

Career Development Planning Outcomes and Practices –
ORS/RIDE

Benchmark 4 – Career Development Plan Outcomes: Youth Transition Target Population §IV(3); §VIII(7). The State will engage in an annual person centered planning process with all individuals in the Youth Transition Target Population mandated by state law to begin at age 14 resulting in a career development plan for each transition age student that consolidates the recommendations of school personnel, ORS and DDD representatives. The plan will be developed by the employment team and inform employment related goals and recommendations of the Individual Support Plan (ISP), the Individual Education Plan (IEP), the Individual Plan for Employment (IPE), Individual Learning Plan (ILP) and individuals' Summary of Performance (SOP).

Status: RIDE works in collaboration with the LEAs to implement the requirements of the Consent Decree for transition age students with ID and DD beginning at age 14. In July, RIDE identified 462 individuals with ID in the Youth Transition Target Population. Eighty-percent (80%) of these individuals (368) have a Career Development Plan in their records as verified by the Special Education Census as well as by on-site Employment First Quality Reviews (See Section L below). An additional 209 individuals with developmental disabilities and/or intellectual disabilities as a secondary or tertiary diagnosis were identified by the census and 22 reported as having participated in a person centered planning process and to have completed CDPs.

Assessment: Requirements Not Met. The Consent Decree requires that all members of the Youth Transition Target Population have career development plans. The state's Consent Decree Database reports a total of 470 individuals in the Youth Transition Population. RIDE reports a total of 462 individuals in the Transition

Target Population with intellectual disabilities, 368 of whom (80%) have career development plans in place. While the State has demonstrated progress in this area, the requirement that all members of the Transition Target population have CDPs has not yet been achieved.

Recommended Actions: RIDE and ORS report that they have implemented monitoring and quality improvement strategies to identify noncompliance with this requirement and determine the need for additional training or oversight to improve career development planning. However, numbers of individuals continue to be without needed CDPs. RIDE and ORS are requested to review and improve their current policies and practices for ensuring that CDPs are provided in a timely fashion to all individuals who have been determined to need one, and to provide a report to the Court Monitor on the steps they are taking to comply with this provision not later than February 28, 2017.

Response:

RIDE conveys the requirements for the CDP through the RIDE Employment First Policy, which promotes the development of a career planning team, the use of the career development plan and its conjunction with the IEP process through person centered planning techniques. In addition, RIDE promotes the use of the RI Transition Timeline as a guiding document holding the RIDE/LEA responsible for particular tasks related to CD requirements.

Noted in the timeline between the ages of 14-15 are the promotion of career development teams, person centered planning and the development of a career development plan. The career development plan is specifically noted in the Evidence column for accountability measures during on-site reviews.

This school year (2016-2017) is the first year in which RIDE began to collect the “CDP Date” for the CD database. This collection was on a “move- forward” basis which may not register the most accurate data until after June 30, 2017. Youth who recently turned the age of 14 or who had their IEP review conducted in grade 8 may not show up on the special education census with a CDP until June 2017. Many districts have utilized the fall months to conduct person centered planning, transition assessments and school-based preparatory experiences to support the development of the CDP and IEP, which typically occurs in the later part of the school year. In addition to these continued efforts RIDE will also implement the following actions to support the Monitor’s recommendations:

1. Send reminder notification to all Special Education Directors noting the requirements of the CDP accompanied by the Employment First Policy and RI Transition Timeline.
2. RIDE, in collaboration with the Regional Transition Coordinators, will follow-up with Special Education Directors regarding the current status of those youth reported on the special education census that are reported to be missing a CDP.
3. RIDE will begin disaggregating the data for individuals with CDPs to ascertain the numbers of individuals who have CDPs by grade, since 14 year olds may not have had person centered planning before the 8th grade. Since a through person centered planning process precedes the development of the CDP, school districts may be on schedule for completing the CDP during the student’s 14th year as required, however the counts may not be arriving in the RIDE census data until after the age 14 data is reported to RIDE. By disaggregating by age, RIDE can demonstrate whether individuals without a CDP are in fact 14 year olds that are beginning or actively engaged in the person centered planning process and thus moving toward the development of a CDP.

