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Client Service Memorandum 2016-06

TO: All Client Service Staff

FROM: Emily Stirling, Policy Coordinator

Authorized By: Aaron Thompson, Division Director

SUBJECT: Temporary guidance for Customized Employment and Discovery

Date Issued: October 13, 2014

Date Effective: October 13, 2014

Date Revised: June 2016

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Client Service Memorandum is to offer clarification and guidance regarding the use of the Discovery Assessment and Customized Employment Services as part of Supported Employment Services. This revision of the original memo includes an updated fee schedule for the Discovery Assessment.

**BACKGROUND**

Customized Employment is distinguished from traditional Supported Employment by the use of flexible strategies, services and supports for an individual with a most significant disability beginning with a person-centered determination of the strengths, needs and interests of the individual. The goal of Customized Employment is a placement which meets the specific abilities of the individual and the business needs of the employer.

Customized Employment consists of the following components:

A. A discovery process of job exploration conducted by a qualified Employment Specialist. Information for the Discovery Assessment is gathered from the job seeker and Customized Employment Team in order to determine the job seeker's interests, skills and preferences related to potential employment. The career profiles developed during the assessment are utilized to guide placement activities and the development of a customized job.

When Employment Specialists engage in Customized Employment, they are taking the client through a process of Discovery that seeks to answer the questions "who is this person?" and "what are the ideal conditions of employment?"

The process is used to reveal skills, and determine how to create employment in the community. This activity often begins with a home based evaluation which includes an inventory of the surrounding neighborhood surveying transportation options and natural supports which are ongoing employment and inclusion issues. It also makes sense to look for individual vocational themes and opportunities nearby. Discovery expands to places where interests can be explored through informational interviews, paid work experiences, or engagement in activities that showcase tasks, skills and interests. The discovery activity will reveal multiple employment directions, vocational themes, and skills, which are then used to create a unique employment fit in the community (Griffin, et al, 2014).

B. Working with an employer to facilitate job placement, by:

1. Customizing a job description " this is based on an employer's current needs and can include previously unidentified and unmet needs;
2. Developing a set of job duties
3. Arranging a work schedule
4. Determining the worksite location

5. Defining supervisory requirements including performance expectations and evaluations.
6. Representation and Advocacy to facilitate placement- this may be accomplished by a Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP), chosen by the client through the provision of informed choice, or self-representation by the client.
7. Providing services and supports, such as job coaching, at the work location.
8. Providing the employer with training and resources for ADA, accommodations, etc.

C. Job Coaching provided by an Employment Specialist at the client's job site to teach clients the essential skills needed to maintain employment, provide the necessary prompts and possible behavioral changes and build natural supports to ensure continued success at work. Job Coaching can include but is not limited to:

1. Attending employer training with both the client and Job Coach
2. Meetings with the worksite Supervisors
3. Reviewing, training, and teaching essential job duties with client
4. Individualized training for learning job tasks (as a supplement to employer training)
5. Performing onsite follow-up checks with client to ensure work needs are being met.
6. Providing direct interventions on the job
7. Identifying and setting up accommodations in coordination with employer and VR
8. Building natural supports for continued success, as it relates to work
9. Shadowing and observation
10. Understanding of continued training for client, as Job Coach tapers off supports
11. Developing client understanding work culture (breaks, check ins, calling in sick etc)
12. Work conditioning and hardening
13. Support and encouragement including identifying natural supports on the worksite location

## **POLICY**

Customized Employment Services provided by Employment Specialists are appropriate for clients who:

1. Are classified as Most Significantly Disabled (MSD)
2. Have Supported Employment (SE) funding available (DSPD, SWI, Mental Health, etc.).
3. Require more support than provided through traditional SJBT Milestones.
4. Have access to an Employment Specialist trained in Customized Employment. Training requirements for Customized Employment includes the successful completion of a Customized Employment training program and ongoing technical assistance provided by the training program provider. Qualified Employment Specialists will be registered with the Supported Employment Coordinator and will be added to a list accessible by District Directors.

If the client meets all of the above criteria and both the counselor and client agree that customized employment is the most appropriate placement option, the VR counselor will write a Client Service Recommendation (following the CE template) documenting the four components listed above and will forward it through the supervisory chain to the District Director for final approval. If approved, the counselor will amend the IPE to include customized employment services.

## **FEE SCHEDULE**

The first milestone of Customized Employment is the Discovery Assessment (\$1500.00) unless a Work Strategy Assessment has already been authorized for (\$500) in which case this may supplement the Discovery Assessment for an additional \$1000 fee.(WSA +DA= \$1500.00).

After the Discovery Assessment is complete, authorizations will follow the SE milestones beginning with job development (see CSM 30 Appendix C)