

COMPETITIVE AND INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT POLICY

I. **Purpose:** It is the intent of San Andreas Regional Center to be in compliance with all state and federal laws, regulations, and court decisions, assist the individuals it serves in obtaining, wherever possible, meaningful and competitive integrated employment to the best of their abilities. There are various adult work service programs available that assist consumers in the development of vocational skills, job placement, and which provide guidance and supervision within an employment setting.

II. **Definitions:**

- **Consumer, individual, and person served are used interchangeably in regional center policy and the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act, and mean a person who has been found eligible and receives services from the regional center.**
- *Competitive and Integrated Employment* offer a structured, comprehensive, community-based service for persons with developmental disabilities. They provide training in skills leading to employment, job placement as well as oversight and guidance within a business setting. These programs are funded generically by the Department of Rehabilitation (DR) or by the Regional Center, depending on the nature and phase of a particular service.
- *Meaningful, integrated, and competitive employment* means a job at a workplace among individuals both with and without disabilities that is full or part-time at or above minimum wage.
- *Supported Employment Programs (SEP)* provide paid work opportunities in the community using group or individual placements through the Department of Rehabilitation or the regional center. The programs are aimed at finding competitive work in a community integrated work setting for persons with disabilities who need ongoing support services to learn and perform work.
 - *Group placements* consist of training and supervision of an individual while engaged in work as part of a group in an integrated community setting. The ratio of supervision for work crews is set at a minimum of 1:4 and up to 1:8. Individuals on work crews are

provided full guidance and supervision throughout the course of the work day.

- *Individual placements* consist of job placement in community business settings. A job coach meets regularly with the individual to provide training and supervision to help him or her maintain the necessary skills and behaviors to work independently. As the individual gains mastery of the job, the job coaching time and support services are gradually reduced or phased out.
- *Supported employment services* include *intensive* and *extended* services.
 1. *Intensive work services* provide the individual with maximum support and training in preparation for employment and which continues until he or she is stable on the job. This phase is funded by the Department of Rehabilitation.
 2. *Extended work services* refers to that phase of service which continues when responsibility of funding shifts to regional centers and continues for as long as the individual's employment remains stable.
- *Paid Internship Program (PIP)* is a vendor-coordinated job development and placement which helps to build social and vocational skills through job exploration in an integrated and competitive environment the individual may not have previously been able to access, in order to prepare for and lead to permanent competitive employment. The internship uses state funds to defer the employer's expenses of paying the individual while an adult day program or supported employment vendor receives funding through the individual program plan for job coaching.
- *Competitive Integrated Employment Incentive Payments* are state funds paid to programs (e.g. supported employment, adult day programs) to encourage them to place an individual with an employer and transition them from job coaching or other supports.

Generically-Funded Work Programs

The *Department of Rehabilitation* (DR) is a generic resource that funds and provides a variety of work services programs for individuals with physical or mental impairments that constitute a substantial impediment to

employment. The primary goal of the Department of Rehabilitation - funded Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) programs is to assist individuals in developing the skills and independence necessary to obtain and maintain competitive employment. These programs are time-limited, involving Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors working directly with individuals to develop, plan and implement support services. The Department of Rehabilitation funds the intensive phase of Supported Employment. These services may include but are not limited to assessment, work services, tutoring, adaptive equipment, transportation assistance, pre-placement and job coaching services for supported employment.

While the Department of Rehabilitation serves individuals with various types of disabilities who may or may not be Regional Center individuals, those served first by the Department of Rehabilitation are individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities (MSD). San Andreas Regional Center individuals generally meet MSD criteria, and do not have to wait to begin services. However, there may be instances in which an Order of Selection (OOS) process applies, and individuals may be placed on a wait list. In such cases, the Department of Rehabilitation will notify the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and DDS will issue a Program Advisory.

The Department of Rehabilitation funds supported employment services until the department determines that the placement is stable. A job placement is considered stable when: a) the individuals has learned and is maintaining the job for a minimum of sixty (60) days; and b) the individual's job is expected to be stable and to continue. At such time, The Department of Rehabilitation notifies the regional center of the individual's stability, and funding responsibility can transfer to the regional center. The method for determining the level of regional center funding is explained below (Purchase of Service Standard).

San Andreas-funded Work Programs

Individuals in Supported Employment Placements become eligible for San Andreas Regional Center funding of their work programs when the Department of Rehabilitation counselor has determined that the individual is stable in his or her job, as described above. Individuals in supported employment enter the extended phase of service at the point of transfer to San Andreas Regional Center. Individuals who are in extended work services may be referred back to the Department of Rehabilitation for

funding and provision of intensive services in the event that an individual experiences the loss of job or a loss of stability on the job.