For students in Transition, ORS will assess current expectations and actual practice with LEAs, Regional Vocational Assessment Centers, Transition Coordinators and

VR Transition Coordinators. These findings will assist in the improvement of tracking systems to ensure implementation and better coordination for CDPs between ORS and LEAs. ORS will continue to track CDPs in their quarterly reporting to the Monitor and ensure that Counselors will follow up with LEAs when CDPs may be missing or out of date. ORS has increased service provision to students not enrolled in ORS services due to WIOA legislation and ORS staffs are active members of the CDP/IEP teams at schools. ORS, RIDE and LEAs, with assistance from the RVACs, will develop and provide professional development around career planning. ORS does not delay the initiation of services to members of the Transition Target Population based on the lack of a current CDP.

Plan for Increasing the Number of Hours Worked by Consent Decree Target Population Members

The State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals
Division of Developmental Disabilities

Submitted to: Charles Moseley, Court Monitor
Date: 2/28/2017 Updated: 3/24/17

Background

In the Report of the Court Monitor on Rhode Island Consent Decree Compliance, the following assessment was made regarding target population hours worked:

Benchmark 4 - Youth Exit Target Population Hours Worked §V(J).

By May 16, 2016 and thereafter all individuals in the RI Youth Exit Target Population who receive a Supported Employment Placement shall average, as determined by a point-in-time survey, work in an integrated employment setting for at least 20 hours per week.

Status: RIDE identified the following numbers of individuals in the three Youth Exit Populations based on the June 30, 2014 census:

- 2013-14: 84
- 2014-15: 64
- 2015-16: 121

The RI Statewide DD Employment and Day Activity Outcome Survey is conducted quarterly by the Rhode Island College Sherlock Center on Disabilities (Sherlock Survey) and provides data on outcomes achieved by all Consent Decree Target Populations. The Sherlock Survey Quarter 2 Progress Report for the period ending June 30, 2016 provides information on 95 individuals including 40 members of the 2013-14 Youth Exit Target Population, 38 members of the 2014- 15 Youth Target population and 17 members of the 2015-16 target population. The total of 95 individuals represents approximately 63% of the 151 individuals identified as members of the Youth Exit Population. Of the 95 participants, 11 (12%) were reported as being employed in employer paid jobs in integrated settings. As a group these individuals averaged 95 hours per week or 8.6 hours per person per week. This represents a decrease in the average hours worked per week as compared to the previous quarter's average of 12.33 hours per person per week.

Assessment: Requirement Not Met. Individuals of the Youth Exit Target population who are working in employer paid integrated employment average 8.6 hours per week or approximately 43% of the 20 hours per week required by the Consent Decree.

Recommended Actions: The State is requested to develop, in collaboration with IDD provider agencies, a plan and strategy for increasing the average hours worked per week across all individuals in the Youth Exit, Sheltered Workshop and Day Target populations. The plan should be submitted to the Monitor by February 28, 2017 and implementation begun on March 1, 2017.

This plan was developed as recommended to outline the steps to be taken to address the need to increase the average hours worked across all target populations, first focusing on the Youth Exit population.

1. Identify Needs and Barriers to Increasing Work Hours

The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) has surveyed all providers to develop a list of all individuals currently receiving Supported Employment services, what services they are receiving, who are currently employed, and the hours currently worked, and wages.

From this comprehensive list, DDD will work with the provider agencies to identify which of the following groups individuals fall into by May 31, 2017.

1) Those working less than 20 hours per week by choice.

For these individuals, DDD and the provider agencies will:

- Ensure that the decision to work fewer hours is based on an informed choice of the individual.
 - If found to not be an informed choice by the individual, these individuals will be prioritized to update their person-centered ISP goals and career development plan.
 - If an individual decides at any point to pursue an increase in hours, DDD will work with the provider to determine a plan of action, and DDD will monitor the progress of these individuals monthly or bimonthly.
- Ensure that ongoing annual career development plans address the question of desired hours.

2) Those working at least 20 hours per week and satisfied with their hours.

For these individuals, DDD and the provider agencies will:

- Ensure that job retention services are available to help the individuals maintain their employment levels and make any changes required/desired in the future.

3) Those working who consider themselves underemployed (i.e. would like more hours).

For these individuals, DDD and the provider agencies will:

- Follow up with individuals to discuss current job satisfaction and whether there is opportunity for additional hours at current employer.
- Review/revise or complete a career development plan for all underemployed individuals to include strategies for increasing hours or securing new employment that offers more hours.
- Providers will identify obstacles and solutions towards the goal of increased hours, and determine how to implement these changes into an agency specific strategic plan.

4) Those who are self employed.

