

Section 9 / Part 4

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## **Customer/Client guide to developing the IPE**

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

Congratulations! You have been determined eligible to receive vocational rehabilitation (VR) services. Now it is time to work on developing your Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). This step is essential to your success. Through this plan, you have the opportunity to define your employment goal and the services you require to achieve this goal.

This guide will assist you in understanding the process and the information you will need to develop your IPE

### **What is an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)?**

The IPE is a plan designed specifically for you. It includes a description of:

- Your employment goal and your target date for starting work at a job.
- The steps you will need to take to reach your employment goal.
- Services you will need to reach your employment goal.
- Who will provide you with the services.
- The cost of those services and who will pay the costs.
- How your progress on carrying out your plan will be reviewed and evaluated.
- Your rights as a VR consumer.
- Your responsibilities in carrying out the plan.

### **How do you develop the IPE?**

The following people can help you write all or part of your IPE:

- Your RS counselor.
- A community program.
- Your family members or friends.
- Anyone you trust to help you develop this plan.

Or, you can also work on writing it by yourself.

Remember that you can work directly with your RS counselor to develop your plan if that is your choice. You can ask your RS counselor for help at anytime. Your RS counselor can help you discuss your work goals as well as the barriers you may face. Your counselor is well versed in the services, accommodations, and technology that can empower you to be successful on the job.

If you get someone other than your RS counselor to assist you in developing your IPE, remember that your IPE will still have to be reviewed and approved by your RS counselor. This is to assure that the services and expenditures are made in compliance with our federal and state rules and procedures.

You and your RS counselor must sign the IPE before services begin.

## **What services does RS offer?**

RS offers a variety of services to help people with disabilities regain or achieve employment. Because IPEs and services are customized according to each person's unique needs, skills, interests and abilities, not all eligible consumers will receive the same services.

Services which may be provided include:

- Vocational assessment to help you identify your skills, abilities, interests and employment goals, and to help identify the services you will need.
- Vocational counseling and guidance.
- Physical and mental restoration services (not covered by other insurance) that you may need before you go to work or to improve your chances of getting a job, such as artificial limbs or braces, vision services or speech therapy.
- Training and education to learn new vocational skills.
- Assistive technology, such as telecommunication aids, wheelchairs, or job-site modifications.
- Help with getting a job after leaving high school.
- Assistance in starting a business, such as writing a business plan, buying equipment, stocks and supplies.
- Job coaching to help you learn a job after you begin work.
- Support services while you are participating in other IPE services.
- Job placement to help you look for a job, find a job and stay on the job.
- Referral to other services to help you succeed in getting a job.
- Post-employment services to help you keep your job.

## **Are there any fees?**

The assessment services needed to determine if you are eligible, vocational counseling and guidance, referral, and job placement will be provided at no cost.

RS payment for most other services will depend on whether you meet financial need guidelines. RS will need information about your finances to see if we will be able to pay for services or if you will be asked to help pay for services. You will also be asked to provide information about your spouse's finances or your parent's finances. Such information includes tax returns or check stubs.

If you are receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), you will not be expected to pay for any approved services. You will be asked to provide a copy of a letter or other verification of your SSI or SSDI status to show that you have these benefits.

Please ask your RS counselor if you have any questions about this policy.

## **Will you need to apply for other financial benefits?**

You may need to apply for other benefits before RS can pay for services. These include any benefits provided or paid for, in whole or in part, by other Federal, State, or local public agencies, by health insurance, or by employee benefits. They include such things as college financial aid and medical insurance benefits, including Medicaid. You do not have to apply for other benefits if the delay would cause you extreme medical risk or you would lose a job opportunity because of the delay. RS staff can work with you to help you decide what other benefits must be used before we can pay for services.

## **Where do you get the services you need?**

You can help decide where you want to go for the services you need to reach your work goal, as long as the services are available and cost effective. RS can provide you with information about service providers. When thinking about choosing your service provider, it is important that you compare the possible providers using the following criteria:

- Is the service provider qualified?
- Does the service provider have a good reputation in the community?
- Is the program or service accessible to you, considering your disability-related needs?
- Do you have transportation to attend the service provider or program?
- If the provider is a school, do most of the students graduate or complete the training?
- Is the program successful in getting people jobs?
- Does the cost of the program seem reasonable when compared with the costs of similar programs?

## ***Writing your IPE***

### **Your employment goal**

Choosing the right employment goal is perhaps the most important step you will take to succeed on the job. There are many resources that can help you make this decision, including vocational assessment services available through our Career Development Centers or through the Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Your counselor can help you develop your goal or help you locate other resources, if you wish.

When developing your goal, think about things like:

- Does the employment goal meet your abilities and interests?
- How long will it take you to prepare for the goal? Is this reasonable?
- Will the job be available in your location, or will you need to travel or relocate?
- Will the salary and benefits meet your needs?

Because your employment goal is so important, you will want to discuss it in detail with your RS counselor before making any final plans. Remember, your RS counselor must

approve your IPE, which includes your employment goal, before it can be implemented.

### **Steps to complete your employment goal**

There are a number of steps you may need to take to reach your employment goal. (Some examples might be: Type 50 words per minute. Get a college degree in accounting.)

Knowing the steps is important because it assures that both you and your counselor understand how you plan to get to your goal and how we can review your progress. Please also think about how we will know when a step is completed. (For instance, if you need to learn to type 50 wpm, you will know that you have done this successfully when both you and your counselor get a report from your typing instructor.)

### **Services needed to achieve your employment goal**

When thinking about what services you will need, consider your work goal and the steps you will need to take to reach that goal. Only those services that you will need to reach the work goal will be approved. We encourage you to talk to your counselor if you have any questions about the services we can provide, and whether they are right for you.

