DDS

State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services

One-Time Employment Incentives Guide for ISE

DDS One-Time Employment Incentives are non-annualized funds that **do not affect an individual's annual funding**. The 1X Employment Incentives are used to assist individuals in transitioning to, retaining, or sustaining competitive integrated employment. The 1X Employment Incentives Request Form is linked here.

The 1X Employment Incentives are broken into two pieces:

1. **Services** – Services and supports used to help an individual gain competitive integrated employment.
2. **Benchmarks** – Payments made to providers as a reward for successful employment transition.

The services that make up the first part of the one-time employment incentives are offered in two separate rate structures dependent on the individual's current service option:

$83.32 per/hour — For individuals in solely Group Day Supports such as Group Supported Employment (GSE), Group Day (DSO or DSH), or Employment Transition Services (ETS).

$70.52 per/hour — For individuals in other services such as Individualized Day Vocational (IDV) or Individualized Day Non-Vocational (IDN), Individual Supported Employment (ISE), or a combination of ISE and Group Day.

In a rush? Check out the 1X Employment Incentives One-Pager which serves as a "**quick start**" guide to the ISE One-Time Employment Incentives, linked here.

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1. Career Plan

Career Plan funds are used to provide opportunities for individuals to explore their work preferences, develop interview skills, learn about other employment opportunities, and have on site work experiences (working interviews) in the community while continuing their current group program.

Amount of Funding Available:

- Up to 10 hours of direct face to face service: **WebResDay billing**
  - $83.32 per hour rate for Group Day Options
  - $70.52 per hour rate for people in other programs *or a combination of group day and other programs.*
- Additionally, One Time Fee of $1,005.97 for a Completed Career Plan that has been **reviewed and approved by DDS Resource Management.**

Providers accessing this funding stream will use the CT DDS Career Plan template, linked here. The Career Plan is broken down into three sections, Background Information and Vocational Profile and then an Action Plan. It is a comprehensive tool that addresses both the job seeker's employment history and goals as well as a range of employment related areas that must be part of the employment plan if the job seeker is going to be successful.

The form is designed to be filled out electronically. There are character limits for the comment fields. If you run out of space use the blank pages at the end to supplement your responses. Be sure to number and title any supplemental responses so the reader can refer back to the correct section of the Career Plan.

Providers must have a Contract Service Authorization (CSA) or Vendor Service Authorization (VSA) before starting the Career Plan. Providers should make sure they have the current IP, LON summary, and a copy of the Automated Data System (eCamris) Client Summary Report. These documents will provide demographic, health and safety information that has already been collected and can be obtained from the Case Manager.

Career planning resources, including a Career Plan Template and Career Plan Guide, are on the DDS Website.

Note: **A career plan does not need to be completed in every case**, especially if an individual has already identified employment sectors of interest.

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2. Working Interview Incentive

A "working interview" is when a person works with an employer to demonstrate his/her skills and competencies and there is potential to obtain a competitive job. Funds are to be used to pay an individual minimum wage while working in a position that has a strong likelihood of leading to a job offer. Funds may also be used to cover the cost of staff hours during the working interview.

Amount of Funding Available:

- The Individual's wages can be reimbursed up to 40 hours: **Submit "Actuals" Invoice**
  - $20.96 per hour rate for Individual Wages (Up to 40 Hours) *(Rate effective 6/1/2023)*
- Staff Hours can be reimbursed during the working interview up to 40 hours: **WebResDay billing**
  - $83.32 per hour rate for Group Day Options (Up to 40 Hours).
  - $70.52 per hour rate for people in other programs or a combination programs (Up to 40 Hours).

3. Intensive Job Placement & Training

Funds are to be used to provide additional hours of job training and support to promote a successful transition to employment.

Amount of Funding Available:
- $83.32 per hour rate for Group Day Options
- $70.52 per hour rate for people in other programs or a combination of group day and other programs.

Intensive Job Placement & Training hours can be submitted through **WebResDay billing.**

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4. Benchmark Payments

Individuals must have transitioned to ISE to be eligible for Benchmark Payments. All benchmark payments are up to $4,102 and are calculated based on the average weekly number of hours worked. **Hours worked includes all paid time including sick, vacation, and holidays**.

Payments are prorated, this calculation is the reason why pay stubs must be submitted to receive benchmark payments. If the individual works less than the 25 hours, the payment is prorated, or adjusted, based on the actual number of average hours worked per week.

