

# TennCare and Vocational Rehabilitation

Implementing the Employment and Community  
First CHOICES Interagency Agreement

2022 Joint Training



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# Today's Presenters:

*Leadership from:*

- ❖ Vocational Rehabilitation
- ❖ Managed Care Organizations: Amerigroup, BlueCare, UnitedHealthcare

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# Agenda



# Key Terms and Acronyms

- Employment and Community First CHOICES (ECF CHOICES)
- Managed Care Organization (MCO)
- ECF CHOICES MCO Support Coordinator (SC)
- Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA)
- Person Centered Support Plan (PCSP)
- VR Counselor (VRC)
- Individualized Plan of Employment (IPE)
- Extended Support Plan (ESP)
- ECF CHOICES VR Referral Form
- Throughout the presentation, “individual” refers to the person being supported, whether a VR customer or ECF CHOICES member





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# Employment and Community First CHOICES

# Who is the Program For?

## People with intellectual disabilities (ID)

- Experience significant limitations in two main areas...
  - Intellectual functioning
  - Adaptive behavior
- *Both limitations manifest during the developmental period (i.e. before the age of 18)*
- **Intellectual functioning limitation is evident with an Intelligence Quotient (IQ) score of 70 or below, prior to the age of 18**
- **Adaptive behavior expressed in the person's conceptual, social and practical everyday living skills (conceptual, social, practical)**

# Who is the Program For?

- **People with developmental disabilities (DD)**
- Is attributable to a mental or physical impairment or combination of both
- Occurs before the individual reaches twenty-two (22) years of age
- Is likely to continue indefinitely
- Results in substantial functional limitation in three (3) or more of the following major life activities
  - Self-care, receptive and expressive language, learning, mobility, self-direction, capacity for independent living, and economic self-sufficiency
- Reflects the person's need for a combination and sequence of special interdisciplinary or generic services, individualized supports, or other forms of assistance that are lifelong or extended duration and are individually planned and coordinated.

# ECF CHOICES vs. CHOICES

- In addition to ECF CHOICES, TennCare operates the CHOICES program
- CHOICES serves older adults and people with physical disabilities
- People with physical disabilities enrolled in CHOICES and interested in competitive integrated employment may also seek assistance from TN VR
- The Interagency Agreement we are discussing today is specifically about the ECF CHOICES program



# Employment and Community First CHOICES

- 14 employment services and supports
  - Meet people wherever they are at with employment
  - Available in all five benefit groups (4, 5, 6, 7, 8)
- Wraparound services to support employment and community integration (like transportation)
- No facility-based services; all community-based or in-home services

# Employment and Community First CHOICES

## 14 Different Employment Services/Supports

- Exploration
- Discovery
- Situational Observation and Assessment
- Job Dev Plan
- Self Employment Plan
- Job Dev Start Up
- Self-Employment Start Up
- Job Coaching for Individual Integrated Employment (“Stabilization & Monitoring”)
- Job Coaching for Self-Employment
- Co-Worker Supports
- Supported Employment – Small Group
- Career Advancement
- Benefits Counseling
- Integrated Employment Path Services (Pre-Vocational)

**\* All employment services are available to every ECF CHOICES member aged 16 and older.**

# Employment and Community First CHOICES

**VR Counselors and ECF CHOICES Support Coordinators work together as part of the individual's support network to help identify, obtain, and maintain employment.**

# Employment and Community First CHOICES

## How are services coordinated?

- When determined eligible by TennCare, the individual will choose a Managed Care Organization (MCO or sometimes called a “Health Plan”)
- The MCO ensures the individual has a “Support Coordinator”
- The Support Coordinator works with the individual to develop a Person-Centered Support Plan
- The Support Coordinator is not a conservator or guardian for the individual
- The Support Coordinator is the point of contact for VR when coordinating services for an ECF CHOICES member



# MCO Employment Specialists

- The MCO also employs at least one **Employment Specialist** who is an expert resource for Support Coordinators, VR and employment service providers.
- This Employment Specialist is employed by the MCO and does not provide employment services but is a resource to help with employment.
- The MCO does not provide employment services to its ECF CHOICES members; the MCO contracts with providers of employment services.

# Employment Outcomes and Potential

- **As of June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022:**

**24% of 3,431 working-age members (ages 22-62)  
are working in community jobs\***

**Average Wage = \$10.20/hour**

**Average Hours/Week = 18.6**

- **Many more working-age members do not yet have competitive integrated employment**
- **\*this includes competitive integrated employment, self-employment, and small group employment**



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# Vocational Rehabilitation

# Mission and Vision

- Vocational Rehabilitation is a division within the Tennessee Department of Human Services (DHS) and strives to meet the mission and vision by supporting individuals in their goal for competitive integrated employment.
- The DHS mission is to build strong families by connecting Tennesseans to employment, education, and support services.
- The DHS vision is to revolutionize the customer experience through innovation and a seamless network of services.



# Vocational Rehabilitation Overview

- Vocational Rehabilitation is an individualized process which incorporates many services in order to assist someone in reaching his/her specific vocational goal.
- Individuals work in partnership with the VR Counselor to determine an employment goal which is based on the skills, capabilities, and interests of each individual.
- It is the goal of the VR program to deliver services in a timely manner with the understanding that no two individuals are alike and supports differ from one individual to the next.

