

## **Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)**

### **Chapter 8**

**8.00 Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)** must be developed as soon as possible, but no later than 90 days consistent with the needs of the individual.

1. An IPE, developed by the individual and the counselor, is a description of the specific rehabilitation services. All services provided must be needed for the individual to achieve an employment outcome.

If the individual is not exempt from Financial Participation, the total cost of services and the amount of the financial participation by both the individual and VR must be entered on the IPE.

2. An IPE must be designed to achieve the specific employment outcome that is selected by the individual and consistent with the individual's unique economic self-sufficiency, strengths, resources, priorities concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice; and
3. The IPE must to the maximum extent appropriate result in a competitive integrated employment.

#### **8.01 Options for Developing an IPE** ([English](#)) ([Spanish](#))

1. Eligible individuals or the individual's representative must be provided in writing and in an appropriate mode of communication with information on the individual's options for developing an individualized plan for employment including:
  - a. Information on the availability of assistance or technical assistance, from a counselor or from Disability Rights Florida's CAP, to the extent the individual desires assistance in developing all or part of the IPE,
  - b. A description of the full range of components that shall be included in an IPE;
  - c. As appropriate:
    - an explanation of agency policy and guidelines regarding payment for services,
    - information on the availability of assistance in completing VR forms required when developing an IPE
    - additional information the individual may request or VR determines necessary.
  - d. A description of the individual rights and appeal procedures, including the availability of the Disability Rights Florida's CAP and information about how to contact the CAP. [Reference Chapter 2, Section 2.04]

**8.02 Content of the IPE.** Regardless of the option selected by the eligible individual, the IPE must contain:

1. A description of the specific employment outcome that is chosen by the eligible individual and is consistent with the unique economic self-sufficiency, strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, career interests, informed choice consistent with the general goal of

competitive integrated employment;

(except in the case of the eligible individual who is a student or a youth with a disability, the description may be a description of the individual's projected post-school employment outcome);

2. A description of the specific vocational rehabilitation services that are:
  - a. Needed to achieve the employment outcome, including, as appropriate, the provision of assistive technology devices, assistive technology services, and personal assistance services, including training in the management of such services; and
  - b. Provided in the most integrated setting that is appropriate for the services involved and is consistent with the informed choice of the eligible individual;
3. Timelines for the achievement of the employment outcome and dates for the initiation of the services;
4. A description of the entities chosen by the eligible individual or, as appropriate, the individual's representative, that will provide the vocational rehabilitation services, and the methods used to procure such services. Up to three entities may be listed on the IPE for services that may present scheduling problems; first, second, and third choice provider. A case note is required to justify the activation/use of a provider beyond the first choice. The case note must address the customer's acknowledgement of informed choice of change in provider. If additional providers are needed, an IPE amendment must be initiated (Reference Chapter 8, Section 8.07.)
5. A description of criteria to evaluate progress toward achievement of the employment outcome; if applicable, the counselor shall consider the Timely Progress Standards established for participants in the Ticket To Work and Work Incentives Program (Reference [Chapter 16, Section 16.06](#));
6. The terms and conditions of the IPE including, as appropriate, information describing:
  - a. The responsibilities of VR, including:
    - i. The assignments of how and when a new provider option will be initiated;
  - b. The responsibilities of the eligible individual, including:
    - i. The duties he/she will assume in relation to the individual's employment outcome;
    - ii. If applicable, the participation of the eligible individual in paying for the costs of the plan;
    - iii. The responsibility of the eligible individual with regard to applying for and securing comparable services and benefits (Reference [Chapter 9, Section 9.03](#)); and
  - c. The responsibilities of other entities as the result of arrangements made pursuant to comparable services or benefits as described in [Chapter 9, Section 9.03](#);

7. An IPE for an eligible individual with the most significant disability for whom an employment outcome in a supported employment setting has been determined to be appropriate must meet the requirements found in [Chapter 17, Section 17.03](#).

