

# Supported Employment Protocol Manual

**DIVISION OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH  
NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
FINAL 3-1-20**

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## **PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF MANUAL**

This manual provides guidance on the processes for Supported Employment service provision and billing. This includes guidance on serving and billing for:

- Consumers with mental health concerns served under the braided funding with Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) (traditional)
- Consumers with mental health concerns served while VR is under Order of Selection
- Consumers with substance use disorders only funded solely by the Division of Behavioral Health (DBH)

## **FEDERAL SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT DEFINITION, EXPECTATIONS AND RECENT CHANGES**

### **Federal Definition**

The term "supported employment" refers to competitive work in integrated work settings, consistent with the strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice of the individuals, for individuals with the most significant disabilities -- for whom competitive employment has not historically occurred; or for whom competitive employment has been interrupted or intermittent as a result of a significant disability; and who, because of the nature and severity of their disability, need intensive supported employment services and extended services after transition in order to perform such work.

### **Federal Perspective**

The term "supported employment services" refers to ongoing support services and other appropriate services needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability in employment. Supported employment occurs in an integrated work setting in which an individual with a most significant disability is working in competitive integrated employment and is consistent with the individual's unique strengths, abilities, interests, and informed choice.

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## **STATE OF NEBRASKA SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT**

### **State Perspective**

Supported Employment as funded by DBH in cooperation with VR is designed to provide recovery and rehabilitation services and supports to consumers engaged in community-based competitive employment in integrated settings. A Supported Employment team provides assistance with all aspects of employment, including job search, acquisition and retention, as requested and needed by the consumer. The intent of the service is to support the consumer in the recovery process so the consumer's employment goals can be successfully obtained.

### **Components of Supported Employment**

The following components are integral to the provision of high fidelity supported employment:

- Services are person-centered and culturally-sensitive.
- Initial assessment completed to identify strengths, abilities, and interests.
- Plan for employment is developed with consumer.
- Benefits Orientation and other Benefits Planning Services provided to identify available work incentives for Social Security beneficiaries.
- Individualized job search with consumer based on individual's assessment, preferences, and informed choice.

- Employer contact based on individual's need and choice, typically provided within one month of program entry.
- On-site job coaching and support.
- Follow-along supports provided to employer and consumer.
- The SE specialist participates on consumer's treatment/rehabilitation/recovery team as needed and requested by consumer and includes crisis relapse prevention planning.
- Employment plan is reviewed and updated with consumer as needed, but at least every six months.

## **Eligibility and Payment for Services**

### **1. Traditional**

DBH partners with VR to pay for supported employment (SE) services when a comprehensive assessment indicates a person's need for this service, which may be authorized for those with the most significant disabilities. DBH and VR pay for different "milestones" in the process of consumer job search, employment and employment retention.

VR determines eligibility and priority status for each person. SE services may be authorized for those in priority group one, as that group is identified to have the most significant disabilities. Priority groups are established for the purpose of ensuring that those with the most significant disabilities are served first when funding is not available to serve all eligible people. Priority Groups are as follows:

**Priority Group 1** – The individual has a severe physical or mental impairment resulting in a rating of very low in two or more functional areas.

**Priority Group 2** – The individual has a severe physical or mental impairment that results in a very low rating in one functional area or receives SSDI or SSI based on disability. Individuals who receive SSDI or SSI automatically qualify for Priority Group 2 and are assessed to determine whether they qualify for Priority Group 1.

**Priority Group 3** – All eligible individuals. These individuals must have a low rating in at least one of seven functional areas.

The functional areas assessed are: Communication, Interpersonal skills, Mobility, Self-Care, Self-Direction, Work Skills, and Work Tolerance. For the purpose of DBH SE, the impairment must be based on mental illness.

### **2. When VR is under Order of Selection (OOS)**

Nebraska VR provides a full range of vocational rehabilitation services, as appropriate, to all eligible individuals who apply. In the event that sufficient funding is not available to accomplish this aim, the agency must implement an Order of Selection Policy. Under Order of Selection, any available funding is authorized for services to those in Priority group 1 first, Priority group 2 next, and so on. VR may close one, two or all three priority groups when funding is not available, and people are placed on a waiting list until such funding is available.

Under this policy, if VR has implemented an OOS for Priority 1 consumers, VR will still determine eligibility and priority status for each person as stated in #1, above. The person will then be placed on a VR waitlist and notified when VR is able to again pay for service. During this time, DBH will pay for SE Milestones when achieved until VR is able to authorize funding.

