



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services



Commissioner's Policy Statement and Implementing Procedures

SUBJECT:	Client Employment to Recovery Policy
P & P NUMBER:	Chapter 6.17
APPROVED:	Miriam Delphin-Rittmon, Commissioner Date: 10/15/2015
EFFECTIVE DATE:	October 15, 2015 <i>Miriam Delphin-Rittmon</i>
REVISED:	3/1/2010, 2/1/2010, replaced Policy No. 73, Policy on Employment Services, effective date January 24, 1995
REFERENCES:	
FORMS AND ATTACHMENTS:	

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: The purpose of this policy is to foster a health care system that delivers recovery oriented employment and education services to individuals served by the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services and funded agencies.

POLICY: The DMHAS recognize that gainful employment is essential for most people's well being. Employment makes recovery from and dealing with psychiatric and/or addiction disorders easier and increases self-esteem and satisfaction with one's daily life. The DMHAS providers at all levels will communicate this belief that people with behavioral health disorders can, and should be, productive members of society.

DMHAS will ensure that necessary supports are available for people to find, secure, and maintain employment/educational opportunities. These supports include, but are not limited to education, self-help, peer and co-worker relations, family and friends, community services, financial aid, professional mental health/addiction services, and employment advocacy.

PROCEDURE: Definition and Effects: Employment is inextricably linked to the recovery process for many people in recovery; employment and education are integral to the overarching recovery mission of the Department and cannot be separated from the DMHAS treatment system in functions such as planning, systems design, funding, monitoring and staffing.

Guiding Principles: DMHAS shall:

- Ensure that all staff is informed of the positive effects of employment on recovery; as well as the negative impact of unemployment, on one's health.
- Make a concerted effort, through provider and consumer education, to promote employment not just as a meaningful way to occupy one's time, but also as a potential vehicle through which to leave behind one's disabled role and life of poverty that often accompanies it.
- Encourage DMHAS-funded providers to continuously engage persons in recovery to pursue career advancement and consider opportunities that lead toward economic self-sufficiency.
- See that Supported Education services will be available to assist persons in recovery pursue their educational/employment objectives. Behavioral health disorders often emerge in late adolescence or early adulthood and interrupt the attainment of educational milestones (e.g., a high school diploma, or completion of post-secondary academic or technical training programs).
- Ensure that DMHAS-funded providers encourage and support all people in exploring and pursuing meaningful work and educational opportunities. Upon intake, all persons will:
 - Receive "user-friendly" information regarding the benefits of employment and the impact of employment earnings on disability benefits;
 - Be oriented to local supported employment and/or educational resources;
 - Be given the opportunity to consult with an employment/education specialist or a referral to employment services.
- Adhere to a "zero-reject policy" that does not exclude people based on symptoms, substance use, cognitive impairments, history of hospitalization, or unwillingness to participate in "pre-vocational" activities or adhere to treatment.
- Make available peer mentors and peer recovery guides as "key" element to successful employment, education, and community integration. Providers will build employment partnerships with community-based programs and agencies including, but not limited to rehabilitation, clinical and housing providers, as well as business and employer community to ensure access to resources and continuity of services.
- Ensure that supportive housing providers will work closely with tenants who desire to work and/or obtain an education. They will identify state and private employment agencies within their communities and develop relationships that assist tenants in achieving their employment/educational goals.
- Track the progress of individuals over time in the DMHAS funded agencies to see that their individual employment and education goals are being met. Employment outcomes will be widely publicized both as ways to ensure accountability and to raise awareness of the important role of employment in recovery.
- Ensure DMHAS-funded providers develop a process for measuring and improving the level of satisfaction of people in recovery with their jobs and the employment services provided
- Recognize the strong need for advocacy to combat discrimination in the work place and the community.

Recovery Oriented Employment Services: Giving back to one's community, whether through employment, education or some other form of productive activity, is both a right and a responsibility of citizenship. All individuals, no matter what level of disability are capable of such meaningful, productive activity. The ultimate goal of offering recovery-oriented employment services is to afford people the opportunity to work in "real" jobs for "real" pay, while encouraging all to work toward their highest potential.