee.

0690-03-01-.28 CONTRACT WITH CURRENT OR FORMER STATE EMPLOYEE.

(1) A State Agency shall not contract with or consider a proposal from an individual who is, or within the past six months has been, a State employee.

(a) For the purposes of applying this Rule,

1. An individual shall be deemed a State employee until such time as all compensation for salary, termination pay, and annual leave has been paid;
2. A contract with or a proposal from a company, corporation, or any other contracting entity in which a controlling interest is held by any State employee shall be considered to be a contract with or proposal from the employee; and
3. A contract with or a proposal from a company, corporation, or any other contracting entity that employs an individual who is, or within the past six months has been, a State employee shall not be considered a contract with or a proposal under these Rules.

(2) A State employee may be compensated for performing services for a State agency other than the State agency employing the individual (e.g., a State accountant might be paid for teaching an evening accounting course at a community college). Such agreements are subject to the Rules of the Department of Finance and Administration, Chapter 0620-03-02, et seq., and not the Rules of this chapter.

1.20. Aware Vendor Portal

The Aware Vendor Portal is designed specifically for vendors and provides secure, remote access to VR's case management system via a web-based interface. If conducting business with the Vocational Rehabilitation program, it is recommended that all Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs) use the Aware Vendor Portal.

The Aware Vendor Portal provides real-time information to vendors in a secure manner. VR business and operational processes have been built around the use of the Aware Vendor Portal. In the portal providers can:

- Indicate when a service has been provided and request payment;
- Submit an invoice;
- Receive alerts when a payment is rejected, review the reason, and learn how to remedy;
- Correct an invoice or payment request;
- Learn the status of a payment request;
- View pending authorizations and processed authorizations;
- Search for an existing authorization and review all authorizations attributable to your organization;
- Add notes, documents, and reports to an authorization, including monthly progress reports;
- Submit a referral to Vocational Rehabilitation.

Information regarding the Aware Vendor Portal's system capabilities, navigation, and operational processes can be provided by contacting VR.Contracts.DHS@tn.gov.

2. VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES

2.1. Introduction

The purpose of the vocational rehabilitation services described herein is to assist VR Program applicants or eligible individuals with assessments and/or services to meet the individual's vocational rehabilitation needs consistent with the individual's informed choice and with person centered practices for the purpose of preparing for and obtaining competitive integrative employment and in accordance with an individualized plan for employment and federal and state requirements.

2.2. Trial Work Experiences

The purpose of Trial Work Experiences (TWE) is to provide the VR Counselor with information which will be used to make a determination of whether an individual with a disability is able to benefit from vocational rehabilitation services in terms of an employment outcome because of the severity of that individual's disability. TWE services will be conducted in an area of employment and setting that the individual may have an interest in via an exploration of the individual's abilities, capabilities, and capacity to perform in realistic work situations.

The Trial Work Experiences must be of sufficient variety and over a sufficient period of time to provide clear and convincing evidence (a high degree of certainty) that, due to the severity of the individual's disability, the individual is incapable of benefitting from the provision of vocational rehabilitation services in terms of an employment outcome. Justification is documented in the report from the TWE service provider.

Trial Work Experiences typically provide information on an individual's:

- Strength and endurance (including mobility and physical limitations)
- Challenging behaviors/social interaction skills
- Time management skills
- Functional limitations
- Communication skills
- Effects of medication on functioning
- Performance of essential job duties (ability to follow directions, quality of work and attention to detail, etc.)
- Special or required accommodations
- Evidence that the individual can or cannot sustain employment

The CRP will conduct the Trial Work Experiences in accordance with the VR developed Plan for TWE which may include accommodations and the appropriate use of assistive technology devices and personal assistance services.

The Community Rehabilitation Provider prepares a typed [Trial Work Experience \(TWE\) report](#) from the information gathered at the Trial Work Experiences describing the individual's abilities, capabilities, and capacity to perform in realistic work situations.

2.3. Vocational Evaluation Services

Vocational Evaluation services assist in gathering information to determine services the individual may need and in developing a service plan that leads to a competitive integrated employment outcome. Vocational Evaluation Services are intended to answer referral questions and are relevant in discovering the customer's desired employment outcomes and career options in jobs available in the individual's geographical area.

2.3.1. Basic Vocational Assessment

The Basic Vocational Assessment is conducted in a facility which includes a diagnostic interview and administering tests to assess aptitude, interests, transferrable work skills and abilities. The diagnostic interview may account for:

- Education and training
- Transferrable work skills
- Social and economic factors
- Physical capacities
- Personality traits
- Leisure time activities
- Behavioral observation
- Work experience

The CRP reviews:

- School records
- Doctor's reports
- Psychiatric reports
- Psychological reports
- Other available records and reports

VR may request the CRP administer:

- Achievement Testing for current skill level
- Aptitude Testing for potential skill level
- Interest Inventories (minimum of two for comparison)

- Intelligence Testing that is appropriate for age group and disability
- Limitations Due to Medication (from review of medical records)
- Barriers to Maintaining Employment
- Transferrable Work Skills Analysis
- Summary and recommendations including labor market trends for the appropriate area(s)

2.3.2. Work Readiness Assessment

Work Readiness Assessments are conducted in a structured work setting using actual or simulated work to identify an individual's work-related skills and to determine the individual's workplace readiness training needs.

The VR Counselor, CRP, and person participating in the Work Readiness Assessment collaborate to reach a consensus for the assessment location. The duration of the assessment is typically less than ten (10) days. The major components of this assessment are evaluation of attendance, punctuality, the ability to follow instructions, socialization, the ability to work with or without close supervision, interpersonal relationships with peers and supervisors, initiative, motivation, frustration tolerance, personal hygiene, grooming, and appropriate work attire and general quality/quantity of job performance.

In addition to objective test measurements, observation is utilized to evaluate aptitudes and abilities, as directly related to the work environment. The information acquired is used to develop appropriate recommendations for further training and/or placement services. The techniques used are based on the job market, the characteristics of the person being evaluated, and the personnel needs of the employers.

2.3.3. Job Shadowing

Job Shadowing is conducted in a community based integrated work setting that creates a learning experience where an individual can explore real jobs to determine if the job is consistent with the individual's interests and aptitudes.

Job Shadowing is an unpaid work experience consisting of a minimum two (2) hours per experience. This is not a hands-on work experience; it is observation only. The duration and the number of hours in this assessment are based upon the individualized needs of the participant and the purpose of the service. The duration and scope of the assessment is negotiated with the employer. Before the start of the assessment, the individual, VR Counselor, CRP, and employer review and agree with the assignment.

2.3.4. Integrated Work Site Assessment

Integrated Work Site Assessments are conducted at actual work sites in the community designed to assess the individual's strengths, skills, and support needs and to assist in the determination of whether Supported Employment services may be needed.

The VR Counselor, CRP, and individual person participating in the Integrated Work Site Assessment collaborate to reach a consensus for the work site location. The Integrated Work Site Assessment must last long enough and include the number of work sites necessary to thoroughly answer the questions on the [Integrated Work Site Assessment report form](#). Each site assessment is at least four (4) hours in total duration and may be completed over time. The VR Counselor, individual, and CRP discuss appropriate types of work sites, the expected number of assessment sites, and hours per site, prior to the start of the assessments.

2.3.5. Job Sampling

Job Sampling is conducted with local employers which allow an individual time to learn aspects of potential job tasks and soft skills to identify occupations of interests to the individual.

The duration and the number of hours in Job Sampling assessments are based upon the needs of the individual and the purpose of the service. The duration and scope of the assessment is negotiated with the employer and the VR Counselor. Before the start of the assessment, the individual, the VR Counselor, CRP, and employer must review and agree with the location and assessment requirements.

2.4. Vocational Adjustment Training

Vocational adjustment training is provided to develop and maintain an individual's capacities necessary for achievement of the specific employment outcome.

Vocational Adjustment training is provided in a systematic, organized basis for the purpose of:

- Assisting the individual to acquire personal and work habits, skills and techniques that will enable functioning in a formal training or employment setting;
- Developing or increasing work tolerance (work hardening, work conditioning) and or
- Orienting the individual to the world of work.

Vocational adjustment training is not intended to provide the specific knowledge and skills required for an employment objective.