### **How is the IPE approved?**

Your RS Counselor must review the plan and decide whether it can be implemented by RS. Some of the things the counselor must consider include:

- Is the employment goal consistent with your abilities, capabilities, and interests?
- Are the services necessary to achieve your work goals?
- Will the services result in employment?
- Are the services cost-effective? RS may not pay for a high cost program, when a lower cost option is available that meets your needs.

Services cannot begin until the IPE is signed by you and your RS counselor. RS will not pay for services or equipment that you received before the IPE was approved and signed.

If there are parts of your plan which cannot be approved, your RS counselor will continue to work with you on plan development. You may need to provide additional information or consider other work goals or services.

Through the process of developing your IPE, If you disagree with any RS decisions, you may request that those decisions be reconsidered. Such requests may involve one or all of the following:

- Meeting with counselor and/or the counselor's supervisor.
- Mediation.
- Administrative review.
- Fair hearing.

You may also request assistance from the Client Assistance Program (CAP) to help resolve any disagreements with RS. You can contact CAP at 1-800-432-2326 (V/TTY).

## ***IPE development form***

Name:

SSN:

I did this form by myself.

I received help from the following individual to complete this form:

Name

Address

Telephone

### **Deciding if you need additional assistance**

***Think about the statements listed and choose the response that best fits your situation. Please make notes of additional thoughts, comments or questions, if appropriate, in the space provided.***

I have an employment goal.

Yes     No     I will need help about this.

Notes:

I know when I would like to begin working.

Yes     No     I will need help about this.

Notes:

I know the job duties that are usually needed for the kind of work I want to do.

Yes     No     I will need help about this.

Notes:

I know my abilities and interests well enough to choose a work goal.

Yes     No     I will need help about this.

Notes:

I know whether I will need reasonable accommodations because of my disability.

Yes     No     I will need help about this.

Notes:

I know the job market and employment outlook for my employment goal.

Yes     No     I will need help about this.

Notes:

I know what skills I have based on my work and education history.

Yes  No  I will need help about this.

Notes:

I know the steps I need to take to reach my employment goal.

Yes  No  I will need help about this.

Notes:

I know how to determine whether I have completed each step to reach my employment goal.

Yes  No  I will need help about this.

Notes:

I have concerns in my life that may keep me from reaching my employment goal (for example, money, child care, transportation, etc.)

Yes  No  I will need help about this.

Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes:

I know what services I will need to reach my employment goal.

Yes  No  I will need help about this.

Notes:

I know who will be able to provide the services I need.

Yes  No  I will need help about this.

Notes:

I know how much each of these services will cost.

Yes  No  I will need help about this.

Notes:

I know about other benefits I have or can apply for to help pay for the services I need.  
\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ I will need help about this.

Notes:

Circle the answer which best matches your preference:

I like to work:	by myself	with others
	with my hands	with my mind
	in casual clothes	in business clothes
	indoors	outdoors
	with information	with machines

Notes:

### **My employment goal**

I'd like to discuss the following employment options when I meet with my RS counselor:

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I'd like to work: \_\_\_ full-time \_\_\_ part-time (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

I want to be working by: Month/Year \_\_\_\_\_

Job duties for this type of work usually include: (for example: contact with public, writing reports, working with hands, lifting, driving, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

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I have the following personal strengths that will help me achieve this employment goal:

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I have the following limitation(s) because of my disability that may affect me on this job: (such as limited amount of standing, lifting; difficulty concentrating; unable to work with others).

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This employment goal matches my interests and abilities in the following ways:

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The educational background I have that will help with my work goal is: \_\_\_\_\_

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I have worked before:  Yes  No  
*If yes, please complete the following information.*

Job: \_\_\_\_\_ Employer: \_\_\_\_\_  
What I did in this job: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dates: Start \_\_\_\_\_ End \_\_\_\_\_  
I left this job because: \_\_\_\_\_

Job: \_\_\_\_\_ Employer: \_\_\_\_\_  
What I did in this job: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dates: Start \_\_\_\_\_ End \_\_\_\_\_  
I left this job because: \_\_\_\_\_

Job: \_\_\_\_\_ Employer: \_\_\_\_\_  
What I did in this job: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dates: Start \_\_\_\_\_ End \_\_\_\_\_  
I left this job because: \_\_\_\_\_

**Steps to completing my employment goal**

**Example:** My employment goal is to be a Welder. For me to do this job I need to do these steps:

Complete first semester of the Welding program at Vo-Tech.

I will know I have reached these steps because: I will receive passing grade(s).

For me to reach my employment goal, I need to do the following steps:

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_

I will know I have reached these steps because:

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_

**Services needed to reach my employment goal**

I need the following services to reach my work goal:

1. Service: \_\_\_\_\_

Options where I would get this service, if approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Starting on: \_\_\_\_\_ Ending on: \_\_\_\_\_

Cost: \_\_\_\_\_

Other benefits which could fund this service: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Service: \_\_\_\_\_

Options where I would get this service, if approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Starting on: \_\_\_\_\_ Ending on: \_\_\_\_\_

Cost: \_\_\_\_\_

Other benefits which could fund this service: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Service: \_\_\_\_\_

Options where I would get this service, if approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Starting on: \_\_\_\_\_ Ending on: \_\_\_\_\_

Cost: \_\_\_\_\_

Other benefits which could fund this service: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Service: \_\_\_\_\_

Options where I would get this service, if approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Starting on: \_\_\_\_\_ Ending on: \_\_\_\_\_

Cost: \_\_\_\_\_

Other benefits which could fund this service: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Use additional pages if needed. Give this information to your RS counselor after you complete it.

**Your Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_