### **3. Persons with Substance Use Disorders**

DBH also funds services for individuals with a Substance Use Disorder. Unless the person is on SSI/SSDI and is determined by VR to have Priority One status, DBH will pay all SE Milestones for those whose substance use is a significant barrier to attaining and maintaining employment.

### **4. Persons already employed**

When a person is already employed, but is referred or self-refers to VR, VR will determine eligibility, priority, and place the person on the waiting list, as applicable. DBH will determine milestones to be paid when VR is under OOS. When VR is not under OOS, and a person comes to VR already employed, a determination of payable milestones will be made by VR after discussion about stabilization on the job.

**Supported Employment  
Consumer Referral Process**

**And**

**Milestones 1-5**

## **REFERRAL TO SERVICES**

### **1. REFERRAL PROCESS FOR CONSUMERS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS WHEN VR IS NOT UNDER ORDER OF SELECTION**

**Step 1:** A consumer is first referred to VR for services (self-referral, or by a treatment or support provider).

- VR completes initial interview and consumer applies for services.
- VR determines consumer's eligibility and priority, based on criteria of the VR program.
- VR provides a Benefits Orientation and refers for other Benefits Services, as applicable.
- VR, along with the consumer and others, as applicable, develops an Individual Plan of Employment (IPE).
- Activities to support plan development are completed as needed, and may include:
  - career exploration
  - identification of needed community supports
  - community work assessment.
  - selection of a SE Provider

**Step 2:** A referral is made by the VR Specialist to the SE Provider if the consumer and VR Specialist agree that SE is needed for her/him to be successfully employed. The referral information includes copies of:

- The IPE.
- The "Discover the Job that Works for You" workbook, if completed.
- Employment history.
- A summary of the Benefits Orientation.
- VR Service Authorization for Milestones payment.
- Other assessments and all pertinent records that may be re-released.

**Step 3:** VR will make a referral for Benefits Services based on the consumer's informed choice of Benefits Services providers with which VR has a service agreement.

### **2. REFERRAL PROCESS FOR CONSUMERS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS WHEN VR IS UNDER ORDER OF SELECTION**

**Step 1:** Once a person self-refers or is referred by a service provider to SE, they should go to VR to have an eligibility determination and priority status determination. If determined to be VR-eligible the person will be placed on the waitlist. The person should then be referred back to the SE provider.

**Step 2:** The SE provider will assist the individual to confirm via email from VR that they are on the VR waiting list, register the person in the Division's Centralized Data System, and create an employment profile including information as required by VR/DBH.

**Step 3:** The SE provider, along with the consumer and others, as applicable, develops a plan for employment.

**Step 4:** Once VR begins serving individuals on the VR waitlist in priority order by date of application, providers will follow protocol developed by DBH/VR to bill VR for subsequent VR Milestones, as appropriate.

### **3. REFERRAL PROCESS FOR CONSUMERS WITH SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS**

For persons not eligible for VR, those with substance use disorders may be referred for SE Services via self-referral or referral from a clinical or support services.

**Step 1:** The SE provider will register the person in the Division's Centralized Data System and create an employment profile template.

**Step 2:** The SE provider, along with the consumer and others, as applicable, develops an employment plan and follows the steps for traditional supported employment, billing all milestones to DBH.

## **KEY OUTCOMES OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT: THE MILESTONES**

### **MILESTONE 1: SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT JOB SEARCH AGREEMENT**

#### **PROCESS FOR SE PROVIDER**

- The SE provider, along with the consumer and others, as applicable, develops a plan for employment
- SE provider reviews all referral documentation from VR when they are actively involved
- SE provider notifies VR SE liaison of consumer's acceptance to SE program if applicable
- SE provider completes Intake and services are initiated.
- The SE program staff develop the Job Search Plan with the Consumer and approval of the plan is verified by the Consumer and SE program staff signature.
  - Note that the Job Search Plan takes into account information obtained from the Benefits Orientation, so that the person may make an initial choice about earning income that may impact benefits. Additional information from Benefits Services authorizations will be made available as soon as reports are received by VR.

#### **DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED in consumer file**

A plan for employment is developed.

A written Job Search plan is signed by the consumer.

