

5123:2-2-05

Employment first.

(A) Purpose

The purpose of this rule is to implement the employment first policy.

(B) Scope

This rule applies to county boards of developmental disabilities and providers responsible for planning, coordinating, or providing employment services, regardless of funding source, to individuals with developmental disabilities.

(C) Definitions

- (1) "Benefits analysis" means information provided to individuals about the impact of work on public assistance programs, including but not limited to, social security disability insurance, supplemental security income, medicaid/medicare coverage, medicaid buy-in for workers with disabilities, veteran's benefits, housing assistance, and food stamps.
- (2) "Community employment" means competitive employment that takes place in an integrated setting.
- (3) "Competitive employment" means full-time or part-time work in the competitive labor market in which payment is at or above the minimum wage, but not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by persons who are not disabled.
- (4) "County board" means a county board of developmental disabilities.
- (5) "Department" means the Ohio department of developmental disabilities.
- (6) "Employment first policy" means the state of Ohio policy, established in section 5123.022 of the Revised Code, that employment services for individuals with developmental disabilities be directed at community employment and that individuals with developmental disabilities are presumed capable of community employment.
- (7) "Employment services" means prevocational services or supported employment services.
- (8) "Individual" means a person with a developmental disability.
- (9) "Integrated setting" means a setting typically found in the community where individuals interact with persons who do not have disabilities to the same extent non-disabled persons in comparable positions interact with other persons. "Integrated setting" includes employment settings in which

employees interact with the community through technology.

(10) "Prevocational services" means services that provide learning and work experiences from which an individual can develop general strengths and skills that are not specific to a particular task or job but contribute to employability in community employment, supported work at community-based sites, or self-employment. "Prevocational services" includes vocational habilitation funded all or in part by the individual options, level one, and self-empowered life funding waivers. Prevocational services shall be provided in accordance with the individual's individual plan or individual service plan, as applicable, and occur over a specified period of time with specific outcomes sought to be achieved.

(11) "Provider" means an agency provider or an independent provider that is certified or licensed by the department.

(12) "Supported employment services" means vocational assessment, job training and coaching, job development and placement, work site accessibility, and other services related to employment outside a sheltered workshop and includes all of the following:

(a) Job training resulting in the attainment of community employment, supported work in a typical work environment, or self-employment;

(b) Support for ongoing community employment, supported work at community-based sites, or self-employment;

(c) Supported employment-community funded all or in part by the individual options and level one waivers;

(d) Supported employment-enclave funded all or in part by the individual options, level one, and self-empowered life funding waivers; and

(e) Integrated employment funded all or in part by the self-empowered life funding waiver.

(13) "Working age" means at least eighteen years of age.

(D) Person-centered planning process

(1) Each individual of working age and each individual approaching completion of a program or service under Chapter 3323. of the Revised Code shall be provided with an individualized person-centered planning process to identify the individual's unique strengths, interests, abilities, preferences, resources, and desired outcomes as they relate to community employment. The person-centered planning process shall begin with a review of available information to determine what additional information is needed and what

supplemental situational and/or other formal or informal evaluations are needed to discover this information. For individuals who receive public assistance, this may include a benefits analysis to ensure the individual understands how work incentives can be utilized to maximize earnings.

(2) The person-centered planning process shall include identification and documentation of:

(a) The individual's place on the path to community employment, that is:

(i) The individual is already engaged in community employment and needs support for job stabilization, job improvement, or career advancement;

(ii) The individual expresses a desire to obtain community employment but is not currently employed and needs support to obtain employment or identify career options and employment opportunities;

(iii) The individual is unsure about community employment and needs support to identify career options and employment opportunities and the economic impact for the individual of the decision to work; or

(iv) The individual does not express a desire to work and needs support to learn more about careers and employment opportunities and the economic impact for the individual of the decision not to work.

(b) The individual's community employment outcome.

(c) Clearly defined activities, services, and supports necessary for the individual to achieve or maintain community employment, job improvement, or career advancement.

(3) The results of the person-centered planning process, including the individual's desired outcomes as they relate to community employment, shall be integral to the development of the individual plan or individual service plan, as applicable.

(4) The results of the person-centered planning process shall be reviewed at least every twelve months and whenever a significant change in employment, training, continuing education, services, or supports occurs or is proposed.

(E) Requirements for county boards

(1) The county board shall adopt and implement a local policy to implement the employment first policy which clearly identifies community employment as

the desired outcome for every individual of working age.

- (2) In its strategic plan, the county board shall outline and periodically update its strategy and benchmarks for increasing the number of individuals of working age engaged in community employment.
- (3) The county board shall collaborate with school districts in the county to ensure a framework exists for individuals approaching completion of a program or service under Chapter 3323. of the Revised Code such that the county board and school districts in the county use similar methods to support students with developmental disabilities to obtain community employment and are not duplicating efforts.
- (4) The county board shall disseminate information to individuals served, families, schools, community partners, employers, and providers of services about resources and opportunities, including medicaid buy-in and other work incentive programs, that facilitate community employment.
- (5) The county board shall collect and submit to the department data regarding individuals who do not receive paid employment services but who are engaged in competitive employment or community employment.

(F) Requirements for providers

- (1) Providers of employment services shall submit to each individual's team at least once every six months, or more frequently as requested by the team, a written progress report that demonstrates that services provided are consistent with the individual's identified community employment outcome and that the individual receiving services has obtained community employment or is advancing on the path to community employment. The progress report for each individual participating in prevocational services shall describe progress on achievement of desired outcomes as set forth in the individual plan or individual service plan, as applicable.
- (2) Providers of employment services shall collect and submit to the department data regarding community employment, competitive employment, prevocational services, and supported employment services including, but not limited to, services provided to obtain or maintain employment, cost of services provided, number of individuals employed, industries hiring individuals, hours worked by individuals, and wages earned by individuals. The data shall be submitted in the format prescribed by the department and in a manner that does not disclose confidential information regarding individuals receiving employment services. Providers shall disseminate the data to individuals requesting employment services and to others upon request.