

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES**

**Procedure No:** I.C.5. PR.001  
**Subject:** Employment First Policy  
**Section:** Employment and Day Supports

**Issue Date:** April 13, 2011  
**Effective Date:** Upon release  
**Revised September 24, 2024**  
**Approved:**/s/Jordan Scheff

**Policy Statement**

The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) is an Employment First agency with a goal of increasing opportunities for people with disabilities based on their skills and interests to find and retain employment in the general workforce that is equivalent to Competitive Integrated Employment (“CIE”). The general workforce includes typical jobs available to all job seekers:

- In typical work settings including self-employment
- Working side-by-side with people of all abilities
- Earning industry-standard wages and benefits
- Contributing to the labor force of society

**A. Purpose**

The purpose of this procedure is to provide information and guidance to DDS employees, Qualified Providers and employers to ensure that employment is part of conversations with individuals who have intellectual disability, where their goals and interests are taken into consideration and are receiving services or may receive services after transitioning from school through DDS. It also is intended to ensure that individuals are aware of the employment service options available and can make an informed choice regarding the opportunities that are best for them.

**B. Applicability**

This procedure applies to any individual who is receiving services through DDS or may qualify to receive services in the future. Individuals may include school-age children and young adults who are transitioning into the DDS service system. It applies to DDS case managers, DDS Transition Advisors, members of an individual’s planning and support team and any DDS staff and DDS Qualified Provider staff who provide employment supports.

**C. Definitions**

“Employment and Day Services Unit” means a unit within DDS that provides information and guidance to DDS employees and individuals with intellectual disability regarding employment goals and interests.

“Individual” means a person who has been determined to be eligible for or is currently receiving funding and services from the Department of Developmental Services.

"Individual Plan" means the document to guide all supports and services provided to the individual.

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“Planning And Support Team” or “PST” means the group of persons who participate in the development of an Individual Plan, including the individual; the individual’s parent or legal representative; family members or chosen advocates, as applicable; the individual’s case manager; support services personnel; and any other person requested by the individual.

“Qualified provider” means a person, firm or corporation that has been qualified to provide services funded through DDS and has met the standards established in the DDS Home and Community Based Services Waiver (HCBS).

**D. Implementation**

1. The DDS Employment and Day Services Unit will be responsible for determining the best practices for supporting individuals with intellectual disability in their search for employment including the transitioning to, retaining, and sustaining competitive integrated employment. The goal of the Employment and Day Services Unit is to:
  - a. Develop, implement, and integrate best practices into their recommendations for planning and supporting individuals with intellectual disability who wish to be employed;
  - b. Provide case managers with documentation that can be used during planning meetings or other meetings that would discuss employment and day services; and
  - c. Provide any additional support related to employment and day supports as requested.
2. Employment options shall be the primary focus when planning for day services unless contraindicated by the individual and their planning and support team or if the individual has expressed, they are not interested in employment options. The department is responsible for ensuring that all individuals are informed of their employment options. Such discussions may take place through individual planning meetings, planning and support team meetings, transition from school meetings, inquiries to the Employment and Day Services Unit, or discussions with regional staff.
3. Each individual receiving services from the Department shall have an annual review of their employment history and goals for employment by the individual, the individual’s PST, and other applicable DDS qualified provider staff. The annual review shall align with best practices and the preferences of the individual, which shall include informed choice of employment services options as well as meaningful day options. Such annual review may occur during the annual Individual Plan meeting. Any new goals or requests for employment shall be added into the individual’s Individual Plan.
4. Prior to the annual employment review with the individual, the individual’s DDS case manager should determine appropriate employment services and programs available to

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the individual. The Employment & Day Services Unit shall provide a case manager with support and access to information and resources upon request.

5. Prior to the annual meeting or other such meetings regarding employment and day services with the individual, the Employment and Day Services Unit may answer any of the case manager's questions related to employment. If requested, Employment and Day staff may attend an individual's annual employment review and provide education and support on employment services and programs.
6. The Case Manager will document the meeting and summarize the informed choice employment discussion in the individual's case notes.

**E. References**

None.

**F. Attachments**

None.