# VR Employment Outcome Goal

## **Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) means:**

- Full or part-time work
- At a location typically found in the community
- The individual is compensated not less than the legal minimum wage or at the customary rate for the same or similar work performed by individuals without disabilities
- The individual is eligible for benefits that are similar for individuals without disabilities
- The individual interacts with fellow employees within the work unit who are not individuals with disabilities
- As appropriate, the individual has the opportunity for advancement, similar for individuals without disabilities

# Vocational Rehabilitation Process

## VR Process

- Referral (ECF CHOICES VR Referral Form is used for ECF CHOICES members being referred by an MCO Support Coordinator)
- Application (VR staff does this with the person)
- Obtain Existing Medical/Psychological Records
  - ECF CHOICES VR Referral Form lists records that would be helpful for VR to receive from the MCO Support Coordinator
  - VR refers for new Medical/Psychological Information, if needed
- Determination of Eligibility/Ineligibility to occur as soon as possible but within 60 days from date application is signed.
- An individual that receives SSI or SSDI based on his/her own disability is presumed eligible.

# Vocational Rehabilitation Overview

The VR Counselor must work with the individual to support them in every aspect of planning, decision making, and implementation of the individual's VR program and Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

The focus must be on the individual having an integral part in directing and participating in the selection of an employment objective, services, service providers, and support services through informed choice and person-centered practices.



# Eligibility Requirements

- The individual has an impairment that creates a substantial impediment to employment
- Requires VR services to prepare for, secure, retain, regain, or advance in employment
- Can benefit from Vocational Rehabilitation services in terms of an employment outcome
- Ability to benefit is presumed unless VR determines otherwise through Trial Work Experiences

# Order of Selection

- If any state does not have the resources to provide services to all eligible individuals, then that state goes under what is called an Order of Selection. Within that Order of Selection, the state determines the priority by which individuals receive services. That Order of Selection is called Priority Category.
- In Tennessee, there are 4 Priority Categories. Priority Categories 1 and 2 are the only two that are open for services. If an individual is determined to be in Category 3 or 4, that individual is given the choice to go on a waiting list for services.

# Priority Categories

- PC 1 = Barriers to employment in 2 or more functional limitation categories, requires 2 or more services, services are 6 months or more in duration
- PC 2 = Barriers to employment in 1 or more functional limitation categories, requires 2 or more services, services are 6 months or more in duration
- Functional Limitation Categories:
  - Cognitive Skills, Communication, Interpersonal Skills, Mobility, Motor Skills, Self Care, Self Direction, Work Skills, and Work Tolerance

# Vocational Rehabilitation Overview

- An individual receiving SSI or SSDI is presumed eligible
- An individual receiving SSI or SSDI will be at least PC 2
- For these individuals, consideration of need for multiple services over an extended period of time is not required for a PC 2 determination.



# Vocational Rehabilitation Overview

- For those individuals in PC Category 1 or 2, an **Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)** is developed
- The specific employment goal is agreed upon by the VR Counselor and the individual.
- The services and service provider (vendor) needed to achieve the employment goal are listed in the IPE. Services and providers are selected using individual informed choice.
- The duration of the services are listed on the IPE.
- All services listed on the IPE should address a barrier that was determined in the planning process.
- The IPE is reviewed annually for progress towards the goal.

# Vocational Rehabilitation Overview

## Supported Employment

- For individuals with most significant disabilities:
  - PC1, Most Significant Disability (2 or more functional capacities);
  - Needs multiple services, and will require 6 months or more from the date services initiated;
  - 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**
  - Who, because of the nature and severity of their disability, need intensive VR supported employment services and extended services after VR case closure in order to obtain and maintain competitive integrated employment.

# Vocational Rehabilitation Overview

## Examples of ongoing services once a person is employed:

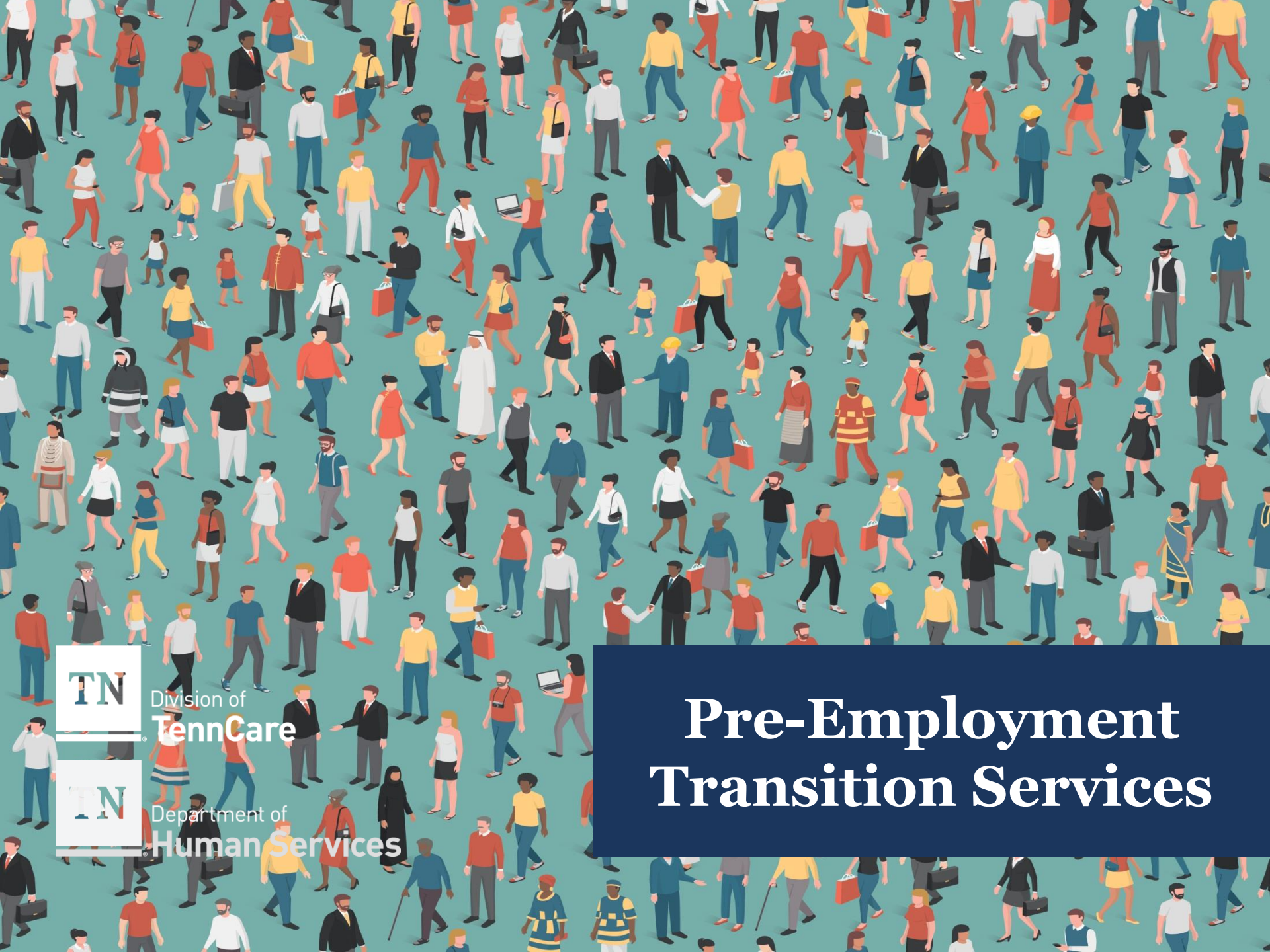
- Individualized and personalized on-site (or off-site) training based on the support needed and individual preference
- 1:1 Job skills training may include job orientation, development, and maintenance of production levels as expected by the employer
- Work related problem resolution
- Crisis management
- Career Counseling
- Task Analysis
- Transportation training
- Teaching employers and/or co-workers strategies in working with the individual
- Development of natural and workplace supports