As of 12/1/2022, providers only need to submit the first paystub and a new year to date pay stub for each benchmark. The final pay stub of the calendar year is also needed for any benchmark that crosses calendar years to calculated hours worked.

Service	Payment Documentation	Benchmark Payment
Job Start, 3, 6, 12 Month Benchmarks Can submit after first paystub	**Year to Date Pay stub submission** Final pay stub of calendar year if benchmark crosses calendar years	5 to 9.99 hours = $820.40 10 to 14.99 = $1,640.80 15 to 19.99 = $2,461.20 20 to 24.99 = $3,281.60 25 or more = $4,102
Transition to Natural Supports Successful Discharge	Documentation of the discharge and plan for natural supports submitted as 1X	

Amount of Funding Available:
- Job Start Benchmark – Up to $4,102
  - First pay stub must be provided to validate employment and confirm hours for proration.
- 3-Month Benchmark – Up to $4,102
  - First pay stub and pay stub after 3-months must be provided to validate employment and confirm hours for proration.
- 6-Month Benchmark – Up to $4,102
  - First pay stub and pay stub after 6-months
- 12-Month Benchmark – Up to $4,102
  - First pay stub and pay stub after 12-months
- Transition to Natural Supports Benchmark – Up to $4,102
  - Documentation of discharge and plan for natural supports

**** The final pay stub of calendar year is needed for any benchmark that crosses calendar years to ensure hours worked can be calculated correctly. ****

Employment Training Incentive

Funds are to be used to provide opportunities for providers to enhance employment training for their staff (i.e., job development, job coaching, business entrepreneurship, assets management/benefits planning). Please use traditional Attachment A, linked here.

Amount of Funding Available: Annual cap to be determined case by case, per request.

- Actual cost of participant registration for employment training sessions.
- Reimbursement for the additional cost of replacement staff based on cost of substitute.

These funds do not require PRAT APPROVAL; however, they are still requested through the One-time Request Procedure. Funds will only be approved to reimburse registration for employment training and/or the additional cost of replacement staff used to cover the staff attending the employment training.

Funds cannot be used to cover costs associated with traveling to an employment training including airfare, hotel costs, or any other costs associated with an employment training.

Accessing the 1X Employment Incentives

All providers should work with an individual's Case Manager before submitting a 1X request. The process to request funds is different for contract providers and individual budget providers (POS versus non-POS).

Contract Providers:

1. Provider submits a 1X request to Region's Resource Manager
2. Once approved, Resource Manager sends the provider a 1X Contract Service Authorization (CSA)
3. Provider submits deliverables
    a. Hourly Services submitted through WebResDay
    b. Career Plan submitted to Resource Manager for approval
    c. Individual Wages for Working Interview & Benchmarks submitted through invoices to Resource Manager.
4. Resource Manager authorizes payment
5. Payment is made through authorization system

Individual Budget Providers (Non-POS):

1. Provider submits a 1X Request to the Region's Resource Manager
2. Once approved, FI liaison and CM build 1X funds in the Individual Budget System and send the provider a 1X Vendor Service Authorization (VSA)
3. Provider submits deliverables
    a. Career Plan submitted to Resource Manager for approval
    b. All other deliverables submitted via invoice to the Fiscal Intermediary (FI)
4. FI makes the payment

Completing the 1X Employment Incentives Request Form

The first piece of the Employment Incentive Request Form requires information about the individual including: full name, DDS ID number, and the individual's Case Manager. Provider agencies must also indicate whether they are a contract provider *(Contract Service Authorization: Yes)* or on budget *(Vendor Service Authorization: Yes)*. The start and end dates of the service must also be provided. The last day of the fiscal year (6/30/20XX) can be provided unless an earlier end date is identified.

The top of the Employment Incentive Request Form also requests the RDID. The RDID is a unique Service Location identifier that is 12 characters long (for example: PR04100354SR). RDIDs can be found on WebResDay or eCamris and is also provided at agency quality review meetings. Contact your Resource Manager if you need assistance with RDIDs.

For the 1X Employment Incentives, the Service Category is used to indicate the individual's current service option. Providers will select the individual's current service, this will indicate whether the right or left side is filled out when selecting the funding. The only time this is not the case is for Customized Employment. Customized Employment follows a separate funding structure on the 1X document. Customized Employment is only selected as the service category when providers are submitting for Customized Employment funding.

