

TO: Community Providers of Supported Employment Services
OVR Staff

FROM: Shannon Austin
Executive Director, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

RE: To give guidance to providers about the provision of Supported Employment Services during a period of state-mandated mitigation strategies for slowing the spread of Coronavirus Disease - 2019 (COVID-19).

ISSUED: April 3, 2020

EFFECTIVE: Immediately

DISCUSSION: The Pennsylvania Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) is committed to providing quality services to Pennsylvanians with disabilities. During this unprecedented time, the health and safety of our customers, staff, and community partners remain our top priority. All Commonwealth businesses should follow the most recent guidance issued by the Governor's Office. Please reference the guide for [Responding to COVID-19 in Pennsylvania](#) for updated information. Please visit the Department of Community & Economic Development's (DCED) website for resources for businesses affected by COVID-19 along with a current list of businesses allowed to operate and the waiver/exemption form (if applicable) at <https://dced.pa.gov/>. Vendors are responsible for ensuring that they are adhering to the Governor's direction, universal precautions, and social distancing requirements. This information is intended to be a guide regarding the allowable services and service provision methodologies OVR will be adhering to during the COVID 19 mitigation response and does not apply to any other circumstance.

This document only applies to Supported Employment services. Additional guidance regarding general services and pre-employment transition services will be issued separately.

Supported Employment (SE) services may not be provided virtually unless specified. Activities, both direct and indirect, that are billable for SE services remain the same as outlined in the *Billable Activities Reference for OVR Supported Employment Services* section below. During this time, specific SE services will be handled as follows:

1. **Community-Based Work Assessment (CBWA – SE100) and Discovery (SE110-SE11)**
 - a. CBWA (SE100) and Discovery (SE110-SE11) services may not be conducted virtually and should be temporarily suspended.

- b. For CBWA's that have been started but temporarily stopped, reports and invoices may be submitted for services already provided.
 - c. Completed services related to Discovery may also be reported and billed.
2. **Supported Employment Supports Plan (SESP – SE000)**
- a. SESP's may be completed virtually (e.g. phone call, teleconferencing, videotelephony apps such as Face Time and Google Duo).
 - b. Normal documentation and billing requirements remain in effect.
3. **Job Mentoring (SE009)**
- a. Job Mentoring may be provided virtually (e.g. phone call, teleconferencing, videotelephony apps such as Face Time or Google Duo).
 - b. Normal documentation and billing requirements remain in effect.
4. **Job Retention (SE010) and Intermittent SE (SE011)**
- a. Job Retention and Intermittent services will follow guidelines for Phase 2 (in 6 below).
5. **Phase 1: Job Development (SE001, SE001E, SE101, SE101E)**
- a. Customers who make the informed choice to seek employment during the COVID-19 pandemic may proceed with job development services as identified in his or her IPE.
 - b. Customers who make the informed choice to suspend seeking employment during this time may continue with a limited number of job development hours for virtual resume development and/or interview practice (5-10 hrs.) for those customers who have not had this type of assistance.
 - c. Job Development activities should be virtually one-to-one and not done in virtual groups.
 - d. Normal documentation and billing requirements remain in effect.
6. **Phase 2: Job Placement (first 40 hours of work) (SE002, SE102)**
- a. Job Placement and other onsite activities may continue, if the customer's jobsite is still open and the job has not been put on hold. Supports that would typically be onsite should be rendered onsite by provider per customer need, following universal precautions and any additional precautions adopted by employer or provider agency.
 - b. If the provider agency is closed or restricting agency staff from working on-site with customers, but the customer continues to work, an alternate vendor should be authorized to provide the on-site services as identified in the customer's IPE.
 - c. If the customer's job is temporarily on-hold, then supports should be suspended until the customer resumes employment. Service hours provided to date may be reported and invoiced up to the date the customer's employment was suspended.

- d. Normal documentation and billing requirements remain in effect.
7. **Phases 3-5: Job Maintenance, Job Stability and Closure (SE003-SE005 & SE103-SE105)**
 - a. Job Maintenance, Stability, and Closure will follow guidelines given for Phase 2 (in 6 above).
 - b. For those customers in these phases who experience an interruption to employment, guidance on how to calculate time periods for phases once the job begins again will be given at a later date.
 - c. If the customer did not meet a milestone for payment prior to employment interruption, no payment will be made.
 - d. Normal documentation and billing requirements remain in effect.
8. **Extended Services (SE006, SE106)**
 - a. Follow guidance given for Phase 2 (in 6 above).

Billable Activities Reference for OVR Supported Employment Services

Billable (Direct – customer must be present)

- Job Search activities (resumes, applications, interview prep)
- Researching/planning transportation to and from work
- Establishing natural supports and job accommodations
- Team meetings
- Instruction in self-advocacy
- Social skills training
- Behavior management
- Money management training
- Obtaining employment prerequisites (photo ID, replacement SS card, etc.)
- Orientation to the job
- Job skills instruction
- Job Analysis
- Direct observation on the job
- Transporting the customer to CBWA sites and job development activities (overall time above 25% of the total hours requires prior VR Supervisor approval)

Billable (Indirect – cannot be used for calculating job stability in Phases 2-5)

- Development of CBWA sites (up to 20% of total time)
- Referral to other services (e.g. Benefits Counseling)
- Coordination of accommodations and/or assistive (rehabilitation) technology
- Employer contact on behalf of customer
- Phone calls to customer, employer or supports
- Identifying and negotiating essential job functions

Not Billable

- Transportation time (other than transporting customers noted above)
- Report writing
- Other administrative tasks