# VR Supported Employment

**“Stabilization”** in employment occurs when the following criteria are met:

- The job site is not in jeopardy of ending; **AND**
- The individual is maintaining work performance which is acceptable to the employer; **AND**
- Job coach intervention has stabilized to an expected minimum level of intervention necessary for the individual to maintain employment, and must have leveled to the same number of job coach hours per day for a period of not less than ten (10) consecutive workdays; **AND**
- Natural supports have been fostered to the satisfaction of the employer and the supported employee; **AND**
- Ongoing (Extended) support services have been established and will continue at a minimum of two contacts per month at the work site; **AND**
- Individual is happy in their role and does not wish to change jobs.

**Some ECF CHOICES members may need only stabilization services from VR.**



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# Pre-Employment Transition Services



# Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)

## **IMPORTANT: For ECF CHOICES Members Ages 14-21**

- A "student with a disability" is an individual with a disability in a secondary, postsecondary, or other recognized education program who:
  - is not younger than the earliest age for the provision of transition services under section 614(d)(1)(A)(i)(VIII) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1414(d)(1)(A)(i)(VIII) unless the state elects a lower minimum age for receipt of pre-employment services and is not younger than that minimum age; and
  - is not older than 21; unless the individual state law provides for a higher maximum age for receipt of services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.); and is not older than that maximum age; and
  - is eligible for, and receiving, special education or related services under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1411 et seq.); or
  - is an individual with a disability, for purposes of section 504.



# Pre-ETS Eligibility Explained

## IMPORTANT: For ECF Members Ages 14-21

- Pre-ETS Eligibility
  - Ages 14 – 21
  - Documentation of disability:
    - Individualized Education Program (IEP)
    - 504 Plan
    - Medical or psychosocial documentation by a licensed provider
  - In-school examples (not exhaustive):
    - Middle school
    - High school
    - Homeschooled
    - G.E.D.
    - Post high school
    - Juvenile justice
    - Private school

NOTE: Students receiving Pre-ETS still need to be referred, apply, and be found eligible for further VR programs and services.

# Pre-ETS Required Services Examples

## Job Exploration Counseling

- Career awareness, career speakers, career student organizations, etc.

## Work-Based Learning (WBL)

- Job shadowing, paid internships, non-paid work experience, volunteering, service learning, etc.

## Postsecondary Counseling

- Strategies for smooth transition to post-high school, information and guidance on post-school training/education, etc.

## Workplace Readiness Training

- Social interpersonal skills, independent living skills, financial literacy, soft “essential” skills, etc.

## Self-Advocacy

- Self-awareness, disability disclosure/advocacy, decision-making, self-determination