2.4.1. Service Description

Vocational Adjustment training includes but is not limited to:

- physical capacities such as sitting, standing and general work stamina;
- psychomotor skills such as eye-hand coordination, finger dexterity, and tool usage;
- interpersonal and communicative skills with coworkers;
- work habits such as attendance and punctuality;
- appropriate dress and grooming;
- job seeking skills;
- productive skills such as quality and quantity of work, and work pacing;
- an orientation to work practices such as payroll deductions, insurance, retirement benefits, and awareness of safety practices;
- work-related skills such as counting, measuring, telling time, travel, use of spare time, money management;
- academic upgrading such as Adult Basic Education (ABE) literacy programs) and/or other necessary vocational adjustment skills.
- Job placement, job retention, and follow-up;
- Related training materials (except computers)

The CRP initiates a monthly case staffing, which is held in person or by phone, and includes the individual receiving services and the VR Counselor. The purpose of a staffing is to evaluate the individual's progress and future vocational needs.

2.4.2. Individualized Written Adjustment Plan (IWAP).

Based on previous diagnostic findings, an [Individualized Written Adjustment Plan](#) is developed. This plan is developed by the CRP with the customer's input and:

- Specifies measurable behavioral objectives;
- Specifies method and techniques;
- Specifies persons (staff, family, etc.) who will be involved in carrying out the plan;
- Specifies projected time frame for each behavior objective and will be periodically reviewed and amended as necessary.

2.5. Job Readiness, Development, and Placement Services

2.5.1. Purpose

Job readiness, job development, and placement services directly assist in preparing an individual to apply and interview for potential employment and eventually obtain successful employment. Successful employment occurs when

the individual completes ninety (90) cumulative days of competitive integrated employment in a job that is consistent with the individual's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, informed choice and economic self-sufficiency.

2.5.2. Job Readiness

Job readiness training includes but is not limited to:

- Writing a resume;
- Completing a job application;
- Assistance in arranging for and preparing for job interviews;
- Workplace behaviors;
- Identifying transportation options;
- Personal appearance, attendance, and punctuality;
- Positive work attitudes, job performance, and safety practices;
- Interpersonal skills;
- Development of a personal budget;
- Individual and group counseling of individuals on job seeking skills, development of a job seeking plan and retention skills;

Job readiness assessment/training services result in completion of the [Job Readiness Assessment/Training Report](#), the individual's resume with list of references.

2.5.3. Job Development and Placement Activity Plan

Job Development and Placement Activity Plans are updated by the CRP on a monthly basis and serves as the manual for job placement activities until the individual completes the job placement process. The initial Job Development and Placement Activity Plan's intent is to identify ongoing barriers to employment and placement activities planned for the next month. Monthly updates also include a record of activities from the previous month. Job Development and Placement Activity Plans are signed by the CRP and the individual receiving service(s).

2.5.4. Job Development and Placement

Job development and placement services are those services in which a CRP actively and directly assists the individual in activities which lead to obtaining and maintaining competitive integrated employment for at least ninety (90) cumulative days and meet other closure standards. Job Development and Placement activities must be consistent with the Individualized Plan for Employment.

Job development and placement services include but are not limited to:

- Analysis of employment and economic trends;
- Technical assistance on removal of architectural, communication; transportation, and other barriers to employment;
- Collaboration with local American Job Centers and other State programs aiding with job placement;
- Job analysis and job restructuring;
- Working with the individual to achieve satisfactory adjustment to a job;
- Assistance with resolution of problems or conflicts in the workplace;
- Working with the individual to develop a list of potential employment opportunities;
- Contacting an employer on behalf of the individual;
- Assisting the individual with job applications/interviews, and
- Assisting the individual to revise their resume to target a specific employer/position.

Job Placement results in placement in competitive integrated employment. Competitive integrated employment means work that:

- Is performed on a full-time or part-time basis (including self-employment) and for which an individual is compensated at a rate that:
 - Is not less than the higher of the rate specified in section 6(a)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 206(a)(1)) or the rate required under the applicable State or local minimum wage law for the place of employment;
 - Is not less than the customary rate paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by other employees who are not individuals with disabilities and who are similarly situated in similar occupations by the same employer and who have similar training, experience, and skills; and
 - In the case of an individual who is self-employed, yields an income that is comparable to the income received by other individuals who are not individuals with disabilities and who are self-employed in similar occupations or on similar tasks and who have similar training, experience, and skills; and
 - Is eligible for the level of benefits provided to other employees; and

- Is at a location:
 - Typically found in the community; and
 - Where the employee with a disability interacts for the purpose of performing the duties of the position with other employees within the particular work unit and the entire work site, and, as appropriate to the work performed, other persons (e.g., customers and vendors), who are not individuals with disabilities (not including supervisory personnel or individuals who are providing services to such employee) to the same extent that employees who are not individuals with disabilities and who are in comparable positions interact with these persons; and
- Presents, as appropriate, opportunities for advancement that are similar to those for other employees who are not individuals with disabilities and who have similar positions.

Documentation to verify that the individual's placement meets the requirements for competitive integrated employment may include information provided through the Hire/Placement Report or a letter from the employer.

Part-time placements of less than fifteen (15) hours are discussed with the VR Counselor prior to placement and approval from the VR Counselor is documented.

2.5.5. Placement Criteria

Job Placement criteria aligns with providing active and direct support to help an individual successfully gain employment. The CRP documents the method and approach taken to complete the job placement service using the monthly [Job Development and Placement Activity Plan](#). The final report is submitted upon completion of the service to the VR Counselor and clearly documents the actions taken by the CRP. Job Placement activities includes but are not limited to:

- Contacting employers by phone or in person based on the customer's person-centered desires/needs;
- Providing the customer industry specific leads which result in an individual obtaining employment. Providing a copy of a newspaper or job posting without providing specific instructions or assistance would not be considered effective job placement services;
- Assisting the customer with completing applications;
- Providing interview preparation and other assistance, which is geared to a specific employer/position of interest, to help secure a specific job;

- Providing specific placement services requested by the VR Counselor. Examples may include activities such as transported or accompanied the customer to the job interview or discussed possibility of job restructuring or job sharing with employer. The CRP and the VR Counselor should have consistent contact to ensure placement service expectations are delivered in a timely and person-centered manner;

The VR Counselor has final discretion on whether adequate job placement services have been provided. Therefore, the CRP must clearly describe placement activities on the Job Placement Activity Plan report.

2.6. Job Coaching

Job coaching services may be provided as an on-the-job service on an individualized basis and depending on the individual's needs. A job coach performs the following duties:

- On-site training to familiarize the individual with specific job demands.
- Assist the individual to develop positive relationships with co-workers, supervisors and intercede when problems or difficulties become known.
- Assist the individual to develop a standard of production acceptable to the employer.
- Identify and address problems that will affect the individual's ability to maintain employment.
- Implement the most effective, least intrusive techniques to help the individual learn job skills including teaching the individual how to use available transportation to and from the job site.
- Assist the individual to be more independent by developing natural supports so that job coaching services can be successfully faded from the job site.
- Orienting an individual to the workplace.
- Assisting an individual with developing positive work habits and positive behaviors with co-workers and supervisors.
- Provide disability awareness information to the individual's supervisor and co-workers.
- Provide regular feedback to VR regarding the individual's progress.

The CRP may charge time (up to 10 hours) needed to gain an understanding of the job task and the individual's needs to develop the most effective training strategy. Job coaching services are individualized and not provided to more than one person.

2.7. Supported Employment Services

2.7.1. Purpose

Supported employment means competitive integrated employment including customized employment, or employment in an integrated work setting in which an individual with a most significant disability, including a youth with a most significant disability, is working on a short-term basis toward competitive integrated employment that is individualized and customized consistent with the unique strengths, abilities, interests, and informed choice of the individual, including with ongoing support services for individuals with the most significant disabilities:

- a. For whom competitive integrated employment has not historically occurred, or for whom competitive integrated employment has been interrupted or intermittent as a result of a significant disability; and
- b. Who, because of the nature and severity of their disabilities, need intensive supported employment services and extended services after the transition from support provided by VR in order to successfully perform this work

Working on a short-term basis means an individual with a most significant disability, whose supported employment in an integrated setting does not satisfy the criteria of competitive integrated employment. The customer is considered to be working on a short-term basis toward competitive integrated employment so long as the individual can reasonably anticipate achieving competitive integrated employment:

- a. Within six months of achieving a supported employment outcome; or
- b. In limited circumstances, within a period not to exceed 12 months from the achievement of the supported employment outcome, if a longer period is necessary based on the needs of the individual, and the individual has demonstrated progress toward competitive earnings based on information contained in the service record.