- The plan includes the following:
  - Consumer's strengths
  - Consumer's job preferences
  - IPE goal (and other acceptable options for employment)
  - Discussion of possible work incentives to be used as identified in the Benefits Orientation provided by VR.
- Job expectations:
  - Number of hours desired,
  - Hourly pay desired, and
  - Benefits needed.
- Supports needed, which may include: transportation, coaching, assistive technology, job accommodations
- Barriers to employment (poor job record, criminal justice history, medical impairments)
- How satisfaction of consumer and employer will be determined and documented
- Plan, signed by consumer and SE provider, sent to VR, when agency is involved

### **MILESTONE 2: JOB PLACEMENT**

#### **OUTCOMES EXPECTED**

- The Job Search Plan is implemented with goals based on the Employment Plan
- Consumer is hired by an employer

#### **Notes:**

- There is one Milestone 2 payment per consumer per year. If an additional payment is needed for a consumer, a written request explaining why it is needed must be sent to DHHS/DBH. This will be reviewed and response returned to the SE provider. Documentation of the request and response must be included in the consumer record.



If applicable, notify the VR counselor on any changes to goals and obtain signature from the consumer for the change.

***DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED in consumer file***

(Must be completed by SE Employment Specialist no later than 5 business days after consumer starts new job):

- "Employer field" in CDS
- "Job Title" field and "Type of Work Acquired" fields in CDS
- "M-2 End Date" field in CDS
- "Hours per week" field in CDS
- "Hourly Wage" field in CDS
- "Employer Benefits Offered" check boxes in CDS
- "Job Search Supports Provided" check boxes in CDS
- Any revisions to the plan based on job placement. When VR is involved, if employment goal is needing revision, it must be conveyed to VR/meeting held to discuss so that job at closure is consistent with the goal in IPE.

**Notes:**

- Only one SE M-2 payment will be made per consumer per 12-month period unless an exception is allowed.
- If an additional payment is needed for a consumer, the SE Provider must submit a written request to DHHS/DBH explaining why it is needed, along with included documentation of all agency activity taken to assist the consumer in retaining the job. The written request must document the circumstance of job loss, determination of initial job suitability for the consumer, skills and activities taught or completed that may have mitigated events that led to the job loss, and summarize any other activities by the SE Provider to support the consumer's success with employment. DHHS may approve or deny the additional payment at its sole discretion. Written requests must be sent via email to [DHHS.DBHNetworkOperations@nebraska.gov](mailto:DHHS.DBHNetworkOperations@nebraska.gov). (See Appendix D for criteria).

Any time a consumer reenters Milestone 2 services, a new encounter must be created for the consumer. Providers must copy the original encounter, discharge the consumer from the original encounter as "Unemployed – Laid Off/Looking" and admit the consumer once more to SE in the new encounter. If the consumer is employed but looking to increase hours then the provider will select the best fitting option for the employment status.

### ***MILESTONE 3: JOB STABILIZATION***

***OUTCOMES EXPECTED***

- Job stabilization: the consumer is working at the job, and coaching time has stabilized at a predictable level.
- There is agreement between the consumer, Employment Specialist, Employer (when possible) and VR Counselor (if applicable) that job stabilization has been achieved.
- Consumer must be on job at least 30 days, with time worked being sufficient to establish a representative sample of job performance across time and situations.

***DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED in consumer file***

- "Stabilization Criteria" check boxes in CDS for employer and consumer job satisfaction.
- IPE is updated by VR, as needed. Plan documents any identified training and supports needed to continue successful employment.
- Signed and dated copy of CDS Employment Tab printout after M3, with both consumer and SE provider signatures present.

## **MILESTONE 4: VR CLOSURE AND JOB RETENTION PLAN**

### **OUTCOMES EXPECTED**

- A job retention plan is created.
  - The focus of the Job Retention Plan is on identifying specific long term supports that will be needed. The Job Retention Plan must include the following items:
    - Consumer Contact: (projected number of times per month) specify face to face, email, phone or text.
    - Employer Contact: (projected number of times per month) specify face to face, email, phone or text.
    - Natural Supports to be developed and how this will be accomplished
    - Job Retention & Maintenance Skills
    - Symptom Management Plan
    - Income reporting requirements (To benefits providers - Social Security, Medicaid, Housing, SNAP) and any follow-up needed with Benefits Services agency/Employment Network, as applicable
    - Anticipated Discharge Date from SE (not more than 24 months from job stabilization)
    - Consumer's Signature
- VR closes the case (if applicable).

**NOTES:** Closure and retention may occur no sooner than 90 days after employment starts and consumer is successfully working at the job.