- III. **Policy:** San Andreas Regional Center shall advocate for the availability of appropriate work service programs for its adult individuals. This shall include collaboration with the Department of Rehabilitation to develop generic work services, help individuals access work services, and to facilitate the successful transfer of individuals between the two service systems. The regional center shall facilitate access to competitive integrated employment through job exploration; vocational, social, and community integration skills development; volunteering; employer development; and employment incentive programs.

San Andreas recognizes that successful employment may require flexibility. San Andreas will fund internship programs that are identified. Internships will be provided by a regional center adult work services vendor.

- IV. **Purchase of Service Standard:** San Andreas Regional Center shall inform adult individuals and/or their authorized representatives of available and appropriate work service programs. The individual program plan team is required to discuss and assist any individual served who is 18 years or older in obtaining meaningful, integrated, and competitive employment. All appropriate services and supports will be explored, including programs through Local Education Agencies, the Department of Education, or the Department of Rehabilitation, self-employment, and competitive employment in keeping with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

San Andreas Regional Center shall purchase an adult work services program (supported employment or appropriate adult day program) for an individual when the planning team has determined that:

- Individuals 18-22 years of age, who are in school and interested in participating in the paid internship program, may be eligible; however, regional centers must comply with WIC Section 4648.55.
- The individual is no longer eligible for a post-secondary educational program.
- The adult work program is the most appropriate service that will meet the needs of the individual and there is an adult work services program available.
- There is no generic service available that will meet the individual's needs.

- The individual agrees to attend the adult work services program.
- The individual agrees to comply with the attendance standards.
- For Supported Employment job placements, the individual has met stabilization criteria for extended services.

Regional center funding for group supported employment or another adult work service is provided on a contract basis through a regional center vendorized program. Examples of other adult work services include, but shall not be limited to, volunteer opportunities, internal employment or job exploration at an adult day program, or facilitated micro-enterprises.

Regional center funding for individual supported employment services (extended services as described above) is provided as follows:

- For individuals who reach stability in 60 days, it is expected that they will require coaching during no more than 20% of their scheduled work hours.
- For individuals who reach stability in 90 days, it is expected that they will require coaching during no more than 25% of their scheduled work hours.
- For individuals who reach stability in 120 days, it is expected that they will require coaching during no more than 30% of their scheduled work hours.

Paid internship placements and payment will be coordinated by a regional center adult work services vendor. The internship must be in a meaningful and in a competitive integrated employment setting and may not be hosted by the adult work services vendor or parent agency unless the position is open to individuals without disabilities. The proposed internship must be approved as both competitive and integrated by the regional center. The internship will last no more than 12 months and will be supported with job coaching and/or other skills training through the adult work services program as possible.

An adult work services program which successfully transitions an individual to permanent, competitive integrated work – with or without supported employment – will receive a Competitive Integrated Employment Incentive Payment upon verification by the regional center.

San Andreas Regional Center will, as a matter of policy and practice, partner with other developmental disability community stakeholder organizations to work effectively with private and public employers to develop successful employment opportunities for individuals we serve.

- V. **Exception Process:** The executive director has full discretion to authorize purchases of service which are exceptions to the board-adopted purchase of service policies and standards. The executive director has designated certain individuals within the regional center who are authorized to grant an exception in the executive director's stead; these individuals are referred to as director's designees.

The first formal discussion of a request for service takes place at the planning team meeting. If the request falls within the service policy, the request is granted.

If the request for service is not consistent with the policy, the service coordinator starts the exception review process by exploring the basis for the request. A time line for the director's exception review is set by agreement between the individual/family and the service coordinator but the time line may not exceed fifteen (15) days. Within that time, another planning team meeting will be convened. In the meantime the coordinator presents the information to the manager to determine whether a director's exception may be warranted. At the scheduled planning team meeting the decision will be made. The director's designee will attend the planning team meeting if necessary. If the exception is granted, the service coordinator amends the person-centered individual program plan, notifies the individual/family, and gives a copy of the amended plan to the individual/family.

- VI. **Notice of Action:** If the exception is not granted, the service coordinator promptly informs the individual /family that it has not been granted, informs the individual /family of their appeal rights, and sends a notice of action and a fair hearing form.

If a decision is made to deny, reduce, or cancel the service without the agreement of the individual or the individual's representative, a Notice of Action will be sent.

DDS Approved: October 25, 2017

Adopted: November 20, 2017