Supported employment means ongoing support services, that may include customized employment placement services, and other appropriate services needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability, including a youth with a most significant disability, in supported employment that are:

- Organized and made available, singly or in combination, in such a way as to assist an eligible individual to achieve or maintain competitive integrated employment;
- Based on a determination of the needs of an eligible individual, as specified in an individualized plan for employment;
- Provided for a period not to exceed twenty-four (24) months, unless under special circumstances the eligible individual and the vocational rehabilitation counselor jointly agree to extend the time to achieve the employment outcome identified in the individualized plan for employment;

2.7.2. SE Consultation & Meeting

When the VR Counselor determines there is a need for a SE Consultation and Meeting and provides the CRP with the Vendor Authorization, the CRP initiates a consultation meeting with the individual and VR to determine the individual's service needs and specific employment objective. The purpose of this meeting is to review and consider:

- The individual's abilities and employment interests and capability of obtaining competitive integrated employment;
- Strategies to address service and employment and support needs, including extended service possibilities;
- A specific employment objective;
- Benchmarks that demonstrate progress; and
- Recommendation of next steps.

Supported Employment encompasses the following characteristics:

- Work for pay at the same rate as other employees;
- Promotes social integration, productivity, and maximum use of a person's skills and abilities;
- Takes place in an integrated work setting;
- Assists individuals with developmental disabilities, severe and persistent mental illnesses, or other significant disabilities;
- Includes job coaching, which is often provided after placement on the job;
- Maintains support services to the worker for present and future employment needs; and
- Builds extended, ongoing supports with agencies and partners outside of VR to assist individuals in maintaining employment.

2.7.3. SE Career Development and Placement

The CRP initiates career development and placement services to include but are not limited to:

- Evaluation of the labor market;
- Career planning;
- Job development;
- Job placement;
- Job and task analyses;
- Job and soft skills counseling;
- Job seeking skills, resume' preparation and interviewing skills;
- Identification of assistive technology and other rehabilitation needs;
- Identification of natural support and long-term support providers;
- Exploration of Social Security work incentives and other funding sources;
- Incentive to businesses;
- Customized Employment placement services when warranted and approved by the VR Counselor;
- Assist employers in identifying, modifying, and eliminating barriers, and coordinate with the VR Counselor if assistive technology may be needed.

The outcome of career development and placement services is a supported employment outcome that meets the rehabilitation and support needs of the individual and results in competitive integrated employment. The CRP directly participates in job development and placement activities documented in the [Hire/Placement Report for: Individual Placement and Support; Supported Employment; Customized Employment; and Job Placement](#). Supported employment services begin at the time the individual begins working and are funded by VR until stabilization and transition to extended services, except under certain circumstances for youth. This includes all necessary training and job stabilization activities that occur between placement on the job and transition to extended services. The time frame for the provision of supported employment services is no longer than twenty-four (24) months, unless authorized in writing by the VR Counselor. Part-time placements of less than fifteen (15) hours are discussed with the VR Counselor prior to placement and must be authorized in writing by the VR Counselor.

The CRP provides job coaching services to the individual at the work site. On-site job skills training includes but is not limited to:

- Job orientation
- Development and maintenance of production levels
- Periodic reassessment and alteration of strategies
- Task analysis
- Transportation training
- Building working relationships with co-workers and supervisors

The training is individualized and personalized to meet the support needs of the individual. Job coaching may also include teaching the employer or co-workers strategies of working with the individual. Exploration of workplace supports should occur during this time if it has not been considered earlier. The individual, employer, and VR Counselor are involved in the planning, directing and evaluating of these services to help ensure that stabilization occurs. In addition, benefits planning and assisting the individual on reporting earnings should be provided. Job coaching services are inclusive in the Supported Employment established fee schedule.

2.7.4. SE Career Stabilization

Stabilization occurs differently for each person depending on the individual's employment needs, limitations, supports, and vocational goal. There is no timeline for how many days of employment are required before the individual can be considered stabilized on the job. The individual is considered stable when all the following occurs:

- The individual is maintaining work performance which is acceptable to the employer;
- Job coach intervention has stabilized to an expected minimum level of intervention necessary for the individual to maintain employment, and must have leveled (faded) to the same number of job coach hours per day for a period of not less than ten (10) consecutive workdays;
- Ongoing support services and extended service provider have been established and will continue at a minimum of two (2) contacts per month at the work site or as requested off-site or off-site if requested by the individual and documented;
- The training objectives on the on-the-job-training agreement have been completed (if applicable);
- The individual has been offered Social Security benefits counseling since beginning employment (if the individual receives Social Security benefits).

When the Stabilization criteria set forth appear to have been met, the CRP initiates a staffing meeting to determine if stabilization has been achieved. The meeting includes the individual, legal guardian or conservator, a CRP representative, and the VR Counselor. This meeting is to review the training services provided and documentation which verifies the individual is stable in their work performance, and to identify supports needed to complete the Individual Placement and Support: Supported Employment Extended Support Plan (ESP). An ESP identifies the parties who will provide extended services. If all members of the team agree, a Vendor Authorization for day one (1) of stabilization may be issued. If the individual discontinues employment prior to completing 90 calendar days of stabilization, the CRP provides additional Career Development and Placement services. Once a new placement occurs, the case proceeds toward stabilization.

2.7.5. Extended Services

Extended services means ongoing support services and other appropriate services that are:

- Needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability including a youth with a most significant disability, in supported employment;
- Organized or made available, singly or in combination, in such a way as to assist an eligible individual in maintaining supported employment;
- Based on the needs of an eligible individual, as specified in an individualized plan for employment;
- Provided by a State agency, a private nonprofit organization, employer, or any other appropriate resource, after an individual has made the transition from support from the designated State unit; and
- Provided to a youth with a most significant disability for a period not to exceed four years, or at such time that a youth reaches age 25 and no longer meets the definition of a youth with a disability, whichever occurs first. VR may not provide extended services to an individual with a most significant disability who is not a youth with a most significant disability.

The Individual Placement and Support: Supported Employment Extended Support Plan (ESP) is a tool for the CRP to use when providing ongoing support services. An ESP outlines the commitment by a party identified by the CRP, prior to stabilization, to provide extended services for the individual. The CRP further develops formal records that describe past, present, and future areas of the individual's needs as well as strategies for supports. These documents provide a record of individual preferences and successful support strategies. The records are made available to the State of Tennessee upon request for review and monitoring.

For youth with disabilities (up through age 24), the CRP identifies all possible funding sources for extended services prior to service authorization. Extended services may be funded by VR for youth with disabilities until the individual:

- No longer meets the established age limit; or
- Has received extended services for a period of forty-eight (48) months; or
- Has transitioned to extended services provided with funds other than VR prior to meeting the age or time limits.

Following the final payment by VR, individuals continue to receive extended services by the identified party after case closure, except for youth when VR is funding the extended services.

2.7.6. SE Successful Employment Outcome

The CRP informs VR when the individual has maintained a supported employment outcome for a minimum of ninety (90) cumulative days using the [SE Customer Monthly Progress Report](#) and verified by submission of the individual's pay stub (within the last 30 calendar days) or other wage verification as approved by the VR Counselor and the signed purchase order for the service. If the individual's hours increased from part-time to full-time, VR makes an adjustment to the Successful Employment Outcome payment. The CRP must submit documentation to VR showing the individual's increased work hours. Following the final payment by VR, individuals will continue to receive extended services by the identified party after case closure, except for youth when VR is funding the extended services.

2.7.7. SE: Intensive Job Services (IJS)

Intensive job services are requested to achieve a successful supported employment outcome. Intensive job services are those services that are necessary due to unusual and extraordinary circumstances which:

- may arise after employment is achieved;
- are attributable to the individual's severity of disability and intensive need for job supports;
- are necessary to maintain employment; or
- are needed to train other organizations to provide extended services.

If a need for intensive job services is identified, the CRP submits the Supported Employment [Intensive Job Services](#) Request to the referring VR Counselor. CRPs may provide up to one hundred (100) hours of intensive job services during the lifetime of the VR case. Additional hours must be authorized.

2.8. Customized Employment

2.8.1. Purpose

Customized employment is competitive integrated employment, for an individual with a significant disability, which is:

- based on an individualized determination of the unique strengths, needs, and interests of the individual with a disability;
- Designed to meet the specific abilities of the individual with a disability and the business needs of the employer; and
- Carried out through flexible strategies, such as job exploration by the individual and working with an employer to facilitate placement. This includes customizing a job description based on current employer needs or on

previously unidentified and unmet employer needs; developing a set of job duties, a work schedule and job arrangement, and specifics of supervision (including performance evaluation and review), determining a job location, using a professional representative chosen by the individual, or if elected self-representation, to work with an employer to facilitate placement, and providing services and supports at the job location ([34 CFR §361.5](#)). Refer to the [Links](#) section found on the VR CRP website.