# How Tennessee VR Provides Pre-ETS



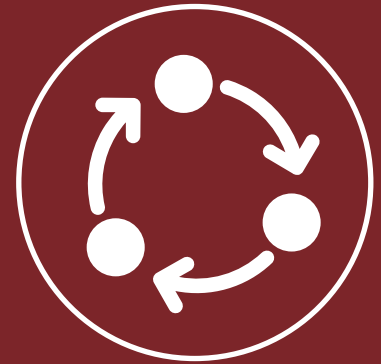
Transition  
School to Work  
Grants



Pre-ETS  
Contracts:  
Community  
Rehabilitation  
Providers



Pre-  
Employment  
Specialist  
VR Counselor



Pre-ETS  
Summer  
Camps



# Applying for VR Service for Students/Youth

## IMPORTANT: For ECF Members Ages 14-21

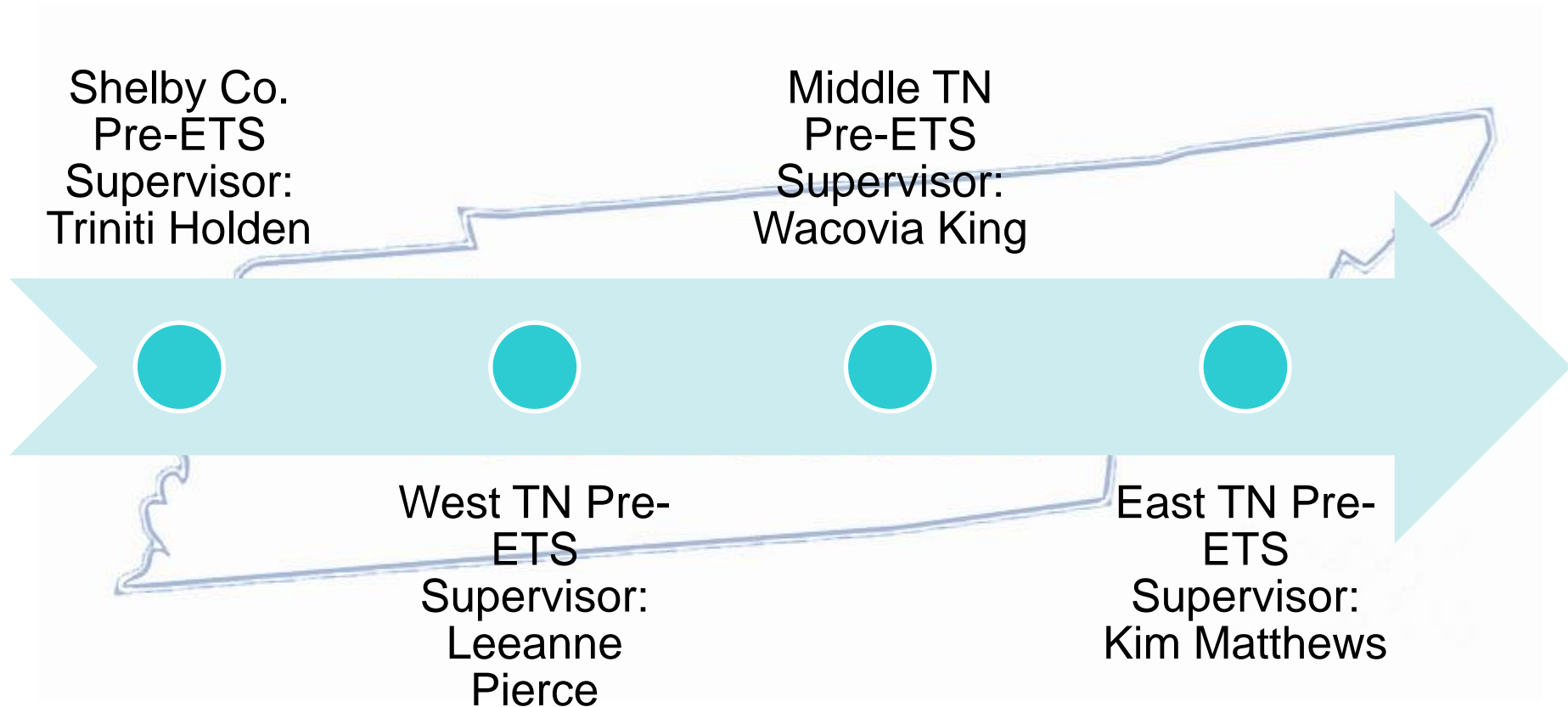
- VR aims to have an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) written and in place **immediately before** a student graduates from high school.
- VR recommends an MCO assist the ECF CHOICES member to apply **12 to 18** months before the member intends to leave high school.

