

Cooperation and Coordination with Other Agencies and Other Entities

Arrangements and Cooperative Arrangements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services

The heart of supported employment is the coordination of the time limited and the on-going support services. The Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS or Division) has been very proactive in working collaboratively with service providers and public agencies to coordinate funding sources and policies. These efforts are categorized into two areas:

- Formal Cooperative Agreements
- Informal Cooperative Efforts with Agencies

Formal Cooperative Arrangements

The Division of Rehabilitation Services has in place a formal cooperative agreement for transition services for youth with disabilities. This agreement is with the Department of Human Services/Divisions of Rehabilitation services, Developmental Disabilities and Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired; Department of Social Services/Division of Behavioral Health Services; Department of Education/Office of Special Education, and the Department of Labor. The purpose of the cooperative agreement is to define:

- services including supported employment,
- eligibility requirements,
- referral process,
- responsibilities of each agency,
- extended support services to be provided by the Division of Developmental Disabilities,
- extended support services to be provided by the Division of Behavioral Health Services,
- time-limited services to be provided by the Division of Rehabilitation Services and Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired,
- service plan development,
- requirements for transition to extended services, and
- responsibilities for post-employment services.

The Division of Developmental Disabilities updated the Policy Memorandum on September 11, 2013 with the Divisions of Rehabilitation Services and Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired. This Policy Memorandum defines how each agency's funding sources are coordinated in regards to the time limited and on-going support services. This policy agreement has had a significant impact in changing how services are provided to individuals with the most significant impediments to obtain and maintain their employment.

In May of 2010, a document was established to help coordinate the services and funding between the Divisions of Behavioral Health Services, Rehabilitation Services, and Service to the Blind & Visually Impaired. This document serves as a policy directive for the Community Mental Health Centers and the local Vocational Rehabilitation Offices. It provides guidance in three areas relative to providing vocational services for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness:

1. What services can and should be provided by the Community Mental Health Center,
2. What services are available from Vocational Rehabilitation, and
3. Which Division pays for the different services.

Informal Cooperative arrangements with agencies

The Division of Rehabilitation Services continually works collaboratively with other State agencies on a day-to-day basis to better serve individuals with disabilities. Following are some of these collaborative efforts:

- The State Office of the Division of Rehabilitation Services is co-located with the Divisions of Developmental Disabilities, and Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired. Our agencies can easily communicate to coordinate services between Divisions.
- Eight of the eleven Division's field offices are co-located with the Department of Labor and Regulation offices.
- The public vocational rehabilitation agencies are working closely with all partners identified in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) to collaborate in the implementation of the new law. Division staff serves on implementation workgroups, task forces, the State Workforce Development Council and on local Workforce Committees.