2.8.2. Service Description

Customized Employment is a process-driven concept that may involve a blend of flexible strategies which result in the provision of individually negotiated and designed services, supports and job opportunities that lead to an employment outcome. A key factor in this service is the presence of employer negotiation, including customizing a job description based on current needs of the employer and the employee. Customized Employment generally comprises of the following components.

Customized employment services may be provided for eligible individuals in accordance with the following guidelines and as described in the customer's IPE.

- Customized employment services must contribute to the achievement of competitive integrated employment.
- Strategies to achieve a customized employment outcome may also include:
 - 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.
 - Job carving. An existing job description is modified, containing one or more, but not all, of the tasks from the original job description.
 - Job sharing. Two or more people share the tasks and responsibilities of a job based on each other's strengths.

2.8.3. Discovery

The CRP initiates the Discovery process to explore the individual's strengths and capabilities which may lead to employment options. The information developed through Discovery allows for activities of typical life to be translated into possibilities for employment. Discovery may include:

- Gaining information about routines, hobbies, family supports, and activities.
- Observation of the neighborhood/area near the individual's home to determine nearby employment, services, transportation, safety concerns, etc.
- Participation in a familiar activity in which the individual is most competent.
- Participation in a novel activity in which the individual is interested in participating but has not yet had the chance to do so.
- Conduct a review of existing records, memorabilia and other documents that are available.

The [Discovery Report](#) is subsequently completed and submitted to VR.

2.8.4. Customized Employment Planning Meeting

After VR approval of the Discovery Report, the CRP initiates a planning meeting that includes anyone who may assist the individual in reaching their employment goal to develop a blueprint to guide the efforts to develop a customized job. While the planning meeting is a person-centered, person-directed session facilitated by the CRP that produces a targeted employment objective and a resume for the individual, a key factor is the involvement of the individual's support system.

2.8.5. Needs Analysis, Customized Job Development, Job Placement

The CRP initiates a needs analysis of potential employers' job sites to identify job tasks and work cultures that fulfill the criteria for a successful job match. Tours and in-depth needs analysis of specific employment sites are used to identify the unmet needs of an employer by looking at job tasks, employee routines, and worksite cultures.

Placement efforts are based on the blueprint developed during the Customized Employment Planning Meeting. Prior to making employer contacts, the CRP identifies relationships that might exist between the job seeker, family and others in the person's support circle that may help with the targeted employer. Successful job matches occur when an individual's contributions, conditions, and interests are carefully matched with an employer's unmet needs. Part-time placements of less than fifteen (15) hours are discussed with the VR Counselor prior to placement and must be authorized in writing by the VR Counselor.

2.9. Individual Placement and Support Services

2.9.1. Purpose

Individual Placement and Support (IPS) is an evidence-based practice based on a 25-item fidelity scale and the 8 principles described in Section 2.9.2. IPS is the model of Supported Employment with the most evidence and research behind it in supporting individuals with behavioral health disorders in gaining and retaining employment.

2.9.2. Service Description

The Individual Placement and Support (IPS) is based on eight key principles:

- **Focus on Competitive Employment:** Agencies providing IPS services are committed to competitive employment as an attainable goal for people with behavioral health conditions seeking employment. Mainstream education and specialized training may enhance career paths.
- **Eligibility Based on Client Choice:** People are not excluded on the basis of readiness, diagnoses, symptoms, substance use history, psychiatric hospitalizations, homelessness, level of disability, or legal system involvement.
- **Integration of Rehabilitation and Mental Health Services:** IPS programs are closely integrated with mental health treatment teams.
- **Attention to Worker Preferences:** Services are based on each person's preferences and choices, rather than providers' judgments.
- **Personalized Benefits Counseling:** Employment specialists help people obtain personalized, understandable, and accurate information about their Social Security, Medicaid, and other government entitlements.
- **Rapid Job Search:** IPS programs use a rapid job search approach to help job seekers obtain jobs directly, rather than providing lengthy pre-employment assessment, training, and counseling. If further education is part of their plan, IPS specialists assist in these activities as needed.
- **Systematic Job Development:** Employment specialists systematically visit employers, who are selected based on job seeker preferences, to learn about their business needs and hiring preferences.
- **Time-Unlimited and Individualized Support:** Job supports are individualized and continue for as long as each worker wants and needs the support.

2.9.3. SE: IPS Career Profile

The purpose of Career Profile is to engage with the VR eligible individual, develop a trusting relationship, and to gather relevant information to assist in identifying employment goals and individualizing the employment IPS service delivery. The Career Profile is a “living” document to assist in meeting the employment and support needs of the individual. Based on the IPS model requirement to start the Career Profile as soon as the individual expresses interest in employment, CRPs may be paid for Career Profile services which start prior to the Vendor Authorization being issued.

2.9.4. SE: IPS Career Development and Placement

The purpose of the employment plan is to detail the services required by the individual. The plan is guided by the [Career Profile](#) and should include specific tasks for the individual and the Employment Specialist. The employment plan as documented on the Job Development Contacts section of the [IPS Monthly Progress Report](#) should be reviewed regularly at the monthly face-to-face meetings between the Employment Specialist, the VR Counselor, and the individual, as appropriate. The CRP may update the employment plan as needed, after full consultation with all parties. The CRP utilizes the IPS Job Development model and principles as recommended by the IPS fidelity standards as defined at <https://ipsworks.org/index.php/library/>. Refer to the [Links](#) section found on our website.

The CRP provides individualized job supports as needed to assist the individual in transitioning into Stabilization leading to Extended Services. The outcome of IPS Career Development and Placement is a job that meets the definition of competitive integrated employment and is consistent with integration at the work site and working toward maximum potential. Part-time placements of less than fifteen (15) hours are discussed with the VR Counselor prior to placement and must be authorized in writing by the VR Counselor.

2.9.5. SE: IPS Career Stabilization and Maintenance

Supported employment services begin at the time the individual begins working and are provided by the CRP until stabilization and transition to extended services, except under certain circumstances for youth. This includes all training and job stabilization activities that occur between placement on the job and transition to extended services. The time frame for the provision of supported employment services is less than or equal to twenty-four (24) months, unless, under special circumstances, the eligible individual and the VR Counselor agree to extend the time to achieve the employment outcome as identified in the Individualized Plan for Employment.

When the Stabilization criteria set forth appear to have been met, the CRP initiates a staffing to determine if stabilization has been achieved. The meeting includes the individual, legal guardian or conservator, a CRP representative, and the VR Counselor. This meeting is to review the training services provided and documentation which verifies the individual is stable in their work performance, and to identify supports needed to complete the [Individual Placement and Support: Supported Employment Extended Support Plan](#) (ESP).

The individual is considered stabilized when:

- The individual is maintaining work performance which is acceptable to the employer;
- Job coach intervention has stabilized to an expected minimum level of intervention necessary for the individual to maintain employment, and must have leveled (faded) to the same number of job coach hours per day for a period of not less than ten (10) consecutive workdays;
- Ongoing support services and extended service provider have been established and will continue at a minimum of two (2) contacts per month at the work site or as requested off-site or off-site if requested by the individual and documented;
- The training objectives on the on-the-job-training agreement have been completed (if applicable);
- The individual has been offered Social Security benefits counseling since beginning employment (if the individual receives Social Security benefits).

If the individual's employment ends before successful closure, the CRP submits an [IPS SE Job End Report](#) within ten (10) business days of the employment ending. The case will return to the IPS SE Career Development and Placement milestone.

2.9.6. SE: IPS Successful Employment Outcome

A successful Employment Outcome is achieved at completion of ninety (90) cumulative days of employment after meeting VR's Stabilization criteria. Competitive integrated employment must be met in accordance with the individual's IPE.

2.9.7. IPS Extended Services

Extended services means ongoing support services and other appropriate services that are:

- Needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability including a youth with a most significant disability, in supported employment;
- Organized or made available, singly or in combination, in such a way as to assist an eligible individual in maintaining supported employment;
- Based on the needs of an eligible individual, as specified in an individualized plan for employment;
- Provided by a State agency, a private nonprofit organization, employer, or any other appropriate resource, after an individual has made the transition from support from the designated State unit; and
- Provided to a youth with a most significant disability for a period not to exceed four years, or at such time that a youth reaches age 25 and no longer meets the definition of a youth with a disability, whichever occurs first. VR may not provide extended services to an individual with a most significant disability who is not a youth with a most significant disability.