### **DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED in consumer file**

- VR Closure date, signed and dated copy of CDS Employment Tab printout with consumer, VR Counselor (if applicable), and SE Employment Specialist signatures present.
  - "Employer Satisfaction Confirmed" and "Consumer Satisfaction" check boxes in CDS completed and present on CDS Employment Tab printout.
- "Supported Employment Services Following Stabilization" check boxes in CDS completed and present on CDS Employment Tab printout.
  - NOTE referral and arrangements made with chosen Employment Network and Ticket to Work Assignment, as applicable, for SSDI/SSI recipients
- A crisis relapse prevention plan.
- Any applicable update on wages, hours, and benefits.
- Anticipated discharge date from SE (No longer than 24 months from job stabilization date per federal requirement).

NOTE: All documentation for milestones 1-4 must be sent to VR. The provider may send copies of the completed Milestones forms or a copy of the print-out of information from the CDS that shows the supports provided and supports projected for the next milestone. In addition, when a person is coming off the waiting list, a copy of the plan for employment must be sent to VR to aid in the development of the Individual Plan for Employment (IPE), as applicable. These documents support the continuity of services as provided/funded under each program and is essential to ensure proper documentation of both VR and DBH.

## **MILESTONE 5: LONG TERM SUPPORTS**

### **OUTCOMES EXPECTED**

- The Job Retention Plan is implemented.
- The consumer continues to work.
- The consumer continues to receive rehab and/or treatment services, based on the service plan, to assist in managing symptoms of the behavioral health disorder and retaining employment.

- There are ongoing supports following completion of Milestone 4.  
**Note:** A consumer may be in SE (including Long Term Supports) up to 24 months from date of job stabilization. Notify DBH at 22 months if more time is needed for Long Term Supports. DBH approval for any extension is required. To be submitted to the DBH Network Services Administrator, this request must be in writing, thoroughly describes the consumer's need for additional supports, and, includes an anticipated date that supports will no longer be needed. DBH will respond to the request for extension within 30 days.
- Clinical coordination continues.
- Discharge as soon as possible when consumer is independent on a job.

#### **DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED in consumer file**

- Monthly feedback from employer or documentation of why feedback is not available.
- Monthly feedback from consumer
- Behavioral health supports are continued as needed per the Job Retention Plan.
- The plan does not require the use of an SE Employment Specialist to provide ongoing long-term support.
- Describe specific supports from Job Retention Plan that are used and billed by SE program staff. "Consumer Long Term Supports" check boxes filled out and present on Employment Tab printout.
- SE Providers should enter the number of units (hours) of long-term support provided into the Central Data System (CDS). The Turn Around Document will serve as supportive documentation for reimbursement for support provided during the month. Providers should document the types of long-term support provided and the amount of time for each service in the consumer file as designated in the following list:
  - i. Work Performance Skills
  - ii. Work Related Social Skills
  - iii. Job Attendance
  - iv. Coping Skills
  - v. Interpersonal Relationships (employer, supervisor, co-workers)
  - vi. Symptom Management
  - vii. Work/Life Balance
  - viii. Conflict Resolution
  - ix. Personal Appearance
  - x. Natural Supports
  - xi. Problem Solving
  - xii. Worksite Accommodations
  - xiii. Transportation
  - xiv. Benefits Monitoring (Social Security, Medicaid, housing, SNAP, etc.)\

### **Best Practices**

#### **Training:**

1. All agencies providing SE should train all staff, including administration and management, on the impact of employment on the social determinants of health. All employees should be able to speak to consumers and others regarding the potential impact employment may have on their lives.
2. Agency staff should be informed on other available employment services and supports available in the catchment area including American Job Centers, nonprofits or other services. Referrals to other services should be made when the individual does not have high employment/mental health needs that SE is intended to serve.
3. Collaboration should occur across systems to maximize resources to best meet consumer need. Potential activities could include the creation of brief fact sheets to be shared among the entities, site visits, trainings and "meet and greet" opportunities. This work may be best approached locally or regionally.

#### **Service provision:**

1. When an individual is referred to VR for SE, the VR specialist, SE staff and consumer should meet at the time of referral to expedite determination of eligibility and facilitate communication on next steps. VR staff may agree to meet regularly at the SE provider location to accomplish this "warm handoff".
2. Every effort should be made for the SE staff to be included as part of the consumer's treatment team. Progress on attaining/maintaining employment should occur regularly.
3. Job development should be individualized and job search rapid. Consumer preferences should be established and honored when securing employment.
4. Consumers receiving benefits should receive benefits services from an individual qualified to do such work.

