

Attachment 4.8(b)(4) – Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services

Supported employment services provided by the Division consist of case services made available through the Title VI-B funds of the Rehabilitation Act (earmarked by the federal government for this purpose). Title VI-B funds for Federal Fiscal Year equaled \$244,500.00. Title I funds of the Rehabilitation Act (available for general, basic vocational rehabilitation services) are used for supported employment services upon depletion of Title VI-B funds. The Division experiences significant increased to total supported employment expenditure due to the ever-increasing cost of services.

The Division procures supported employment services on a case-by-case basis from local rehabilitation programs that have committed long-term funding to the individual participants. Area supervisors conduct direct negotiations of fee for service procurement schedules of supported employment services. The local counselor and the State Office monitor the scope and quality of supported employment services available to DVR participants.

Supported employment service providers are required to submit to the Division monthly reports to the local area supervisor of client progress and satisfaction, as well as demographic data. The review, compilation, and analysis of the monthly cumulative reports obtained from the contract vendor enable the Division to monitor the quality of job coaching. The DVR participant's counselor reviews these reports with the contract provider to ensure that the scope of services comply with supported employment guidelines and are consistent with the vocational needs of the participant.

Quality of supported employment services is measured in terms of integration achieved by the individual at the work-site along with the amount of wages earned. To increase the level of integration, the Division emphasizes the individualized placement model. This information is documented in the participant case files and monitored on a monthly basis.

The scope and extend of services provided to clients under the Individualized Plan for Employment for supported employment continues to be the same as those available to individuals under the Title I program. This is in accordance with Division operating procedures. All services are provided on an equitable basis within the constraints of available funding. The Division does not target specific disability groups to provide supported employment services. However, long-term support funding by the State is currently available for those individuals who are either developmentally disabled or who have significant disabling mental illness.

The Division continues to seek long-term funding for support for other disability groups. To this end, the Division seeks to negotiate with other state agencies and private non-profit organizations.

Traditionally, cooperative agreements between the New Mexico Health Department Development Disabilities Services Division and the Mental Health Division facilitate the transition from Title VI-B funding to a long-term funding source. The transition occurs when the time spent by the job coach with the DVR participant in supported employment program

decreases to an average of 8 hours (20%) per week or less. Another determinant is agreement by the client, employer, job coach and the NMDVR counselor that the transition to the long-term funding source is appropriate and consistent with the vocational needs of the client. It is noted that time limits are not defined in the Division's Manual of Operational Procedures; rather each case is assessed in terms of individual needs for supported employment services.

Memorandum of Agreement has been entered into between the New Mexico Health Department's Developmental Disabilities Supports Division and the Mental Health Division to accomplish joint implementation for supported employment under: the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, 29 U.S.C 795(b)(1) and 721(a)(11); 8.314.5 New Mexico Administrative Code and Walter Stephens Jackson, et.al. vs. Los Lunas Center for Persons with Developmental Disabilities, et.al. CIV No.87-0839-JP/LCS.

The MOU defines, eligibility for DVR services, DVR eligibility criteria for Supported Employment, Developmental Disabilities Support Division eligibility for the purposes of the MOU, methods of accomplishment outlining the responsibilities of the Developmental Disabilities Supports Division such as implementation and maintenance of a referral process, offer of long-term support, and implementation of additional responsibilities to carry out the agreement. The MOU outlines responsibilities of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, joint responsibilities of both DVR and DDS, and targeted outcomes.

The MOU defines Ongoing Support Services – Services that are:

1. Needed to support and maintain an individual with significant disabilities in supported employment,
2. Based on a determination by the designated State Unit of the individual's needs as specified in an Individualized Plan for Employment; and
3. Furnished by the designated State Unit in 34 CPR 363.4(c)(3) and following transitions, by one or more extended services providers throughout the individual's term of employment in a particular job placement or multiple placements if those placements are being provided under a program of transition employment.
4. Include, at a minimum, twice-monthly monitoring to assess employment stability at the work site of each individual in supported employment (unless the Individualized Plan for Employment provides for off-site monitoring), and based upon that assessment, the coordination or provision of specific services at or away from the work site, that are needed to maintain employment stability. If off-site monitoring is determined to be appropriate, there must be contact with the employer each month.

It is noted that the Division partners with the Developmental Disabilities Services Division. The Developmental Disabilities Services Division was recently moved by legislative action from the Department of Health to the Human Services Division (legislation 2007). The Developmental Disabilities Services Division provided administrative support to and houses the Behavioral Health Collaborative to provide a long-term funding mechanism for Developmental Disabilities Medicaid Waiver recipients.

Behavioral Health Services funding is a collaborative to provide comprehensive and vocational services to individuals with significantly disabled mental illness.

Both mechanisms mentioned above are used to fund long-term supported employment services and extended services.