

Department of Human Services  
Division of Rehabilitation Services  
Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired

**PROGRAM GUIDE**  
**DRS/DSBVI - 2008-03**  
**Revised Date: Nov 6<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

**FROM: Grady Kickul, DRS Director**  
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**TO: All DRS & DSBVI Offices**

**SUBJECT: Service Descriptions**

This Program Guide identifies the descriptions and guidelines of services commonly used by the local DRS and SBVI offices. This Program Guide is effective immediately and supersedes Program Guide DRS/SBVI 01-07 dated July 1, 2001. This Program Guide also incorporates the previously separate Program Guide 01-07 Addendum #1 dated December 19, 2003, regarding Employment Skills Training, and the previously separate Program Guide 05-02 dated September 13, 2005, regarding Situational Assessments.

The Divisions of Rehabilitation Services and Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired will utilize fee rates established from other State agencies that are the primary monitoring agency for providers.

- Division of Mental Health - Mental Health Centers
- Division of Developmental Disabilities - Adjustment Training Centers
- Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse - Chemical Dependency Facilities
- SD Department of Labor - Career Learning Centers

For medical related services, the CPT rates established by the Department of Social Services will be utilized. Other services commonly purchased by DRS or SBVI have been defined in this program guide. Other services not commonly purchased by the Divisions may be purchased at the going rate in the community.

Fee rates from the other State Agencies and our providers may change at any time throughout the year. The most current rates will be maintained electronically in the Mainframe for the CPT rates or in the VR FACES for all the other established rates. It will not be necessary to revise this program guide or provide addendums when rates change.

The public VR programs utilize or establish rates that are:

- Reasonable in cost;
- Not so low as to effectively deny an individual a necessary service;
- Not absolute and permit exceptions so that individual needs can be addressed; and

- Not absolute dollar limits on specific service categories or on the total services provided to an individual.

DRS and SBVI maintain a fee schedule of common services purchased or unique services with the rates established. This document is maintained electronically and provided to DRS/SBVI offices when the rate changes. This fee schedule does offer flexibility in purchasing services from a Community Rehabilitation Program, Private Provider or an Independent Living Center when the services are not listed on the fee schedule or the agency is requesting a higher fee rate. These situations may arise when providing for the unique needs of the individuals we serve. In these situations the following procedure must be used:

- The DRS counselors will discuss the case and the request with their District Supervisor and submit a written request to the DRS Assistant Director. This request must describe the situation, reasons for the service, justification for additional costs, and any other relevant information;
- The SBVI counselors will discuss the case and the request and submit a written request to the SBVI Assistant Director. This request must describe the situation, reasons for the service, justification for additional costs, and any other relevant information;
- The case narrative must reflect the circumstances for the request.

If approved, the state office will confirm the request in writing with a copy attached to the authorization which will be placed in the file.

The Divisions of Rehabilitation Services and Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired are required to consider comparable benefits (i.e., SSI, private insurance, workers compensation, funding from other Divisions, etc.) when purchasing services for VR clients. Duplicate funding for services is not allowed. See Pages 12-13 of this Program Guide for more information about using comparable benefits.

If you have any questions on this Program Guide, please contact the appropriate DRS or SBVI Assistant Director.

## VOCATIONAL EVALUATION SERVICES

"Vocational evaluation" is an appraisal of an individual's capability. It includes assessing patterns of appropriate work behavior, the individual's ability to acquire occupational skills and providing services enabling an individual to select an appropriate vocational goal. It is a planned and systematic sequence of vocational assessments, which uses reliable and valid instruments developed for the individual's type and degree of disability.

Vocational evaluations are categorized into three categories types; Comprehensive, Limited and Situational Evaluation. These evaluations can be utilized individually or in combination with each other for a more complete assessment of the consumer's capabilities. The selection and type of evaluation utilized should be based upon the consumer's needs and the necessity to obtain vocational information. The counselor and consumer should select which evaluation categories to use based upon what questions need to be answered by a vocational evaluation.