### **Job Development/Job Match**

1. SE staff should establish a broad base of potential employers. This may be accomplished by 1) introducing oneself as someone who helps people find employment, 2) developing an understanding what the employer does and what they need in employees, including prerequisites, prior to consumer referral to the employer, and only then 3) suggesting to the employer that they will be sending a potential employee over to fill a vacancy.

## Milestones Payments Quick Reference Chart

MILESTONE	DESCRIPTION/ACTIVITIES	PAYMENT	DBH VR	DBH OOS	SUD only	Already In Job
<b>MILESTONE 1</b> – Referral-Initiate SE Services-IPE development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>VR, clinical, and financial eligibility and priority determined</li> </ul>	\$1,000	VR/SE	VR/SE	SE	VR/SE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff and consumer develop plan for employment</li> </ul>		VR	SE	SE	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff completes registration in CDS</li> </ul>		SE	SE	SE	SE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notification of VR acceptance in to Program</li> </ul>		Yes	Yes	No	Yes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SE program staff develops and <b>submits Job Search Plan</b></li> </ul>		SE	SE	SE	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Milestone 1</li> <li>Paid by:</li> </ul>		VR	DBH	DBH	VR
<b>MILESTONE 2</b> - Job Search and Placement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff implement Job Search Plan activities.</li> <li>Develops resume and assists with applications matching consumer to job(s) consistent with employment plan goal,</li> <li>Contacts employer, places consumer on job,</li> <li>Teaches job seeking skills and provides employer education as needed.</li> </ul>	Per FY BH Rates Sheet - Payment upon receipt of invoice for Milestone 2	SE	SE	SE	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meets with VR liaison monthly to review progress.</li> </ul>		Yes	No until OOS lifted	No	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notifies VR immediately with Job information.</li> </ul>		Yes	No until OOS lifted	No	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Milestone 2 paid by</li> </ul>		DBH	DBH	DBH	N/A

<b>MILESTONE 3 - Job Coaching and Stabilization</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Program staff and consumer jointly develop job-specific strategies and accommodations.</li> <li>Program staff provides on/off-site job coaching and supports to stabilize consumer on the job.</li> <li>Maintains regular contact with employer.</li> <li>Program staff, consumer, employer, as applicable, and VR liaison agree to the job stabilization.</li> <li>Amend the IPE, as needed.</li> <li>SE Program staff <b>submits Milestone 3 CDS Employment Tab printout no sooner than 30-days after job start date</b></li> </ul>	\$1,500	SE	SE	SE	SE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Milestone 3 paid by</li> </ul>		VR	DBH	DBH	VR
<b>MILESTONE 4 - Closure &amp; Job Retention Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Program staff maintains regular contact with consumer and employer, building long-term natural supports for job retention.</li> </ul>	\$1,500	VR	SE	SE	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agreement of closure on case</li> <li>A meeting is held to agree on successful employment outcome and plan for long-term support needs.</li> <li>SE Program staff <b>submits Milestone 4</b></li> </ul>		SE VR Consumer	SE VR Consumer	SE Consumer	SE VR Consumer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>CDS Employment Tab</b> completed</li> </ul>		SE	SE	SE	VR
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Milestone 4 paid by</b></li> </ul>		VR	DBH	DBH	VR
<b>MILESTONE 5 - Long Term Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SE Program staff maintains regular contact with consumer and employer.</li> <li>Provides long-term job supports.</li> <li><b>Submits invoice for ongoing long term supports</b> while gradually reducing contact as consumer becomes more independent.</li> <li>SE provided is for a period of time not to extend beyond 24 months from job stabilization (see federal service definition requirement).</li> </ul>	Hourly Rate: Per FY BH Rates Sheet to be paid upon receipt of invoice for Milestone 5				
	Milestone 5 is paid by		DBH	DBH	DBH	DBH

## **Appendix A:**

### **SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT FLEX FUNDS GUIDANCE**

#### ***DBH FLEX FUNDS GUIDANCE***

The SE Flexible Funds will be paid according to DBH guidance and must be directly related to job and IPE. Regional Behavioral Health Authority (RBHA) will determine whether they wish to use SE dollars for flexible funding. DBH Flex Funds may be used anytime during Milestones 1-5. These funds are from DBH and not paid by VR.

#### **Purpose**

Supported Employment Flex Funds (SEFF) are available to each consumer enrolled in SE Services to provide the necessary resources to address identified employment needs in implementing an approved Individual Plan of Employment (IPE).