# Pre-ETS Summary

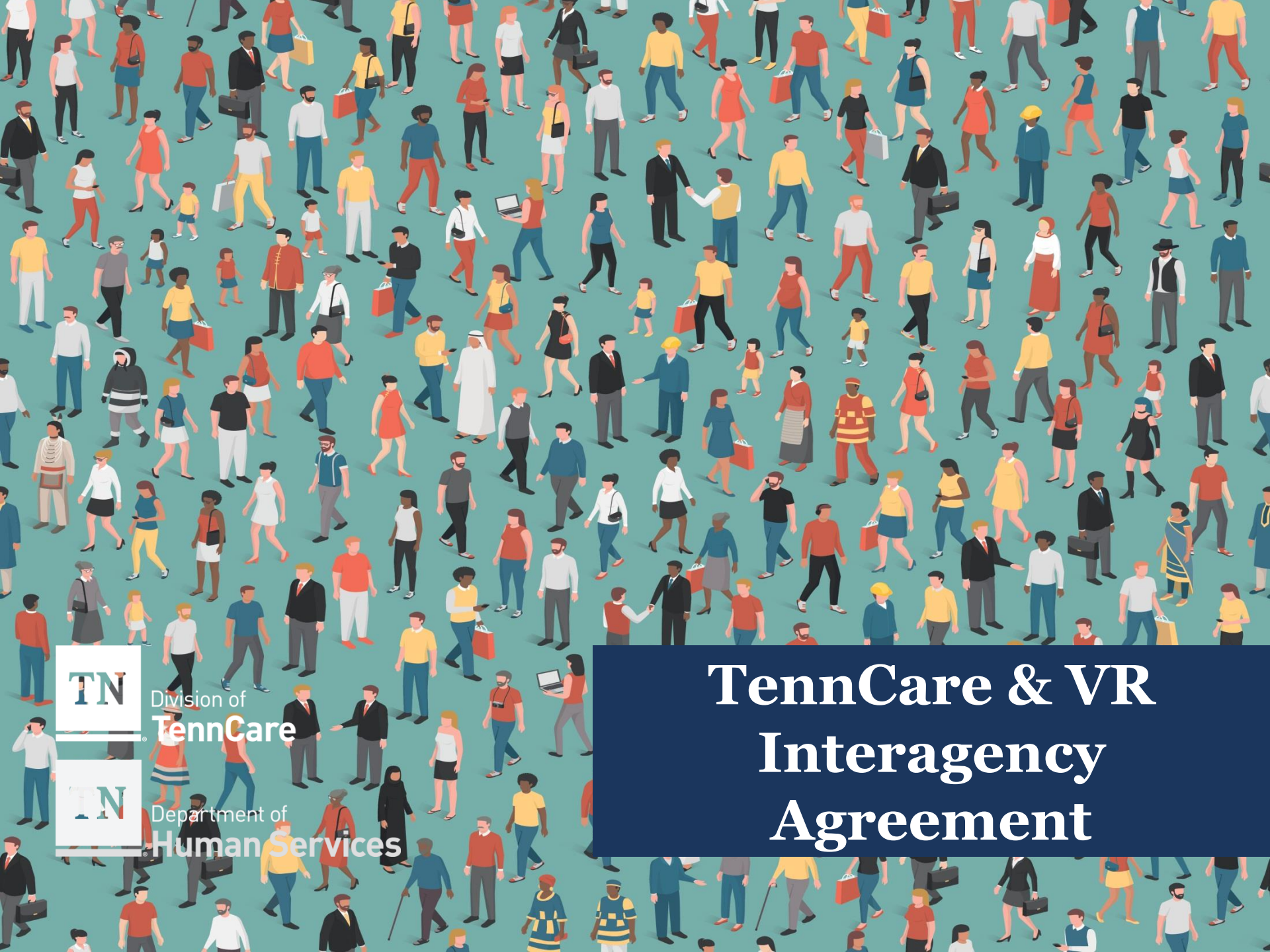
## IMPORTANT: For ECF CHOICES Members Ages 14-21

- Applying for VR services is not a requirement for Pre-ETS.
- Pre-ETS may be provided by a local education agency, by a VR staff member, and/or by entities under contract with VR. The Pre-ETS Specialist will coordinate the services.
- If you work with an individual enrolled in ECF CHOICES that may benefit from **Pre-ETS**, please contact the designated Pre-ETS Supervisor in the area where the ECF CHOICES member lives.

# Pre-ETS Team Structure







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# TennCare & VR Interagency Agreement

# Vision

Shared Vision based upon:

- The philosophy of Employment First: The premise that all citizens, including individuals with significant disabilities, are capable of full participation in integrated employment and community life!
- Serving individuals in a manner that ensures efficient use of resources and effective delivery of services
- VR is for time-limited services and supports; ECF CHOICES is for long-term services and supports

# Purpose of the Interagency Agreement

Develop Processes to:

- Provide quality employment services that lead to competitive integrated employment in a non-duplicative and seamless manner
- Comply with Federal and State laws
  - Tennessee Executive Order No. 28
  - Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
  - Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Settings Rule
  - Federal guidance for Medicaid Managed Long-Term Services and Supports programs

# Purpose of the Interagency Agreement

**Individuals achieve competitive integrated employment goals**



Provide individuals with high-quality employment services in a non-duplicative and seamless manner



Enhance and strengthen collaboration and coordination

Identify and share best practices

Efficient use of resources

Seamless delivery of services

Maintain state level workgroup to address system issues

# Eligibility and Access

**Who is responsible for service delivery?**

**Both ECF CHOICES and VR!**



- An individual receiving VR services can also apply for ECF CHOICES
- A person in ECF CHOICES who is interested in obtaining part-time or full-time competitive integrated employment may apply for VR services





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# Roles and Responsibilities



# TennCare Responsibilities Overview

- Determine eligibility for ECF CHOICES
  - Individual (or someone on the individual's behalf) will complete the online self-referral form: Signing up for the program (tn.gov)
  - TennCare will determine whether individual meets target population: person has intellectual or developmental disability
  - TennCare will determine Medicaid eligibility and Financial eligibility
- TennCare sends new member referral to person's chosen MCO

# How Can VR Help a Person Apply and Check on Individual's Enrollment Status in ECF CHOICES?

- VR Staff can assist an individual to complete an online self-referral to apply for ECF CHOICES
- Make sure the individual (and legal representative, if applicable) knows you are submitting the Self-Referral for them
- With a signed consent form, VR can call the **TennCare LTSS Help Desk** at 1-877-224-0219 and find out status of the individual's enrollment
- If the individual is enrolled, ask the Help Desk for their MCO and call that MCO's Employment Specialist

# MCO Responsibilities Overview

MCO works with newly enrolled individual to:

- Conduct a comprehensive assessment to identify the person's goals and need for supports to achieve those goals and successfully live and participate in their local community
- Address immediate needs, including any immediate needs related to employment
- Within 30 days, develop a complete Person-Centered Support Plan, including services and supports to be provided through ECF CHOICES

# MCO Responsibilities Overview (2)

MCO works with newly enrolled member to:

- Determine interest in competitive integrated employment (if member is not already employed or already pursuing employment)
- If an individual **does not know** if they want to work in competitive integrated employment, the MCO will offer the employment **Exploration** service
- Exploration service allows an individual to make an **informed choice** about working