The Individual Placement and Support: Supported Employment Extended Support Plan (ESP) is a tool for the CRP to use when providing ongoing support services. An ESP outlines the commitment by a party identified by the CRP, prior to stabilization, to provide extended services for the individual. The CRP further develops formal records that describe past, present, and future areas of the individual's needs as well as strategies for supports. These documents provide a record of individual preferences and successful support strategies. The records are made available to the State of Tennessee upon request for review and monitoring.

For youth with disabilities (up through age 24), the CRP identifies all possible funding sources for extended services prior to service authorization. Extended services may be funded by VR for youth with disabilities until the individual:

- No longer meets the established age limit; or
- Has received extended services for a period of forty-eight (48) months; or
- Has transitioned to extended services provided with funds other than VR prior to meeting the age or time limits.

Following the final payment by VR, individuals continue to receive extended services by the identified party after case closure, except for youth when VR is funding the extended services.

2.9.8. SE IPS Intensive Job Services

Intensive job services aim to achieve a successful supported employment outcome. Intensive job services are those services that are necessary due to unusual and extraordinary circumstances which may arise after employment is achieved, are attributable to the severity of the individual's disability and intensive need for support and are absolutely necessary to maintain competitive integrated employment. If a need for intensive job services is identified, the CRP submits the Supported Employment [Intensive Job Services](#) Request to VR. CRPs may provide up to one hundred (100) hours of intensive job services during the lifetime of the VR case. Additional hours must be authorized.

2.9.9. IPS Fidelity Process

Fidelity Reviews, based on the 25-point Fidelity Scale developed by The Rockville Institute (formerly Dartmouth Psychiatric Research Institute), will be conducted at minimum once a year by a representative from VR, Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (DMHSAS), IPS trainer, and a peer reviewer, as appropriate. A score of less than one hundred (100) will require the CRP to complete an Action Plan to improve the fidelity score. The Action Plan must be submitted to VR and DMHSAS by the agreed upon date determined at the fidelity report out. The CRP submits quarterly Action Plan updates to VR to document activities and progress toward completion of items on the Action Plan. The CRP also participates in Fidelity Reviews every six (6) months until a score of one hundred (100) is achieved. The CRP has up to two (2) years to achieve a score of 100.

2.9.10. Interdepartmental Collaboration

The CRP maintains active collaboration with the Department of Human Services (DHS) and Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (DMHSAS) for the provision of IPS employment services, which includes meeting and maintaining the established guidelines for IPS supported employment program. Each CRP works in collaboration with the VR and DMHSAS approved IPS Trainers to implement and sustain IPS Supported Employment through trainings and technical assistance.

The IPS trainer participates in IPS unit meetings to help the team develop strategies based on the IPS approach. The trainer attends at least one (1) IPS unit meeting every month during the first six (6) months of implementation and participates in mental health treatment team meetings to help practitioners consider employment for people who are not working and to help improve integration of services. The trainer attends at least one (1) mental health treatment team meeting every quarter during the first six (6) months of implementation.

The Employment Specialist and the IPS Team Leader work alongside the trainer while developing employer relationships. The IPS trainer helps with employer relationships monthly or quarterly depending on the needs, and employment outcomes of the IPS team and participates in quarterly steering committee meetings for the IPS supported employment. The trainer is to review IPS program outcomes with the IPS supervisor and agency leaders in order to develop plans for improved outcomes.

2.10. Project SEARCH Transition Model

The Transition School to Work Project SEARCH® program is a one school year internship program for VR eligible individuals with disabilities, in their last year of high school. The Community Rehabilitation Provider (CRP) provides Project SEARCH® services at the request of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) in collaboration with the Local Education Agency (LEA), local businesses and other entities. The program is targeted for students whose goal is competitive integrated employment. The program takes place in a healthcare, government, or business setting where total immersion in the workplace facilitates the teaching and learning process as well as the acquisition of employment and marketable work skills. Individuals participate in three (3) unpaid internships to explore a variety of career opportunities. The individuals work with a team that includes their family, a special education teacher, a community rehabilitation provider, on-site business liaison and staff and the Vocational Rehabilitation counselor to create an employment goal and support the individual during this important transition from school to work. Project SEARCH® refers to VR individuals as interns. It is expected that all interns will obtain competitive integrated employment during or after participation in the internship project for a minimum of sixteen (16) hours per week.

The program is business-led in which businesses participate in the program without subsidy. There is a strong business liaison involved in crucial decisions, such as intern selection, internship site development, active internal marketing of the program throughout the business, and assistance with internal hiring of qualified candidates. The business provides an on-site classroom. The LEA, in collaboration with the business, develops an employability skills curriculum taught each day.

After the internship, the CRP may provide placement services using either the Supported Employment or Job Placement model. CRPs must have been authorized by VR to provide Supported Employment and Job Placement services.

2.10.1. Service Description

The CRP employs and provides Skills Trainers to help prepare interns to complete the essential tasks/duties/core employability skills at the worksites. Expertise in adaptations and job accommodations to interns, in consultation with the LEA and VR, is also provided by the CRP. If placement services are not provided, then the CRP participates in transitioning the intern to the agency providing employment services.

In conjunction with VR and the LEA, the CRP provides education and training to the host business site managers and co-workers. The training encompasses supporting, mentoring, and working with people with disabilities in the workplace.

The CRP participates in monthly meetings to discuss progress on skill development with interns, coordinator/instructor, family members, the VR Counselor(s) and other appropriate team members. Sites are designed to serve 8-12 individuals per year. This number can be modified by the CRP, LEA, and the business site to meet the needs of the business. The CRP maintains sign-in sheets to document intern attendance. Copies of intern sign-in sheets must accompany each Vendor Authorization. Please see [Section 6.4](#) for training requirements.

2.11. Project SEARCH® Adult Model

The Adult Model program is a one-year internship program for VR eligible individuals with disabilities. It is targeted for adult age individuals whose goal is competitive integrated employment. The program takes place in a healthcare, government, or business setting where total immersion in the workplace facilitates the teaching and learning process as well as the acquisition of employment and marketable work skills. Interns will participate in three internships to explore a variety of career paths. The intern will work with a team that includes their family, a CRP staff person, business representative, and the Vocational Rehabilitation counselor to create an employment goal and support the VR Individual.

Project SEARCH® refers to VR customers as “interns.” The objective is for all interns to obtain competitive integrated employment during or after participation in the Project SEARCH® internship project for a minimum of sixteen (16) hours per week.

After the internship, the CRP may provide placement services using either the Supported Employment or Job Placement model. CRPs must have been approved to provide Supported Employment and Job Placement services. CRPs must abide by the terms and conditions as outlined in the Supported Employment or the Job Placement sections of the CRP Manual.

The program is business-led. Businesses participate in the program without subsidy. There is a strong business liaison involved in crucial decisions, such as intern selection, internship site development, active internal marketing of the program throughout the business, and assistance with internal hiring of qualified candidates. The business provides an on-site classroom. The program includes an employability skills curriculum taught each day and customized to the business.

Please see [Section 6 Training and Certification](#) for training requirements.

2.11.1. Service Description

- The CRP provides Skills Trainers to help prepare interns to complete the essential tasks/duties/core employability skills at the worksites.
- The CRP provides expertise in adaptations and job accommodations to interns in consultation with VR.
- If the CRP will not be the agency providing the placement services, the CRP will participate in transitioning the intern to the agency providing employment services.
- In conjunction with VR, the CRP will provide education and training to the host business site managers and co-workers regarding working with, supporting, and mentoring people with disabilities in the workplace.
- Regular monthly meetings are held to discuss progress on skill development with interns, coordinator/instructor, family members, the VR Counselor and other appropriate team members.
- The CRP must maintain a licensing agreement signed with Project SEARCH® Cincinnati through Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center.
- Under the licensing agreement, the CRP has the responsibility to provide a full-time Instructor for this project. The instructor(s), at each site, will be directly employed and supervised by the CRP.
- The CRP will provide Skills Trainers for the project that will be employed and supervised by the CRP.
- Sites are designed to serve 8-12 individuals per year. This number can be modified by the CRP and the business site to meet the needs of the business.
- The CRP must maintain sign in sheets to document training provided to interns. Copies of intern sign in sheets must accompany each Vendor Authorization.

3. FEES AND PAYMENTS

The following is provided for informational purposes only. Nothing in this section constitutes an offer to any party or a guarantee of any specific rate. The method of payment for services is through an approved Vendor Authorization. Once the service is completed, the CRP signs the Vendor Authorization certifying the service was provided in accordance with VR standards and applicable State and Federal Rules and Regulations. Separate Vendor Authorizations are issued for each service requested.

The CRP must sign the Vendor Authorization before VR can process the Vendor Authorization for payment.