### Components of a Comprehensive and Limited Vocational Evaluation

Evaluation Component	Minimum Requirements of a Comprehensive Evaluation	Minimum Requirements of a Limited Evaluation
Aptitude testing	A	A
Achievement/verbal testing	A	A
Personality/Emotional testing	A	A
Interest testing	A	A
Work sampling	A	B
Specific occupational testing	A	B
Career guidance/exploration	A	C
Job seeking skills evaluation	B or C	B or C
Cognitive testing	A	A
Perceptual/Sensory testing	A	A
Work history explored & compiled	C	C
Physical capacities assessed	A	A
Motor dexterity skills	A	A
Transportation assessed	B or C	B or C

**A** = Commercial tests could include Valpar, Views, McCarron Dial, other commercial testing tools, or evaluations from a specialist such as physical therapist and occupational therapist.

**B** = In-house test/forms designed by the provider

**C** = Area assessed by interviewing the consumer and/or other key people

### COMPREHENSIVE VOCATIONAL EVALUATION

The Comprehensive Vocational Evaluation must utilize at a MINIMUM 11 of the 14 components listed above. This evaluation is provided one-to-one with the consumer and involves approximately 30 to 40 hours of the consumer's time.

## **LIMITED VOCATIONAL EVALUATION**

The Limited Vocational Evaluation must utilize at a MINIMUM 5 and a MAXIMUM 10 of the 14 following components listed above. The evaluation is provided on-to-one with the consumer and involves approximately 15 to 20 hours of consumer's time.

## **WORK ADJUSTMENT SERVICES**

Work Adjustment is the provision of real work experiences and support services to assist an individual to adjust to a work environment. This service is time-limited and provided in an integrated or segregated setting. Authorizations for Work Adjustment are limited to 18 months unless additional time is approved by the Division Assistant Director. The training should assist the individual in acquiring skills and developing behavior patterns necessary to function effectively in a work environment. Full-time work adjustment is a minimum of 30 training hours per week. If 30 hours per week is not possible, the service should be prorated to half time work adjustment. This service is aimed at developing the individual's ability to reach their optimum level of personal, social, and vocational reintegration. The primary objective of this service for vocational rehabilitation consumers is full-time employment in the competitive labor market or, when appropriate, part-time employment consistent with the capabilities of the individual.

## **EMPLOYMENT SKILLS TRAINING**

Employment Skills Training is the provision of training in preparation for competitive, integrated community employment. The training is individualized based upon the person's unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice. The training typically is no longer than 12 weeks in length. The Employment Skills Training must have measurable objectives and outcomes from the training program. This service MUST include job preparation classes or instruction. Individuals should receive training on interviewing for jobs, completing applications and other job seeking skills. This portion of the service differentiates it from Work Adjustment Training defined above. Providers of this service need to have their program approved by the State Office. Full-time is a minimum of 30 training hours per week. If 30 hours is not possible, the service should be pro-rated to half-time.

## **PRE-EMPLOYMENT CLASS**

As part of a comprehensive assessment, pre-employment class is a job preparation class or instruction to assist the consumer in preparing for future employment. It may include but should not be limited to training on interviewing techniques, filling out job applications, completing a resume, obtaining references, encouraging job preparation activities such as volunteering, mentoring, job shadow experiences and completing interest and aptitude testing. It can be done on a one-to-one basis or as part of an employment class or group. It is done without the Employment Skills Training and is billed on an hourly basis by the provider.

## **JOB PLACEMENT SERVICES**

Job placement services include assisting the consumer in finding employment, orientating the consumer to the job demands and informing the employer about the consumer's abilities and special needs. Existing community services such as Rehabilitation Services, Department of Labor, and/or industrial/business resources may be a part of the placement services. Placement services will consist of a maximum of 25 hours of job placement related activities per job placement package authorization or successful placement of the consumer into employment. The following service components are all considered components of a job placement package, but the scope of services must be individualized to best assist the consumer to obtain employment. The counselor and consumer should identify which of the following placement services are

needed to obtain employment. The provider should individualize the placement services based upon these needs.

### **Scope of Placement Services**

- A. Collaboration with employment services and other organizations involved in manpower assistance.
- B. Employer contact and job development.
- C. Task analysis and job restructuring.
- D. Study and interpretation of employment trends and economic forecasting.
- E. Individual and group instruction in job seeking skills, identification of current and potential job openings and development of a job seeking plan.
- F. Individual and group counseling on job retention skills.
- G. Personal assistance in conducting job interviews.
- H. Consulting and advising on job adjustment and/or consumer/employer conflicts.

There should be a periodic review of the job seeking plan and related job placement services. A written report should be furnished to the rehabilitation counselor on a monthly basis, including an itemized description of services, date of service, time spent providing services and a summary of services with future recommendations.