#### **Applicability**

The Behavioral Health Supported Employment (BHSE) Provider can use SEFF resources to assist with the implementation of an IPE.

- The BHSE is responsible to maintain all supporting documentation needed to substantiate any SEFF claims.
- There is documentation showing the items purchased **cannot** be provided through Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Labor, other funding mechanisms or more traditional service provision modalities.
- Authorized use includes the following: transportation (gas, auto repair), tools, uniforms, medications, lab work, and related areas that are directly related to job attainment or retention.

#### **Accountability**

- The RBHA chooses whether it will use SE funding for SEFF.
- If the RBHA is willing to use its SE allocation for SEFF, each BHSE provider designates an allocation of Flexible Funds which is then approved by the RBHA. RBHA may choose to increase SE allocation for Flex Fund purposes.
- The RBHA shall ensure these Flexible Funds are used to purchase goods and services for eligible consumers based on needs identified in the Employment Plan.
- Use of SEFF resources needs to comply with DBH requirements pertaining to allowable and unallowable costs.
- The funds are subject to additional restrictions as may be imposed by the RBHA.

#### **Financial Reporting**

- The RBHA shall have a process for authorizing, monitoring, and accounting for the expenditures of SEFF resources.
- The RBHA shall insure the provider's SEFF expenditures do not exceed budgeted amounts.
- A monthly financial report must be submitted by the RBHA to DBH for the utilization of SEFF resources.
- The use of all SEFF will be monitored by the Department to evaluate cost effectiveness and the impact of SEFF resources on consumer outcomes.

# **Appendix B** **BH-SE1 Flex Funds** **Supported Employment Consumer Billing Form**

NE Department of Health and Human Services  
 Division of Behavioral Health

PROVIDER/REGION: \_\_\_\_\_  
 BILLING FOR MONTH/YEAR: \_\_\_\_\_  
 DATE SUBMITTED: \_\_\_\_\_

Effective 10-1-14

CONSUMER NAME:	DATE:
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1. DBH Flex Funds may not be used for any item, service or expense that can be paid for in full by Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation or other source unless VR is under OOS or the individual is not VR eligible.
2. DBH Flex Funds may be in combination with other sources with permission from DHHS.
3. Flex Funds may only be used to purchase goods or services for SE eligible consumers based up the Employment Plan.

## **CONSUMER NEED FOR FLEX FUNDS (as documented in the IPE)**

<i>Items Eligible for Flex Funds</i>	<i>Cost:</i>
Transportation to/from residence and work only (gas, bus tickets, taxi) during job search and until person can pay for cost through earnings	\$0.00
One-time Car Repairs	\$0.00
Tools required for performance of job not provided by employer (most economical set available)	\$0.00
Required clothing, uniforms, work shoes, or other required apparel not provided by employer or Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation	\$0.00
License or permit fees required for employment (one time)	\$0.00
Medications for the consumer	\$0.00
Lab work or testing required for employment & not paid for by employer	\$0.00
Other (pre-approved by DBH):	\$0.00
Other (pre-approved by DBH):	\$0.00
Other (pre-approved by DBH):	\$0.00
<b>TOTAL - SE Flex Funds \$</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>

**Attach documentation showing that items purchased cannot be provided through Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Labor, and other funding mechanisms, OR through more traditional services. If documentation is not available, explain below.**

DOCUMENTATION EXPLANATION (as needed):
--

X \_\_\_\_\_  
 ORIGINAL SIGNATURE: Supported Employment Staff Date

X \_\_\_\_\_  
 ORIGINAL SIGNATURE: Agency Fiscal Manager/Director Date



## **Appendix C:**

### **BACKGROUND AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETION OF EMPLOYMENT PLAN - BH**

**BACKGROUND:** At present, due to the closing of all priority groups under Order of Selection (OOS), Nebraska VR is unable to fund supported employment (SE) milestones for those on its waiting list. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) / Division of Behavioral (DBH) and VR have developed a plan to continue Nebraska's SE efforts for those with Behavioral Health needs until such time that VR is able to serve people from its waiting list. Potential interim funding methods have been authorized by DBH for those who are on the VR waiting list.

In anticipation of conversion back to traditional SE should funding be available for VR, an interim Employment Plan is needed for each person on VR's waiting list who will be served with alternative funding for SE. A template for the Employment Plan is provided to the Regions for use by BH SE providers. The aim in using this format is to track the employment activities and supports provided using printouts of the Employment Tab from the CDS. With this documentation it will be possible to determine where the person is in the employment process should VR be able to begin serving people from its waiting list.