If the CRP manually signs the Vendor Authorization, they must:

- 1) Sign their name in the **Vendor Signature Block**
- 2) Enter the date the signature is taking place in the **Date Block**
- 3) Print their name in the space immediately below the **Vendor** signature block.

If the CRP uses AwareSign to sign the Vendor Authorization the printed name and signature will be completed electronically. Guidance on using AwareSign can be found at <https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/ds/vocational-rehabilitation/dhs-vr-loa1.html>.

Refer to the [Links](#) section found on our website. (click on the Aware Sign for Vendors Links in the Announcements section of the web page).

By signing the Vendor Authorization, the CRP is affirming the services have been provided as described in the Special Instructions section of the Vendor Authorization.

The Vendor Authorization, [service report](#), and other pertinent documentation is submitted within ten (10) business days of completing the service, unless otherwise specified. The service report for each specific service is listed in [Section 5](#) of this manual. Reports and/or documentation in need of further clarification or revision may be corrected and resubmitted before payment is processed. In the event an individual obtains competitive employment, the CRP may be asked to provide evidence showing the individual is compensated at or above the minimum wage. Service outcomes are subject to review and must be deemed satisfactory by VR before payment is authorized.

If a CRP is asked by VR to provide services outside of the counties designated on the CRP List, the CRP may request mileage reimbursement. Mileage reimbursement will be at the current State travel rate.

VR SERVICE		FEE
VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENT		
Basic Vocational Assessment Report		\$696
Work Readiness Assessment – the assessment typically should not exceed five (5) hours per day and no more than ten (10) days. The VR Counselor may approve exceptions based on the needs of the individual. Partial hours are rounded to the nearest full hour.		\$14 /hr
Job Shadowing – minimum of two (2) hours per experience. The VR Counselor may approve exceptions based on the needs of the individual.		\$209 per experience
Job Sampling - the duration and the number of hours in Job Sampling is based on an agreement between the individual, the VR Counselor, CRP, and employer prior to the start of the assessment.		\$348 per experience
Integrated Work Site Assessment – each site assessment lasts at least 4 hours. The VR Counselor may approve exceptions based on the needs of the individual.		\$1,044
VOCATIONAL ADJUSTMENT TRAINING		
Vocational Adjustment Training - maximum of 5 hours per day and 25 hours per week. The VR Counselor may approve exceptions based on the needs of the individual.		\$11 /hr
TRIAL WORK EXPERIENCES		
1 Trial Work Experience		\$696 if one TWE is completed
2 Trial Work Experiences		\$1,045 if two TWEs are completed
3 Trial Work Experiences		\$1,320 if three TWE are completed
JOB READINESS, JOB DEVELOPMENT & PLACEMENT (GENERAL)		
Job Readiness Training		\$696
Job Development & Job Placement Initial - (completion of 45 cumulative days) Priority Category 1 or 2 CRP is compensated for Job Development & Job Placement – Initial as verified and reported by the CRP using the Job Placement Activity Plan and the individual's pay stub or other wage verification such as a wage verification statement from the employer. If the CRP is unable to provide verification through other means they may document those efforts and attest to the individual's wages in the Job Placement Progress Report.		\$1,393 or \$696 if CRP employs

Job Development & Job Placement Initial - (completion of 45 cumulative days) Priority Category 3 or 4 CRP is compensated for Job Development & Job Placement Initial as verified and reported by the CRP using the Job Placement Activity Plan and an individual's pay stub or other wage verification such as a wage verification statement from the employer. If the CRP is unable to provide verification through other means they may document those efforts and attest to the individual's wages in the Job Placement Activity Plan.	\$1,113 or \$556 if CRP employs
Job Placement-Final (90 cumulative days) – Priority Category 1 or 2	\$2,088 or \$1,045 if CRP employs
Job Placement-Final (90 cumulative days) -- Priority Category 3 or 4	\$1,671 or \$835 if CRP employs
Exceptional Wage Bonus - If the placement results in the individual earning at least \$12 per hour and the individual is working at least thirty (30) hours per week the CRP qualifies for an Exceptional Wage Bonus. The Vendor Authorization can be processed for payment after the individual has completed ninety (90) cumulative days of employment and the counselor has received documentation verifying individual's wages and hours worked per week. Possible sources of verification might be copies of the individual's pay stub or other wage verification such as a wage verification statement from the employer.	\$696
Benefits Incentive - An incentive payment may be made to a CRP for a successful placement that includes employer paid comprehensive major medical insurance. For the insurance to qualify as employer paid, the employer must pay at least 51% of the premium. Supplemental insurance does not meet the requirement of this provision. The CRP submits a request for bonus payment along with adequate documentation that the criteria have been met. Possible sources of verification might be copies of the individual's pay stub or copies of the individual's valid health insurance card from a major insurer.	\$278

JOB COACHING SERVICES (Non-Supported Employment)	
Job Coaching Services (Non-Supported Employment) - Job Coaching services are individualized and not provided to more than one person. The CRP may charge time (up to 10 hours) needed to gain an understanding of the job task and the individual's needs to develop the most effective training strategy. Partial hours are rounded to the nearest full hour.	\$34 /hour
SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT (SE)	
SE Career Consultation	\$278
SE Career Development/Placement	
Full-Time – as defined by the employer	\$2,088
Part-Time – as defined by the employer	\$1,393
SE Career Stabilization	
Day 1 of Stabilization	\$696
Day 30 of Stabilization	\$1,045
Day 60 of Stabilization	\$1,045
SE Successful Employment Outcome - If the customer's hours increased from part-time to full-time, during the ninety (90) cumulative days, VR makes an adjustment to the Successful Employment Outcome payment. The CRP must submit documentation to VR showing the customer's increased work hours.	
Full-Time – as defined by the employer	\$4,177
Part-Time – as defined by the employer	\$2,784
Intensive Job Services	\$24 /hour
SE Extended Services for Youth with Disabilities- If no other funding source is available to provide the extended services identified in the Individual Placement and Support: Supported Employment Extended Support Plan (ESP), VR may compensate with authorization by the VR Counselor. The CRP submits the Supported Employment Customer Monthly Progress Report monthly report along with the monthly Vendor Authorization to process for payment.	\$70 /contact
INDIVIDUAL PLACEMENT AND SUPPORT (IPS)	

IPS SE Career Profile - This Vendor Authorization is payable upon completion of a staffing meeting and the Individual Placement and Support Career Profile Face Sheet , submitted within ten (10) business days of the staffing meeting. The staffing meeting includes the CRP, the VR Counselor, the individual, and other appropriate individuals.	\$1,045
IPS SE Career Match and Hire - This Vendor Authorization is payable upon submission of the Hire/Placement Report for: Individual Placement and Support; Supported Employment; Customized Employment; and Job Placement to the VR Counselor. The report is due within ten (10) business days of the meeting with the individual, CRP, and VR Counselor, and other appropriate individuals.	\$2,088
IPS SE Career Stabilization and Maintenance - CRP is compensated for Individual Job Placement and Support Career Stabilization and Maintenance, Day 1 as verified and reported by the CRP using the Individual Placement and Support: Supported Employment Monthly Progress Report and the individual's pay stub or other wage verification such as a wage verification statement from the employer. If the CRP is unable to provide verification through other means they may document those efforts and attest to the individual's wages in the Individual Placement and Support: Supported Employment Monthly Progress Report.	-
Day 1	\$1,393
Day 30	\$696
Day 60	\$696
IPS SE Successful Employment Outcome - The Vendor Authorization for this service is payable when the individual has maintained employment for at least ninety (90) cumulative days, all other requirements have been satisfied and supporting documentation (progress reports, wage verification, etc.) has been provided to VR.	\$3,829
Intensive Job Services	\$24 /hour
Extended Services for Youth with Disabilities - VR can only pay if no other funding source is available to provide the extended services identified in the Individual Placement and Support: Supported Employment Extended Support Plan as approved by the VR Counselor. The CRP is required to submit "Supported Employment Customer Monthly Progress Report " monthly reports along with the monthly Vendor Authorization to process for payment.	\$70 per contact according to the Individual Placement and Support: Supported Employment Extended Support Plan
CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT (General Employment cases)	
CE Discovery	\$696

