

Customized Employment (CE) Services

Candidate Overview

Customized Employment (CE) is an alternative method of finding competitive integrated employment by matching the strengths, interests, skills, and abilities of individuals with significant disabilities with the unmet needs of employers. It is a highly structured, person-centered process, carried out over time. CE is carried out through flexible strategies which help identify interests, skills and conditions of employment that direct the job seeker and CE Certified Staff towards a career or job path that works for the job seeker and the employer. Certified Staff members will work with the individual and community employers through the individual's network to negotiate a customized position that resolve the employer's unmet needs.

Who is a good candidate for CE?

- CE is a good strategy for those who need more intense support than typical individualized or group models and/or who may need to utilize more comprehensive discovery strategies for career and job direction.
- CE is effective for individuals with complexities that make it difficult to utilize traditional job search strategies.
- CE is best for individuals who have a strong support/community network through which CE Staff may connect with potential employers to job develop and negotiate customized employment opportunities.

If an individual meets the above requirements, case managers/vocational rehabilitation counselors should consider whether they fit into at least one of the criteria listed below before initiating the CE Referral Process:

1. Have had one or more supported employment opportunities in the past three years where the individual lost the supported employment position, **primarily** because the individual was **unable** to meet the expectations of the employer(s) for the position being filled; or
2. Has been in supported employment job development for six months or longer, have not obtained employment and continue to desire to obtain employment; or

Customized Employment is an interagency service provided by both the Departments of Aging & Disability Services (ADS) and Developmental Services (DDS). Below are specific considerations for each agency.

ADS Specific Considerations

1. Previously closed unsuccessfully by ADS/BRS and current need for long-term employment support; or
2. New to ADS/BRS, and VR area director or counselor has determined that the individual is unlikely to be successful in obtaining *Competitive Integrated Employment* that matches their preferences and needs through use of existing supported employment practice; or
3. Any individual who would otherwise be closed with VR on the basis that the person is not competitively employable *through traditional VR services* but has demonstrated some work skills that indicate potential to work competitively.

DDS Specific Considerations

1. Previously tried DDS employment support options such as or Group Supported Employment (GSE), Individualized Employment Supports; or IX Employment Incentives.
2. Previously engaged in pre-employment support options such as Employment Transition Services (ETS) or Project SEARCH.
3. New to DDS, and the Case Manager judges the job seeker is unlikely to be successful in obtaining Competitive Integrated Employment that matches their preferences and needs through use of existing supported employment practice.

Other Important Service Considerations

The case manager may also want to explore the following with an individual before proceeding with Customized Employment services:

1. Is employment a **priority** for the job seeker and those who support him or her (when applicable)?
2. Does the job seeker understand that Discovery will create a personal profile and a plan for success in employment?
3. If actively seeking employment, is the job seeker willing to suspend a job search to participate in the Discovery process? (*which will focus on engagement and not job development*)
4. Will this job seeker be available to actively participate (e.g., not going on vacation, available during business hours, etc.)?
5. Will this person be undergoing major life changes soon that would impact the picture of who they are (e.g., a move, a graduation, a divorce, etc.)?
6. Are there any pending considerations that will impact the candidate's ability to be reliable or dependable throughout the process (e.g., medical, legal, vacation, etc.)?
7. Will the job seeker allow access to both professional and natural supports (when available)?
8. Will the job seeker (and supports, where applicable) allow access to the home?
9. Does the job seeker have a legal guardian or conservator of person that needs to be consulted as part of the process?
10. If the job seeker has a conservator, has there been a request to allow the job seeker to make his/her own decisions as it relates to vocational rehabilitation services?
11. Does the job seeker have the necessary accommodations to participate in the process; communication supports, personal care assistance, transportation, assistive technology, etc.?

The CE Referral process begins with the CE Referral Consult Form. ADS Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors and DDS Case Managers can access the form on their internal drives.