After completing the administrative information at the top of the 1X Request Form, providers will choose the path that is appropriate to the services the individual currently receives.

Providers will use the **left side** for individuals in Group Day Supports such as GSE, ETS, DSO, or DSH for a rate of **$83.32 per hour.**

Providers will use the **right side** for individuals in all other services including ISE, IDV or IDN, or a combination of ISE and Group Day for a rate of **$70.52 per hour.**

Employment Incentives

Individual's Name:	John Jones	DDS#	12345
Service Category:	ISE		
Provider Name:	Provider A	Case Mgr:	Case Manager A
RDID#	PR04100354SR		
Contract Service Authorization	yes	Vendor Service Authorization	no
Start date:	1/5/2023	End Date:	6/30/2023
(Submit to Resource Manager 1)		(Submit to Case Manager)	

Choose the path that is appropriate to the services the individual currently receives

Units	Group Day/Customized Employment*		Units	IDV/ISE/ Group Day Combo or ISE only	
	Career Plan Hours (Max 10 Hrs.)			Career Plan Hours (Max 10 Hr.)	
	hrs x $81.25/hr (Group Day)	$ -		hrs X $68.76/hr	$ -
	Completed Career Plan $980.96			Completed Career Plan $980.96	
	(Enter 1 unit)	$ -		(Enter 1 unit)	$ -
	Working Interview Staff Hrs (Max 40)			Working Interview Staff Hrs (Max 40)	
	hrs x $81.25/hr (Group Day)	$ -		hrs X $68.76/hr	$ -
	Individual Wages (Max 40 hrs.)			Individual Wages (Max 40 hrs.)	
	hrs. X $20.17/hr	$ -		hrs. X $20.17/hr	$ -
	Intensive Job Placement & Training			Intensive Job Placement & Training	
	hrs x $81.25/hr (Group Day)	$ -		hrs X $68.76/hr	$ -

Once completed, the 1X Employment Incentive Employment Incentive Request Form will be sent to the individual's assigned Case Manager and the provider's assigned Resource Manager.

When an individual has transitioned to an Individual Supported Employment (ISE) placement, providers can submit for benchmark payments. A new 1X form must be submitted. Providers can submit for all anticipated benchmarks at one time. Payment will not be made until deliverables are submitted to Resource Management or the Fiscal Intermediaries via invoice.

	Individual must have transitioned to ISE to be eligible for Benchmarks ***Prorated for scheduled hrs. below 25 hrs. per week*** ***Select "yes" or "No" for applicable Benchmarks.***	
	Job Start Benchmark (up to $4000)	
yes		$ 4,000.00
	3 Month Benchmark (up to $4000)	
yes		$ 4,000.00
	6 Month Benchmark (up to $4000)	
yes		$ 4,000.00
	12 Month Benchmark	
yes	(up to $4000)	$ 4,000.00
	Transition to Natural Supports	
	(up to $4000)	$ -
	Total	$ 16,000.00

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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1. What happens if an individual finds employment for less than five days a week but really needs five days a week of supports?

The individual can still participate in part-time on-going group day supports and part time supported employment as long as the services are **not** occurring at the same time (provider cannot bill for these two services at the same time: double billing is not allowed). As of 10/1/2022, the cap on ISE hours has been removed. An individual will be able to utilize their Day funding for ISE or a combination of ISE and other Day supports – up to their LON amount. For more information, see Operation_Center_Memo_FY23-24_Updated_Funding_Guidelines.pdf (ct.gov) and the DDS_Funding_Guidelines_Version_6-1-23.pdf (ct.gov).

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2. Who can I contact if I have questions?

Private Providers should contact their Resource Manager for Incentive questions and Case Manager for specific questions regarding an individual's supports.

DDS Case Managers should contact their supervisor. If assistance is still needed, contact the Employment & Day Services team at DDS.Employment-DayServices@ct.gov.

3. Can providers continue to put in for the ongoing Employment Incentives for individuals on their caseload in conjunction with the ARPA Plan incentives?

Yes, providers can access both the ISE 1X Incentives and the ARPA Incentives.

DDS 1X Employment Incentives are ongoing rates meant to incentivize employment for individuals. ARPA funds are meant to incentivize agencies to transition their service models to non-congregate services with a focus on employment services and service models that support independence. Providers have access to both funding streams and access to ARPA incentive does not disqualify the agency from applying for 1X Employment Incentives for individuals on their caseload.