CE Plan and Resume	\$349
Customized Job Placement - Initial – If Customized Employment services are used CRP is compensated for Customized Job Placement – Initial as verified and reported by the CRP using the Customized Employment Customer Monthly Progress Report and the individual's pay stub or other wage verification such as a wage verification statement from the employer. If the CRP is unable to provide verification through other means they may document those efforts and attest to the individual's wages in the Customized Employment Customer Monthly Progress Report.	\$2,088
Customized Job Placement - Final – If Customized Employment services are used CRP is compensated for Stabilization, Day 1 as verified and reported by the CRP using the Supported Employment Customer Monthly Progress Report and the individual's pay stub or other wage verification such as a wage verification statement from the employer. If the CRP is unable to provide verification through other means they may document those efforts and attest to the individual's wages in the Supported Employment Customer Monthly Progress Report.	\$1,393
CE Exceptional Wage Bonus - If the placement results in the individual earning at least \$12 per hour and the individual is working at least thirty (30) hours per week the CRP qualifies for an Exceptional Wage Bonus. The Vendor Authorization can be processed for payment after the individual has completed ninety (90) cumulative days of employment and the counselor has received documentation verifying individual's wages. Possible sources of verification might be copies of the individual's pay stub or other wage verification such as a wage verification statement from the employer.	\$696
CE Benefit Incentive - An incentive payment may be made to a CRP for a successful placement that includes employer paid comprehensive major medical insurance. For the insurance to qualify as employer paid, the employer must pay at least 51% of the premium. Supplemental insurance does not meet the requirement of this provision. The CRP submits a request for bonus payment along with adequate documentation that the criteria have been met. Possible sources of verification might be copies of the individual's pay stub or copies of the individual's valid health insurance card from a major insurer.	\$278
CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT (Supported Employment cases)	
SE CE Discovery and Profile – If Customized Employment services are used	\$1,113
SE CE Employment Plan and Resume – If Customized Employment services are used	\$557
SE Career Development/Placement	
Full-Time – as defined by the employer	\$2,088

Part-Time – as defined by the employer	\$1,393
SE Successful Employment Outcome - If the customer's hours increased from part-time to full-time, during the ninety (90) cumulative days, VR makes an adjustment to the Successful Employment Outcome payment. The CRP must submit documentation to VR showing the customer's increased work hours.	
Full-Time – as defined by the employer	\$4,177
Part-Time – as defined by the employer	\$2,784

Project SEARCH® Adult Model	
Internship Project SEARCH®	\$557 /month per intern
Project SEARCH® Customized Training	\$51 /day per intern
Project SEARCH® Transition Model	
Project SEARCH® Customized Training	\$51 /day per intern

4. **STAFF QUALIFICATIONS**

CRP Staff Qualifications

The Community Rehabilitation Provider is required to hire qualified staff who have met the educational background, professional or personal experience or a combination thereof to provide vocational rehabilitation services. This may be in the form of formal education, professional certification, or in-depth training by a professional organization. Disability-related services experience should be directly related to the areas for which the Community Rehabilitation Provider is seeking to provide services. Community Rehabilitation Provider staff must have the knowledge of disabling conditions relevant to the aspects of the services that they provide.

The CRP is responsible for providing basic skills training or otherwise ensuring their staff can effectively provide services to the customer. The University of Tennessee, Center for Learning Education and Employment (UT CLEE) offers supplemental training to enhance CRP staff knowledge at no charge to the CRP (see Section 6.5).

The CRP must maintain documentation that all staff adhere to educational and experience qualifications as specified below.

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS BY SERVICE	
VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENTS	
For Basic Assessments, a Bachelor's degree (Master's degree preferred) from an accredited college or university and documented experience in test administration, synthesizing test results, and making recommendations based on findings.	
All other assessment services, a High school diploma or High School equivalency (HiSet) or general equivalency diploma (GED) and documentation of at least 6 months of experience in delivering employment related services.	
VOCATIONAL ADJUSTMENT TRAINING, JOB READINESS/JOB PLACEMENT SERVICES, TRIAL WORK EXPERIENCES, SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT JOB COACHING, AND PROJECT SEARCH® – ADULT & TRANSITION MODELS	
CRP staff must have at least 6 months of work experience working with individuals with disabilities and meet one of the following:	
A Bachelor's degree (Master's degree preferred) from an accredited college or university and written documentation of one (1) year of experience in delivering employment related services	
OR	
an Associate's degree from an accredited college or university or a high school diploma or High School equivalency (HiSet) general equivalency diploma (GED) and	

written documentation of two (2) years of experience in delivering employment related services.

Please see [Section 6](#) for staff training and certification requirements for Project SEARCH®.

NON-SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT JOB COACHING SERVICES

High school diploma or High School equivalency (HiSet) or general equivalency diploma (GED) with one (1) year of professional work experience and six (6) months training and/or experience working with individuals with disabilities in teaching life skills and work tasks.

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

CRP staff must have at least six (6) months experience working with individuals with disabilities and meet one of the following educational/experience requirements:

A Bachelor's degree (Master's degree preferred) from an accredited college or university and written verifiable documentation of one (1) year of successful work experience in delivering employment related services;

OR

an Associate's degree from an accredited college or university and written verifiable documentation of two (2) years of successful work experience in delivering employment related services.

The CRP must maintain at least three (3) qualified staff as described herein and meet the training requirements of [Section 6](#). At least one (1) of the three (3) qualified staff must meet the job specifications and requirements of an Employment Specialist.

The CRP must inform their Provider Relations Team representative if they fall below the three (3) SE qualified staff requirement. The CRP may not accept new referrals once they fall below the three (3) SE qualified staff requirement.

CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT

A CRP staff must have at least six (6) months experience working with individuals with disabilities and one of the following educational requirements:

A Bachelor's degree (Master's degree preferred) from an accredited college or university and one (1) year of work experience in delivering employment related services

OR

an Associate's Degree from an accredited college or university and two (2) years of work experience in delivering employment related services.

Please see [Section 6](#) for staff training and certification requirements.

INDIVIDUAL PLACEMENT AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Maintain a minimum of two (2) full-time equivalent IPS Employment Specialists and one (1) Team Leader. CRP staff providing IPS services must meet one of the following educational/experience requirements:

- Bachelor's or Associate's degree from an accredited college or university in education, social work, human resources, healthcare, or disability related field of study;

OR

- High school diploma or GED and two (2) years of experience in education, social work, human resources, healthcare, or disability related field of study.

CRP staff are required to complete initial IPS training provided by the Tennessee IPS Trainers before providing IPS services. Please see [Section 6](#) for staff training and certification requirements.

5. REPORTING

- 5.1.** The CRP completes and submits report forms to VR. The reports listed in this section are used to assess progress and the quality of services provided by the CRP. Each service listed herein has a corresponding report, and by submitting a signed Vendor Authorization for payment, the CRP signifies that it has provided all appropriate reports. This section contains all service reports CRPs complete during service delivery. The reports can be accessed at <https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/ds/vocational-rehabilitation/dhs-vr-loa1.html>. Refer to the [Links](#) section found on our website. Service reports are sent to the referring VR Counselor. All service reports must be type-written.

5.2. Vocational Assessments

Vocational Assessments	
VR Progress Reports	
Basic Vocational Assessment Report	Vocational Assessments are due ten (10) business days after completion of the assessment.
Integrated Work Site Assessment	
Integrated Work Site Assessment Summary	
Job Sampling Assessment Report	
Job Shadowing Assessment Report	
Work Readiness Assessment Report	

5.3. Vocational Adjustment

Vocational Adjustment	
VR Progress Reports	
Vocational Adjustment Progress Report	The Vocational Adjustment Progress report is due by the 5th business day of the month.
Individualized Written Adjustment Plan (IWAP)	Provide VR with a copy of the IWAP within ten (10) business days.

5.4. Trial Work Experiences

Trial Work Experiences	
VR Progress Reports	
Trial Work Report	This typed report is electronically submitted to VR along with the signed Vendor Authorization within ten (10) business days of completion of the final TWE.

5.5. Job Readiness and Job Placement

Job Readiness/ Job Placement	
VR Progress Reports	
Job Readiness Report	Job Readiness Report is due within ten (10) business days of completion of Job Readiness training.
Job Placement Activity Plan	The first Job Placement Activity Plan report is due within ten (10) business days after start of job placement services. Subsequent reports are due monthly by the 5 th business day of the month. Once employment is achieved the Job Placement Activity Plan will be submitted on day 45 and day 90 of employment, instead of on a monthly basis, i.e. employment starts Jan 10 the next Job Placement Activity Plan would be submitted 45 days after Jan 10 and include Jan 1 -10 activities (there would not be a monthly report for January).
Hire/Placement Report for: Individual Placement and Support; Supported Employment; Customized Employment; and Job Placement	Within ten (10) business days of the individual starting employment the CRP completes a Hire/Placement Report for: Individual Placement and Support; Supported Employment; Customized Employment; and Job Placement and sends a copy to VR.