A challenge in addressing hours of self-employed individuals is that the Division lacks a definition of and standards for self-employment. Currently, the data for these individuals is combined with employer-paid individuals in the Sherlock survey data provided to DDD, so it is difficult to determine what the specific needs of the self-employed group are. See Section 2 for more on data collection.

DDD, in conjunction with ORS, will define self-employment standards and educate individuals, families, and providers, and work with stakeholder groups and subject matter experts around developing sustainable self-employment opportunities. The standards will be defined and training will begin by April 30th.

As part of ongoing oversight, DDD and the provider agencies will ensure that each individual's next career development plan addresses hours of employment and strategies to obtain the desired number of hours.

2. Address Data Quality and Collection

One challenge to increasing the average hours worked is the method and quality of data collection. Steps to improve this include:

- a. Separate self-employment data from competitive employment data in the reporting of the next quarterly Sherlock survey.
- b. Establish a method of follow up to the Sherlock survey with those reporting employment but not providing data on hours and wages in the next quarter.
- c. Validate data collected in the next quarter that does not meet set standards, such as too few hours (e.g. one hour or less per week), or hours paid at less than minimum wage.
 - Establish follow up training with the agencies and with self-directed individuals regarding the expected standards for integrated competitive employment that will begin in the next quarter and continue as needed afterwards.
- d. Through the Person-Centered Supported Employment Program, incorporate the collection of data related to hours worked.
- e. Explore additional ways to collect data on hours worked in a more timely fashion than the quarterly reports so that potential quality issues can be addressed earlier and to ensure employment standards are being met within the Individualized Support Plans, Career Development Plans, and in provided services.

3. Collaboration with IDD Providers and Other Groups

Because agencies participating in the Person-Centered Supported Employment Program either have well-established employment programs or are focusing on developing more robust employment programs, these agencies are the core ones that DDD will initially work with to develop strategies to increase the hours worked for all target populations. Throughout the year-long pilot program, the Associate Director of Employment and the Associate Director of Program Performance will work with the PCSEP agencies on strategies to increase hours worked. Lessons learned from this group will be shared with other agencies through the Associate Director of Employment's regular meetings with each provider, and through written materials and group meetings.

The monthly strategy meeting was held with these agencies on February 26, and included a discussion of strategies to increase hours worked, listed in the next section. During this discussion, some barriers to increasing hours were raised, including:

- Myths regarding benefits, including incorrect information given out by non-DD agencies such as the Social Security office.
- The inability of employers to offer more hours. Several agencies reported that employers have told them they are planning to cut hours, especially if the minimum wage is increased.
- Lack of coordinated job search and job development resources. Many of the agencies are approaching the same businesses, which puts off the business owners/managers.
- Transportation, especially for those working more than one job.

Over the next quarter and continuing thereafter, DDD will also work with stakeholder groups such as the Supported Employment Leadership Network, the Employment First Task Force, the DD Supported Employment Council, families, and other subject matter experts to identify additional strategies to improve work outcomes and to provide better education around work and benefits.

4. Strategies for Increasing Hours Worked

The following are strategies to increase hours worked discussed by providers:

- Ongoing discussion with the employer regarding their satisfaction, the employee's progress, interests, and satisfaction, and the possibility of increase hours or responsibility.
- Regional shared contacts or business liaisons to coordinate search and job opening efforts among multiple provider agencies.

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- Work with individuals to look for a second or third job opportunity.
- Restructure day activities to focus on discovery activities, such as volunteering, to lead individuals to make better informed decisions about work.
- Look at the State as a model employer, and State set-asides for contracts with people with disabilities.

DDD will pursue the following strategies to assist providers in increasing hours:

- Provide ongoing individualized provider-specific technical assistance through the Associate Director of Employment and the Conversion Institute.
- Promote and facilitate a forum, such as a job developers group, among providers to share ideas, successful practices/strategies, and questions/challenges they are having in moving people towards employment. Have representatives of this group coordinate with the Employment First Task Force and the Ocean State Employer Services Network.
- Continue to have monthly strategy meetings and regular individual continuous improvement meetings with providers.
- Continue to provide training and resources on supported employment, customized employment, and best practices.
- Promote benefits counseling and provide information that counters the myths around work and impact on benefits, through a contract with the Sherlock Center and DDD's written materials.
- Add an Employment First page to DDD's website.
- DDD's Associate Director of Employment is coordinating with the Department of Labor and Training around collaborating efforts to increase employment outcomes for the DD population.
- DDD and RIPTA are collaborating on transportation options, including a joint approach to Uber and Lyft and other alternative methods.