### 8.03 IPE or IPE Extension

1. The IPE must be developed within 90 calendar days of the eligibility determination or activation from the waiting list, whichever is later. Meeting the 90-day timeframe is the mutual responsibility of the counselor and individual.
2. If the IPE cannot be developed within 90 days due to exceptional and unforeseen circumstances, the individual, or an authorized representative of the individual, and the counselor must agree to a specific extension of time. An extension must be documented in the case record by the counselor. Exceptional and unforeseen circumstances may include:
  - a. an appointment for a necessary assessment could not be secured in a timely fashion;
  - b. illness of the individual or other reason for non-availability to participate in the IPE development; or
  - c. unexpected closing of offices due to natural causes.
3. The IPE or IPE amendment must be approved by a supervisor before being signed by the counselor unless the counselor has gained independent status. [Reference Chapter 1, Section 1.18] No vocational rehabilitation services proposed under an IPE or IPE amendment are effective absent such approval.
4. If an IPE cannot be developed during the timeframe identified in the extension, the individual or his/her representative and the counselor must agree to another specific extension of time. The counselor must document the circumstances necessitating the continued extension in the case record.

### 8.04 Mandatory Procedures

1. Written Document. The IPE must be written document prepared on the form provided by the Agency.
2. Informed Choice. An IPE must be developed and implemented in a manner that affords eligible individuals the opportunity to exercise informed choice in selecting an employment outcome, the specific vocational rehabilitation services to be provided under the plan, the entity that will provide the vocational rehabilitation services, and the methods used to procure the services. [Reference [Chapter 4, Section 4.03](#)]
3. VR shall not pay for goods and services unless such goods and services are listed in the IPE or) an amendment thereto, or are part of the assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs.
4. If applicable, the counselor shall explain to the SSA Ticket-holder(s) (with assignable Tickets) the conditions that will apply once the eligible individual's signs the IPE as referenced on the IPE.

## 8.05 Signatories

1. The IPE must be agreed to and signed by the eligible individual or, as appropriate, the individual's representative; and
2. Approved and signed by a qualified vocational rehabilitation counselor employed by VR of Vocational Rehabilitation.

## 8.06 Copies

1. A copy of the eligible individual's written IPE must be provided to the individual, or as appropriate, to the individual's representative.
2. If appropriate, the IPE must be in the native language or mode of communication of the individual or, as appropriate, the individual's representative.

## 8.07 Annual Review and Amendments

1. The IPE must be reviewed at least **annually** by a vocational rehabilitation counselor employed by VR and the eligible individual or, as appropriate, the individual's representative and documented in the record. The annual review date is based on the signature date of the original IPE and the annual review must be conducted prior to or on the signature date of the original IPE.
2. The IPE must be amended if there are substantive (major) changes to the original IPE. IPE amendments are required for the following:
  - a. changes in the employment outcome
  - b. changes in the vocational rehabilitation services to be provided
  - c. changes in the provider of the vocational services
3. Any amendments do not take effect until agreed to and signed by the eligible individual or, as appropriate, the individual's representative and by a vocational rehabilitation counselor employed by VR.

## 8.08 School to Work Transition Services in Coordination with Educational Agencies

1. When services are being provided to an individual who is also eligible for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the IPE must be prepared in coordination with the appropriate education agency and must include a summary of the relevant elements of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) for that individual.
2. The reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act in 1998 places responsibility on VR to form working relationships with state educational agencies in order to develop long-term rehabilitation goals and to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from secondary schools to VR.
3. Transition services mean a coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within an outcome-oriented process that promotes movement from school to post-school activities including postsecondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including

supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation.

- a. The coordinated set of activities shall be based upon the individual student's abilities and capabilities, taking into account the student's preferences and interests.

#### **8.09 Termination of Services Under an IPE**

1. If services are to be terminated or not initiated under an IPE because of a determination that the individual is not capable of achieving an employment outcome, the following conditions and procedures will be met and carried out:
  - a. This decision is made only with the full consultation of the individual, or, as appropriate, the individual's representative, unless the:
    - i. individual refuses to participate
    - ii. individual is no longer present in the state
    - iii. individual's whereabouts are unknown
    - iv. individual's medical condition is terminal.

#### **Stevens Amendment**

The Florida Department of Education, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is an equal opportunity employer. It is against the law for VR as a recipient of Federal financial assistance to discriminate against any individual in the United States on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief. The application process used by VR to determine eligibility for services, any subsequent services and the entire VR process are subject to these non-discrimination requirements. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. VR program receives 78.7 percent of its funding through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. For the 2021 Federal fiscal year, the total amount of grant funds awarded were \$176,836,896. The remaining 21.3 percent of the costs (\$47,860,557) were funded by Florida State Appropriations. Revised October 2021.