# ECF CHOICES Exploration Service

- Occurs over a 30-day period
- Helps people explore work related to their interests
- Addresses concerns, hesitations, questions of the individual and their family/guardian
- Helps people identify skills they possess that can be valuable for employment
- Helps people with benefits questions/concerns

# MCO Responsibilities Overview (3)

- If an individual **knows** they want to pursue competitive integrated employment, the MCO Support Coordinator will determine if application to VR is appropriate next step and/or **if** ECF-funded pre-employment services may also be needed (e.g. Discovery; Situational Observation and Assessment).
- The goal is **no gap** (or only small gap) between employment services, so the MCO Support Coordinator will help the person apply to VR while the person **may** be in process of completing an ECF-funded pre-employment service.
- **One exception is Exploration:** The MCO Support Coordinator should not be helping people apply to VR until **after** they complete Exploration and have made a decision about whether they want to pursue competitive integrated employment.



# MCO Responsibilities Overview (4)

- When an individual needs VR services, the MCO Support Coordinator will:
  - Complete and send the **ECF CHOICES VR Referral Form** to VR to facilitate the individual applying for VR services
  - Share relevant records with VR (with consent)
  - Assist individual with attending VR intake session, if needed
  - Assist VR, as appropriate, with timely development of IPE
  - Communicate with VR Counselor when authorizing additional employment-related services that are needed during time VR services are being provided (for example, Integrated Employment Path services to develop a person's knowledge, skills, aptitudes, and experiences for competitive integrated employment)

# Forms: Relevant Records

To expedite eligibility determination and IPE creation by VR, MCO Support Coordinators should send the following records with the ECF CHOICES VR Referral Form:

Required to submit with Referral Form:

- Disability documentation (including Social Security benefits approval letter if available);
- Comprehensive Needs Assessment
- Person-Centered Support Plan
- Signed Release of Confidential Information from individual (or guardian)

Submit with Referral Form if applicable and available:

- Conservator/Guardianship documents (if applicable)
- ECF-funded employment service reports (e.g. for pre-employment services provided through ECF CHOICES program)

# VR Responsibilities Overview

- Eligibility determination within 60 days of intake meeting where application is signed
- **Notify individual (and/or legal representative) and MCO Support Coordinator within 5 days of:**
  - Determination of eligibility or ineligibility
  - Determination of need for Supported Employment
  - If VR services are not immediately available, why and when they may become available to the individual

**Send copy of individual's letter to MCO Support Coordinator**

# VR Responsibilities Overview

- **Develop Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) and Extended Support Plan (ESP)**
  - Occurs within 90 days of eligibility determination
  - Invite Support Coordinator to IPE development meeting (with consent from individual)
  - IPE defines the individual's employment goal and the supports/services to be provided by VR to support the person to achieve the goal
- **Share copy of IPE with the individual's MCO Support Coordinator**
- **Provide documentation of person's progress to MCO Support Coordinator** – throughout delivery of VR services

# To Avoid VR Exceeding its Required Timeframe for Writing the IPE

- The ECF CHOICES VR Referral Form includes:
  - Information on the ECF-funded pre-employment service(s) a person may be receiving at the time of referral to VR (as applicable)
  - The expected end date for the ECF-funded pre-employment service(s)

# VR Responsibilities Overview

- **Supported Employment Cases**
  - An Extended Support Plan is used for people who VR determines are in need of Supported Employment and extended (ongoing) services to maintain competitive integrated employment after VR services end.
  - The Supported Employment provider writes the Extended Support Plan, which is required for VR to move the individual into Stabilization
  - Extended (ongoing) supports funded by ECF CHOICES start when VR moves the individual into Stabilization
- **Notify the MCO Support Coordinator as soon as VR Counselor is made aware of projected date when person is expected to reach stabilization.**
  - If possible, 4 weeks before anticipated date of stabilization
  - Stabilization is when ECF CHOICES-funded extended/ongoing services need to start
  - MCO Support Coordinator must know in advance in order to get the ECF CHOICES-funded extended/ongoing services funding authorized
  - Share the updated/finalized Extended Support Plan with the Support Coordinator

# When to Notify SC of Status Change

VR Process Trigger	When to Send Notification to MCO Support Coordinator
Case Moved to Eligible	Eligibility Determination
Case Unable to be Moved to Eligible	Ineligibility Determination
Case Moved to Service	Individual Plan for Employment Complete
Case Moved to Service	VR Services Begin
<b>Provider notifies VR Counselor</b>	Individual Starts Job
<b>Provider notifies VR Counselor</b>	Individual Changes Jobs
<b>Provider notifies VR Counselor</b> Case requires finalizing of Extended Support Plan; <b><i>MCO Support Coordinator needs to be involved in this to ensure funding for extended supports</i></b>	Individual Expected to Reach Stabilization Within 4 Weeks or Less
Case Moved to Employed	Individual Reaches Stabilization/Extended Support Begins
Case Moved to Closed-Rehabilitated or Closed-Other	Case Closure



# VR Responsibilities Overview

- **Obtain in writing that the MCO will assume responsibility for funding any needed employment services once VR Stabilization occurs and VR services end**
  - At least 10 days before VR services end (case status is Employed or Employed-SE)
- **IMPORTANT**
  - ECF CHOICES-funded services (if needed) start when the individual is moved into Employed or Employed-SE.
  - The VR case closure does not occur until 90 days in Employed or Employed-SE.
- **Send a copy of the VR closure letter to the MCO Support Coordinator when case is closed. Counselor will document communication in case file.**