#### **INSTRUCTIONS:**

- Complete the identifying information
- Verify the person is on the VR waiting list by obtaining a copy of the individual's Eligibility/Priority Group letter from VR. This letter should accompany the referral from VR.
- Fill out the appropriate steps in CDS and attach to the employment plan for submission to VR. This print-out is intended to reduce the duplication of documentation as it reports activities previously documented on Milestones forms. Information in CDS must be entered, the CDS employment tab must be printed out, and attached to the employment plan as documentation of services. A copy of the information provided to VR should be kept in the consumer's file.

## **Appendix D**

### **Criteria for Paying for Additional Milestone 2**

When a consumer completes Milestone 2, the provider receives payment for Milestone 2 completion, and the consumer subsequently suffers job loss, a new payment for Milestone 2 services may be authorized upon receipt of a written request from the provider to DHHS/DBH sent in a secure format via email to [DHHS.DBHNetworkOperations@nebraska.gov](mailto:DHHS.DBHNetworkOperations@nebraska.gov). Without a written request, no additional payment will be authorized. The written request must include:

- Name of consumer
- Initial job placement
- Detailed explanation of circumstances leading to job loss
- Narrative justification for issuance of second Milestone 2 payment

DHHS/DBH will review the written request, make a determination, and either authorize a second Milestone 2 payment or send the provider a written notice denying the payment with an explanation for the denial.

## **Appendix E**

### **Supported Employment Reviews and Audit Tool**

#### **Review Process**

Supported Employment as a service has a unique status in the behavioral health system, due to its hybrid billing nature and braided-funding status. As such, it should be reviewed in a manner specific to the unique aspects of the service itself. Supported Employment's unique billing requirements and service delivery expectations dictate an in-depth review of the data entered for each encounter, as well as the timelines that accompany them. The process and standards described herein are requirements **in addition to** those described above.

#### **CDS Data Entry**

Beginning 9/1/2018, each Milestone's information was required to be entered into the CDS. This was done to allow review of service timelines, ensure proper delivery of services, and to attain a better understanding of the service as a whole. Supported Employment encounters should be reviewed in CDS first, to ensure that the information found in the file is (1) present in CDS, and (2) matches the information presented. The Supported Employment Tool provides detailed points to check when auditing the service. It takes the form of questions with Yes/No options. Demonstrable, substantial compliance with the requested information is required to attain a "Yes" designation for the required component. Each completed Milestone for a consumer should be reviewed using the Supported Employment Audit Tool. If a Milestone has not been completed, the non-applicable sections of the Audit Tool are not required to be filled out and should be absent from the completed review form.

#### **Service Delivery**

Review of the delivery of Supported Employment services should focus on the job search and timelines of each Milestone achieved at the point of review. Additional attention should be given to requests for additional milestones. Each Milestone has a specific period attached to it for proper service delivery in the service definition, and the minimum period guidelines for each Milestone should be adhered to in each case. The Supported Employment Audit Tool should be used as the standard (or a template) evaluation tool for audits of this service. As mentioned above, the components to be reviewed during an audit of Supported Employment are listed explicitly in the Supported Employment Audit Tool, with Yes/No options for each component. Possible sources of documentation are listed by each component, seeking to demonstrate substantial evidence of delivery of the service as indicated in CDS, and the consumer's file for Supported Employment.

## Supported Employment Audit Tool

Consumer:

Last Milestone reached: 1 2 3 4 5

### Milestones

Milestone	Component	Present?
1	Copy of letter/email from VR confirming referral to SE services in file.	Y/N N/A
1	Plan for employment was developed, present in file.	Y/N
1	Written job search plan is present, signed by consumer.	Y/N
1	Job search plan includes consumer's strengths, job preferences, IPE goal (with other acceptable employment options, and discussion of possible work incentives to be used, if any.	Y/N
1	Job expectations for number of hours desired, hourly pay desired, and benefits needed present in file.	Y/N
1	Job supports needed by consumer explicitly outlined in file.	Y/N
1	Barriers to employment highlighted in file.	Y/N
1	Metrics for gauging consumer and employer satisfaction documented in file.	Y/N
1	Job search plan signed by consumer, provider, and sent to VR when agency involved.	Y/N N/A