4. What is the difference between the 1X Employment Incentives for ISE and Customized Employment?

The 1X Employment Incentives for ISE and Customized Employment are separate service models. Both services are non-annualized funding, meaning they do not affect an individual's annual budget. All non-annualized funding requests are submitted on the 1X Employment Incentives Request Form linked here. Customized Employment (CE) Services are highly structured and follow a detailed process with specific deliverables. The 1X Employment Incentives for ISE are less structured and are not as in depth as the services received in CE.

Individuals who need highly structured, specifically modified, customized supports to achieve competitive integrated employment may be good candidates for Customized Employment. Individuals who do not need as structured supports may be better candidates for the 1X Employment Incentives for ISE. For more information about Customized Employment services, click here. For more information about the funding/authorization process for Customized Employment, click here.

5. What is the RDID and where can I find it?

The RDID is a unique Service Location identifier that is 12 characters long (for example: PR04100354SR). RDIDs can be found on WebResDay or eCamris and is also provided at agency quality review meetings. Contact your Resource Manager if you need assistance with RDIDs.

6. How are 1X's billed if a provider agency doesn't have ISE on their contract?

If the agency is a Qualified Day Services provider agency but does not have ISE on their Master Contract, the services can be paid through the Individual Budget System as a 1X instead of with annual funding through WebResDay. The provider will submit invoices to the FI to receive payment. In addition, the provider's Master Contract should be amended to add ISE. This takes approximately. two months to finalize.

Benchmarks

7. How are the benchmarks handled for individuals who are in seasonal employment? If they work seasonally for one summer and then return the following summer, are they eligible for benchmarks each year?

In the case where employment is seasonal, the benchmarks are only applicable the first year. The provider cannot apply for the benchmarks a second time when the individual returns to that position the next year/season the opportunity is in place.

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8. How are the benchmarks handled for individuals who have part time employment before the 1X process and now have another part time employment opportunity obtained through the 1X process?

In some cases, individuals who are employed part time may want to explore an additional part time employment opportunity. If this is the case, providers can use the 1X process to help the individual obtain another part time opportunity. <u>Providers will qualify for benchmark payments for the new employment opportunity only.</u> When submitting for the benchmark payment, providers will only submit hours worked at the new employment opportunity that was obtained through the 1X process. Hours worked at the original employment setting cannot be included in the benchmark payment if the job placement was not achieved through the 1X process.

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9. When submitting time for benchmark payments, does hours worked include sick and vacation time?

Yes. Hours worked includes all paid time including sick, vacation, and holidays.

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10. Can providers submit for all anticipated benchmarks at one time?

Yes, providers can submit for all anticipated benchmarks at one time. Individuals must have transitioned to an Individual Supported Employment (ISE) placement before providers can submit for benchmark payments. A new 1X form must be submitted. Payment will not be made until deliverables are submitted to Resource Management or the Fiscal Intermediaries via invoice.

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11. What do I do if I am having a hard time getting paystubs from an individual? Do I need to submit paystubs to recieve benchmark payments?

Provider agencies must submit the first paystub for the job-start benchmark and year-to-date paystubs for the 3, 6, and 12-month benchmark payments. Copies of paystubs are acceptable as well as pictures of paystubs (must be clear and readable).

If providers are having a difficult time collecting paystubs, they should reach out to the individual job seeker's Case Manager for support. Deliverables for benchmark payments were simplified in 2022, providers no longer need to submit every paystub. Instead, providers can submit the first paystub for the job start benchmark and then a new year-to-date paystub for each corresponding benchmark (paystub at 3, 6, and 12 months). In some cases, provider agencies have created arrangements with the employer to get a copy of paystubs directly from the employer with consent of the individual.

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12. Can a provider submit for benchmark payments if they found an individual a job in the community through traditional ISE not with the ISE 1X incentives?

If a provider agency helped an individual in ISE get a competitive job and continues to provide ISE supports for this individual, the provider can submit for benchmark payments.

Employment Training Incentives

13. Can the Employment Training Incentive be used to cover travel costs to an employment training/conference?

No. The Employment Training Incentives **cannot be used** to cover the cost of travel, lodging, etc. associated with an employment training or conference. The incentive can only be used to cover the actual cost of participant registration for employment training sessions or to reimburse providers for the additional cost of replacement staff used to cover staff who are at an employment training/conference.