5.6. Job Coaching

Job Coaching (non SE)	
VR Progress Reports	
Job Coaching Progress Report (non-SE Job Coaching)	Job Coaching Progress Reports are completed on a weekly basis and submitted to VR by the following week. The report serves as the guide for job coaching activities and individual progress in employment.

5.7. Customized Employment

Customized Employment	
VR Progress Reports	
Customized Employment Discovery Report	Customized Employment Discovery Report is due within ten (10) business days of completion of Discovery Services.
Hire/Placement Report for: Individual Placement and Support; Supported Employment; Customized Employment; and Job Placement	Within ten (10) business days of the individual starting a job, the CRP sends VR a completed copy of the Hire/Placement Report for: Individual Placement and Support; Supported Employment; Customized Employment; and Job Placement.
Customized Employment Customer Monthly Progress Report	By the 5th business day of each month, the CRP completes and submits a Customized Employment Monthly Progress Report until the customized placement is successfully closed.
Customized Employment Job Development Plan	Within ten (10) business days of the Customized Employment Planning Meeting, the CRP completes the Customized Job Development Plan and a copy of the resume or Visual Resume' Portfolio to document the results of the planning meeting.

5.8. Supported Employment

Supported Employment	
VR Progress Reports	
Supported Employment Consultation Services Plan	The Supported Employment Consultation and Services Plan is due within ten (10) business days from the date of the meeting.

<u>Supported Employment Customer Monthly Progress Report</u>	Completed by the fifth (5 th) business day of each month until stabilization is achieved. Once stabilization is achieved, the SE Monthly Progress report is due every 30 calendar days, from the date of stabilization, until the case is successfully closed (i.e. if stabilization occurs Jan 15 the next report will be due Feb 15 and cover the period of Jan 1 through Feb 15).
<u>Hire/Placement Report for: Individual Placement and Support; Supported Employment; Customized Employment; and Job Placement</u>	Within ten (10) business days of the customer starting a job, the CRP sends VR a completed copy of the Hire/Placement Report for: Individual Placement and Support; Supported Employment; Customized Employment; and Job Placement
<u>Individual Placement and Support: Supported Employment Extended Support Plan</u>	Completed within ten (10) business days of the stabilization date. In the event circumstances require revision of the Individual Placement and Support: Supported Employment Extended Support Plan, the CRP provides the VR Counselor an amended ESP within ten (10) business days of the amendment.
<u>Supported Employment Intensive Job Services Request</u>	The CRP initiates the Supported Employment Intensive Job Services Request when the CRP identifies and documents the potential need for IJS.

5.9. Individualized Placement and Support

Individualized Placement and Support	
VR Progress Reports	
<u>Individual Placement and Support Career Profile Face Sheet</u>	Within ten (10) business days from completion of the Career Profile service the CRP completes the Individual Placement and Support Career Profile Face Sheet.
<u>Hire/Placement Report for: Individual Placement and Support; Supported Employment; Customized Employment; and Job Placement</u>	Within ten (10) business days of the customer starting a job, the CRP sends VR a completed copy of the Hire/Placement Report for: Individual Placement and Support; Supported Employment; Customized Employment; and Job Placement
<u>Individual Placement and Support: Supported Employment Extended Support Plan</u>	In the event circumstances require revision of the Individual Placement and Support: Supported Employment Extended Support Plan, the CRP provides the VR Counselor an amended ESP within ten (10) business days of the amendment.

<u>Individual Placement and Support: Supported Employment Monthly Progress Report</u>	By the fifth (5 th) business day of each month, the CRP completes and submits an IPS monthly progress report until stabilization is achieved. Once stabilization is achieved the IPS monthly progress report is due every 30 calendar days from the date of stabilization, until the case is successfully closed.
<u>Individual Placement and Support Job End Report</u>	Within ten (10) business days of the customer ending a job, the CRP sends VR a completed copy of the Job End Report
<u>Supported Employment Intensive Job Services Request</u>	The CRP initiates the Supported Employment Intensive Job Services Request when the CRP identifies and documents the potential need for IJS.

5.10. Project SEARCH

Project SEARCH	
VR Progress Reports	
<u>Project SEARCH Monthly Progress Report</u>	The Project SEARCH Monthly Progress Report is due by the fifth (5 th) business day of the month.

6. TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION

Prior to providing services, all CRP staff who are hired after January 1, 2022, are required to complete Orientation to VR Training conducted by the University of Tennessee, Center for Learning, Education and Employment (UT CLEE). If an individual moves from one CRP to another the new CRP is required to ensure the individual has completed the Orientation to VR Training or has documentation of past completion.

6.1. Supported Employment Training Certification

In addition to the education and work experience mentioned in [Section 4](#), SE Professional Employment Specialists must have a training certificate from a state or nationally recognized employment program on Supported Employment. The Supported Employment Specialist certificate is to be obtained within twelve (12) months of the individual being designated to provide services as a Supported Employment Specialist. Examples of recognized employment programs include:

- A Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP) certification as awarded by Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE), <https://apse.org/cesp-central/> Refer to the [Links](#) section found on our website.
- A Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) certification.
- Completion of Association of Certified Rehabilitation Educators (ACRE) training program, <http://www.acreducators.org/>. Refer to the [Links](#) section found on our website.

6.2. Customized Employment Training Certification

CRP staff providing Customized Employment services must have received training in Customized Employment prior to serving any VR individuals who have been referred for Customized Employment services. VR will pre-approve training entities such as Marc Gold & Associates, Griffin-Hammis, or training from the Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators (ACRE). The CRP verifies that each staff member providing Customized Employment services has completed the required training. In addition to the staff qualifications listed in Section 4.1., staff providing Customized Employment services are expected to complete one of the trainings listed below:

Acceptable sources of Customized Employment certification training includes:

- *Basic Employment Certificate* available through Griffin-Hammis, <https://www.griffinhammis.com/what-we-do/customized-employment> Refer to the [Links](#) section found on our website.

- *WorkWorks Employment Services* available through the University of Georgia, <https://www.fcs.uga.edu/ihdd/work-works> Refer to the [Links](#) section found on our website.
- In-person training provided through Marc Gold & Associates sponsored by Employment First (ECF) CHOICES.
- In-person training provided through Marc Gold & Associates sponsored by the Department of Disability and Aging (DDA).

6.3. IPS Credentialing Process

CRP staff members are required to complete the following activities in order to provide IPS services to customers:

1. Attend the “IPS Basics Training” provided by the Tennessee IPS Trainer Team.
2. Successfully complete a content-based evaluation.

Note: Staff are not approved to provide IPS services to customers until the first two activities have been successfully completed.

Additionally, the following activities must be completed within the first six months:

3. Completion of the “New IPS Specialist Observation Checklist” provided by the Tennessee IPS Trainer Team.
4. Field practice for job development with an IPS Trainer.
5. Enrollment in the online IPS Practitioner Skills course provided by the IPS Employment Center (<https://ipsworks.org/index.php/training-courses/practitioner-skills-course/>). The course must be completed within 12 months of enrollment.

In addition to completing all above requirements, IPS Team Leaders must complete the following activities:

1. Attend the “IPS Team Leader Training” provided by the Tennessee IPS Trainer Team within two months of being appointed to the Team Leader position.
2. Enrollment in the IPS Supervisors Skills course provided by the IPS Employment Center (<https://ipsworks.org/index.php/training-courses/supervisors-skills-course/>) within six months of being appointed to the Team Leader position.

The Tennessee IPS Trainer Team manages the IPS Credentialing Process. Record of completion for activities should be submitted to the Tennessee IPS Trainer Team. Upon successful completion, a certificate will be provided to the CRP. The Department of Mental Health, Office of Wellness and Employment, and the Vocational Rehabilitation leadership team will also receive a copy of awarded certificates.

6.4. Project SEARCH® Transition and Adult Model Training

Community Rehabilitation Providers providing Project SEARCH® model services are required to complete subject related training led by Project SEARCH® Cincinnati through Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. For more information about Project SEARCH® see the link in the link section on the VR CRP website.

6.5. Continuing Education Opportunity

The VR program partners with the University of Tennessee, Center for Learning, Education & Employment (UT CLEE) to provide professional development services for Community Rehabilitation Providers that promote competency-based learning in the delivery of competitive integrated employment services.

Continuing Education training sessions that focus on a broad range of disability and employment topics are offered monthly. Contact a member of the UT CLEE team to get the dates for upcoming training and to be added to their email distribution list. Refer to the [Links](#) section found on the VR CRP website for the contact information for the UT CLEE team.