Milestone 2		
2	"M-2 End Date" field in CDS filled in.	Y/N
2	"Employer" field in CDS is filled in.	Y/N
2	"Job Title" and "Type of Work Acquired" fields in CDS filled in.	Y/N
2	"Hours per Week" and "Hourly Wage" fields in CDS filled in.	Y/N
2	"Date of Review of Benefits Plan / Work Incentives Plan" and "Benefits Service Provider" fields in CDS filled in.	Y/N
2	"Job Search Supports Provided" checkboxes selected.	Y/N
2	Revisions to Job Search Plan provided in CDS and communicated to VR (if agency involved) to keep job closure consistent with goal in IPE.	Y/N

Milestone 3		
3	"Stabilization Criteria" checkboxes in CDS selected for employer and consumer job satisfaction.	Y/N
3	IPE updated by VR, as needed. If VR is under OOS, see Appendix C.	Y/N N/A
3	Plan documents any identified training and supports needed to continue successful employment.	Y/N
3	Signed and dated copy of CDS Employment Tab printout after M3, with both consumer and SE provider signatures present.	Y/N
3	File has documentation of supports provided through stabilization.	Y/N
3	CDS matches file's required components.	Y/N

Milestone 4		
4	VR Closure date, signed and dated copy of CDS Employment Tab printout with consumer, VR Counselor (if applicable), and SE Employment Specialist signatures present.	Y/N N/A
4	“Employer Satisfaction Confirmed” and “Consumer Satisfaction” checkboxes in CDS completed and present on CDS Employment Tab printout.	Y/N
4	“Supported Employment Services Following Stabilization” checkboxes in CDS completed and present on CDS Employment Tab printout.	Y/N
4	Crisis relapse prevention plan present in file.	Y/N
4	Hours worked, hourly wages, benefits updates made in CDS, if needed.	Y/N

Milestone 5		
5	Monthly feedback from employer present in file, or documentation of why feedback missing.	Y/N
5	Monthly feedback from consumer present in file.	Y/N
5	Behavioral health supports continued as needed per Job Retention Plan.	Y/N
5	Specific supports from Job Retention Plan used and billed by SE program staff are described.	Y/N
5	“Consumer Long Term Supports” check boxes filled out and present on Employment Tab printout.	Y/N
5	Turn Around Document hours billed and description of support provided match file.	Y/N



Additional Milestone 2	Component	Present?
	Additional Milestone 2 payment requested and authorized, with documentation of communication between provider and DBH.	Y/N N/A
	File contains documentation of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why additional M2 needed;</li> <li>• Agency activity to assist consumer in maintaining job;</li> <li>• Circumstances of job loss;</li> <li>• Determination of initial job suitability for consumer;</li> <li>• Skills and activities taught or completed to mitigate events leading to job loss.</li> </ul>	Y/N

#### Training:

Component	Possible Documentation	Occurring?
Does SE provider train all staff, including administration and management, on impact of employment as social determinant of health?	Meeting Notes Meeting Agenda Training completion certificates Training Schedule	Y/N
Does SE provider inform staff on other available employment services and supports available in the catchment area, including American Job Centers, nonprofits, or other services?	Handouts from agencies, nonprofits, etc. Posted contact information for other services, agencies, etc. (electronic or hard copy)	Y/N
Does SE provider collaborate across systems to maximize resources to best meet consumer need?	Fact sheets FAQ sheets Training curriculums/delivery Meet and Greet agendas	Y/N

Service Provision:

Component	Possible Documentation	Occurring?
Does SE provider meet with VR worker, SE staff, and consumer at time of referral to expedite eligibility determination, facilitate communications.	Signatures of all parties on initial referral document, with date	Y/N
Does SE provider make every effort to be included as part of consumer's treatment team to ensure progress made on attaining/maintaining employment regularly?	Attendance roll at treatment meetings for consumers Meeting notes for treatment meetings	Y/N
Does SE provider establish and honor consumer preferences when securing employment?	Provider notes showing inquiry into preferred fields, job types Documentation of contacts with employers in said fields, or employers in similar fields	Y/N
Does SE provider ensure benefits services are provided by individual qualified to do such work?	Documentation of credentials of benefits service provider	Y/N

Job Development:

Component	Possible Documentation	Occurring?
Does SE provider staff introduce themselves as individual who helps others find employment?	Training curriculum Employer feedback	Y/N
Does SE provider staff develop an understanding of what employer does and what employer needs from employees, including any prerequisites prior to consumer referral to employer?	Training curriculum Employer feedback	Y/N
Does SE provider staff accomplish previous two components before suggesting consumer as a potential employee?	Training curriculum Employer feedback	Y/N