# VR Responsibilities Overview (2)

## **If case is being closed for any reason other than successful employment outcome:**

- Schedule transition planning meeting to discuss next steps within 10 calendar days before closure – Should be done at the same time as Contact or Close Letter is sent to individual
- Notify the MCO Support Coordinator 3 business days before case closure
- Allow MCO Support Coordinator to respond within 3 business days before the case is officially closed by VR
- Send a copy of the closure letter to the MCO Support Coordinator

# Primary Payor

## WHO pays for WHAT?

### TennCare

- **Exploration**
- **Discovery**
- Benefits Counseling
- Situational Observation and Assessment
- Integrated Employment Path
- Job Development or Self-Employment Plan
- **Ongoing/Extended Job Coaching & Follow Along**



### VR

- Benefits Counseling
- Integrated Work Site Assessment
- Job Sampling
- **Job Development or Self-Employment Start Up**
- **Job Coaching to Stabilization**
- **Career Advancement**

**Bold = Primary**

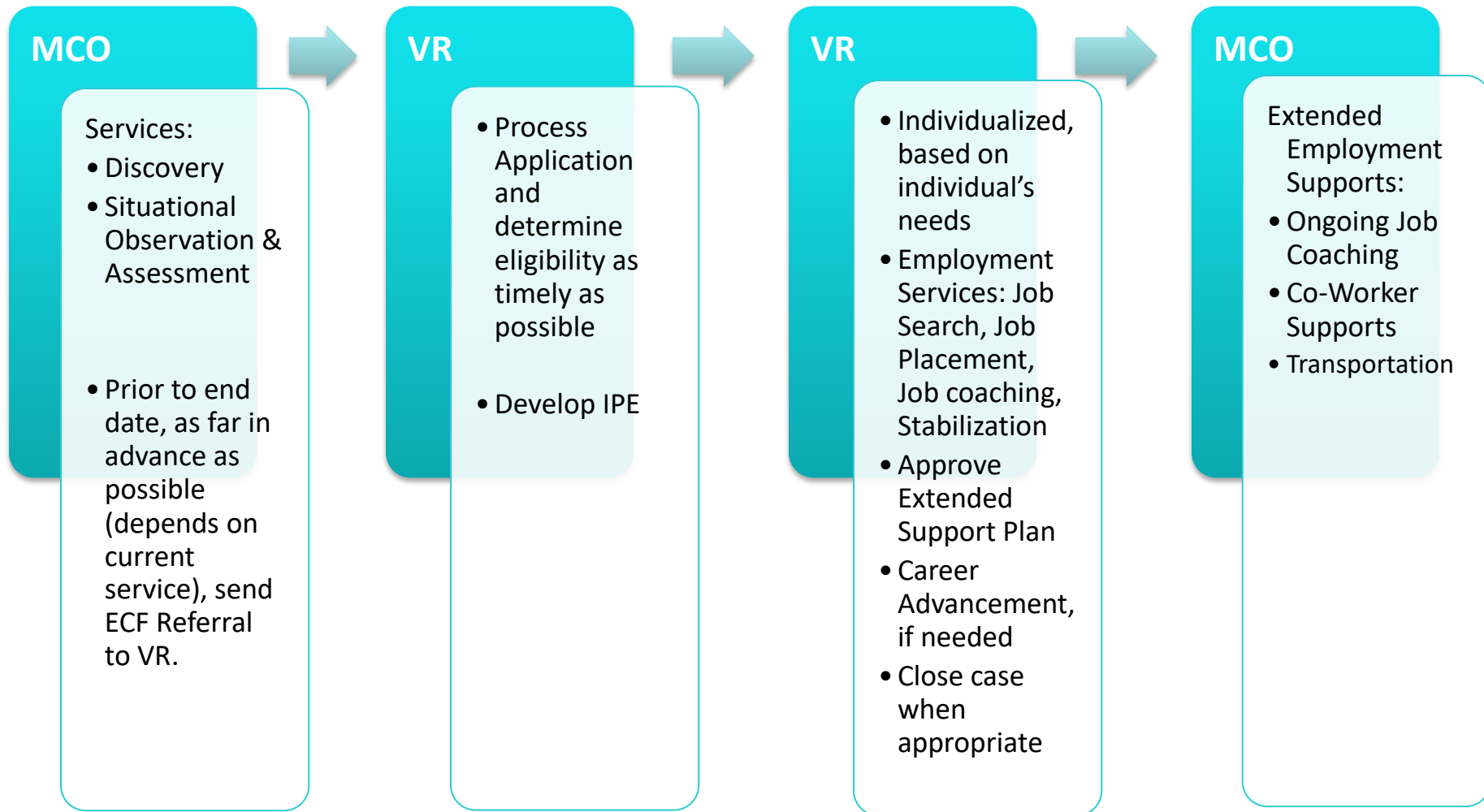
TennCare will be the primary and **ONLY** payor for *Co-Worker Supports* and *Supported Employment – Small Group Supports*

# Providers Serving ECF CHOICES Members Cannot Bill Both MCO and VR

VR Funded Equivalent Service	MCO Funded Equivalent Service
Integrated Work Site Assessment	Situational Observation and Assessment
Job Placement	Job Development
IPE Services based on approved Business Plan (case by case basis)	Self-Employment Start-Up
Job Coaching	Job Coaching

VR Authorization Must Be Used First

# Examples of Workflow



# Responsibility for Services

## In ECF CHOICES and not employed:

- Tells Support Coordinator (SC) if they want to work or goes through Exploration service and decides to pursue work
- Receiving Discovery services (may also receive Situational Observation and Assessment services)



**Let's talk  
SPECIFICS**

## **As soon as possible, SC refers member to VR, AND Sends VR:**

- ECF CHOICES VR Referral Form
- Disability Documentation (letter from SSA if available)
- Release of Information and Guardianship Information (if applicable)
- Person-Centered Support Plan & Comprehensive Needs Assessment
- Any relevant reports from pre-employment services funded by ECF CHOICES

**THEN...**

# Responsibility for Services

- VR will process application and determine eligibility timely, then
- Develop Individualized Plan for Employment as soon as possible
- Meanwhile, individual is finishing up ECF CHOICES Discovery and/or Situational Observation and Assessment services
- VR Counselor (VRC) gives IPE to provider so VR Employment services can begin at the end of ECF CHOICES services (ideally, with no gap in services). ECF CHOICES services will pick back up, if needed, prior to VR case closure.
- Provider continues to provide services
- VR Counselor and MCO will hold staffings on a regular basis
- **GOAL – Payor transitions from MCO to VR and individual does not notice**



Let's talk  
**SPECIFICS**



# Responsibility for Services

## **WAIT!** There's more....

## **TIMELINES**

- The VRC (and provider) will notify the MCO SC four (4) weeks **before** Stabilization on the job is expected, or as soon as possible, and no less than ten days before Stabilization. This will give MCO SC adequate time to authorize needed ECF CHOICES employment services so there are no gaps in needed services.
- Send copy of Loss of Contact OR Contact or Close letter to MCO SC if one is mailed to individual
- Notify MCO SC at least three days before closure for any reason other than successful closure
- Upon closure, send SC a copy of the VR closure letter

**Note: ECF CHOICES will pay for Extended/Ongoing and follow along Employment services needed by the person after VR services end.**

# Plan for the Unexpected

## But what if...

- **IF** VR eligibility determination is extended beyond 60 days
  - **OR** the development of the IPE will take longer than 90 days
- **THEN** the MCO Support Coordinator will authorize the needed ECF CHOICES Employment services
  - Requires amending the PCSP and documenting why the services are needed and not available through VR at the time

## Communication is key!

SC and VRC are to remain in contact with each other. Talk about what's happening, what's working, what's not working. Help each other achieve the common goal of employment for the member.

# Plan for the Unexpected

## And what if...

- An ECF CHOICES member is not sure they want to work?
  - MCO SC will authorize **Exploration** as an ECF CHOICES service
- An ECF CHOICES member loses their job (other than from their own willful actions)?
  - MCO SC will help individual apply to VR for assistance with re-employment
- An ECF CHOICES member wants Career Advancement (promotion or second job)?
  - MCO SC will help the individual apply to VR for assistance with this goal
- An ECF CHOICES member wants more/different hours in current job?
  - MCO SC will make sure these needs are addressed through the PCSP
- An ECF CHOICES member needs help because there is change in duties, supervisor, shift pattern, location, etc. in current job?
  - MCO SC will make sure these needs are addressed through the PCSP

# How To's for VR Counselors

## How Can VRC Write an IPE just for Job Coaching to Successful Closure when person already has Job Offer?

For General Caseload:

Services	Provider	Funded By (Source)	Method of Procuring Services
Job Readiness	XYZ Career	ECF CHOICES	Comparable Benefit
Job Placement, Initial	XYZ Career	ECF CHOICES	Comparable Benefit
Job Coaching	XYZ Career	VR	Authorization, \$25 per hour
Job Placement, Final	XYZ Career	VR	Authorization, \$1,500

*Vendor Purchase Order (VPO) is now known as Authorization in Aware.*

# How To's for VR Counselors

## How Can VRC Write an IPE just for Job Coaching to Stabilization when person already has Job Offer?

For Supported Employment:

Services	Provider	Funded By (Source)	Method of Procuring Services
Career Development & Placement	XYZ Career	ECF CHOICES	Comparable Benefit
Intensive Job Services *when warranted and approved	XYZ Career	VR	Authorization (\$18 per hour)
SE Stabilization & Maintenance	XYZ Career	VR	Authorization (Day 1 \$500; Day 30 \$750; Day 60 \$750)
SE Successful Employment Outcome	XYZ Career	VR	Authorization (up to \$3,000 Tier system)

# Shared Service Provider Networks



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Ensure adequate  
number of approved  
providers statewide

Share each  
other's provider  
lists

Increase  
shared  
network

# Questions

**A Frequently Asked Questions document  
will be shared with the recording after all  
presentations are complete**



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# Resources – ECF CHOICES

## How to Apply for ECF CHOICES:

- Online Self-Referral Form: [LTSS PERLSS \(tn.gov\)](https://www.tn.gov/health/ltss/perlss)
- If an individual is already a TennCare member, then they can apply by contacting their MCO:
  - [BlueCare](https://www.tn.gov/health/ltss/bluecare): 888-747-8955
  - [Amerigroup](https://www.tn.gov/health/ltss/amerigroup): 866-840-4991
  - [United Healthcare Community Plan](https://www.tn.gov/health/ltss/unitedhealthcare): 800-690-1606
- [TennCare Waiver \(tn.gov\)](https://www.tn.gov/health/ltss/waiver)
- [Employment and Community First Choices VR Interagency Agreement \(tn.gov\)](https://www.tn.gov/health/ltss/employment)

# Resources – VR

## How to Apply for VR Services:

- ECF CHOICES VR Referral Form or contact VR directly
- Office locations: <https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/ds/office-locator-trc-ttap.html>
  - Locate the office closest to the individual for referral information
- Information about Community Rehabilitation Providers: <https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/ds/vocational-rehabilitation/dhs-vr-loa1.html>
- [Employment and Community First Choices VR Interagency Agreement \(tn.gov\)](#)



**Thank you**  
for your participation today!



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