### **\*\*\* Successful Placement**

The fee rate for a successful placement will be paid to the provider after the individual placed has worked a minimum of “one work week.” This “one work week” will be based upon the average number of hours the individual will be working each week on a regular basis. Example: For an individual who was hired for a job that is 40 hours per week, this would mean they would be required to maintain employment for 40 hours before placement is paid. For an individual who was hired for a job that is 18 hours per week, this would mean they would be required to maintain employment for 18 hours before successful placement is paid. If the schedule varies, it will be based upon an average work week. For example, if the person is hired to work 15 to 20 hours per week, they would be required to work 17 hours before the placement is paid.

This incentive is paid only after the counselor has reviewed the placement. The counselor has the discretion regarding whether to pay when the placement is for “significantly” fewer hours than the stated employment goal on the IPE. For example, if a consumer stated a goal of 30 hours per week but the placement is for 15 hours per week, payment for the placement can be authorized by the counselor if the consumer expresses satisfaction with the placement. However, if the consumer still wants a 30 hour per week job, it is not considered that placement has occurred until that goal is reached, either with a new job at that number of hours, or with a second placement so that the total number of hours worked per week is satisfactory to the consumer. If the consumer continues to work at the job with fewer hours for more than 90 days, the counselor should further review the goal with the consumer and determine if they are in fact satisfied with the job and successful placement and closure can occur.

Additionally, successful placement should be employment that is consistent with the individual's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice. The placement should also be in the most integrated setting possible, consistent with the individual's informed choice. This fee rate is not contingent upon the case being closed successfully rehabilitated.

### **\*\*\* Placed within 30 days Incentive**

An incentive will be paid if the individual is placed into employment within 30 days after the provider is notified to begin the job placement services. Counselors can approve an extension to the 30 days if there is reasonable cause. Reasonable cause would be from delays resulting from the consumer's ability to participate in the job placement activities. Delays because of the provider's availability to begin the

placement service are not acceptable for an extension. Extensions should be based upon the number of days the consumer was not able to participate in the placement services. The consumer's first day of employment is counted for this incentive, rather than the first day after completion of the 1 work week as defined above. If a second job placement package with the same provider is authorized on the same individual after a first job placement package is unsuccessfully billed, the 30 day incentive does not apply and cannot be billed for. Additionally, if a consumer significantly changes their employment goal, the 30 day incentive "clock" can be restarted to the date that the new goal is formally changed by the consumer on his/her IPE. An example of this may occur when a consumer decides to change their goal from full-time sales associate to part-time day care provider, thus changing the focus of the job search.

**\*\*\* Employed for 90 days**

An incentive will be paid if the individual placed maintains employment for 90 consecutive days. Successful 26 closure does NOT need to take place in order for this incentive to be paid.

**\*\*\*Successful 26 closure**

An incentive will be paid if the individual placed maintains employment for 90 consecutive days and successful 26 closure takes place. District Supervisors can approve payment of this incentive under certain circumstances even when the case is not being immediately closed 26 by the counselor.

**\*\*\* Wages Incentive**

- **Wages Incentive – Level I**

A wage incentive will be paid if the individual's income, at the time of the 26 closure, meets or exceeds 40% above the State of South Dakota minimum hourly wage rate. This incentive is NOT paid at placement, only when the case is successfully closed.

- **Wage Incentive – Level II**

A wage incentive will be paid if the individual's income, at the time of the 26 closure, meets or exceeds 60% above the State of South Dakota minimum hourly wage rate. This incentive is NOT paid at placement, only when the case is successfully closed.

NOTE: If consumer meets Level II wages, both Level I and Level II incentives will be paid.

**\*\*\* Severe Disability Incentive**

This incentive will no longer be paid, effective immediately. It is replaced with the incentive described below.

**\*\*\* Social Security Recipient Incentive**

To assist Social Security recipients in increasing their hours and wages, a referral for benefit analysis and ongoing education by the VR counselor should take place. This will allow for full understanding of the SSA incentives and will serve to reduce dependency on benefits and improve the consumer's quality of life.

- **Social Security Recipient Incentive I**

An incentive will be paid at the time of the 26 closure, if the consumer is a Social Security Recipient and is working 25 hours per week or more. This incentive is NOT paid at placement, only when the case is successfully closed.

- **Social Security Recipient Incentive II**

An incentive will be paid at the time of the 26 closure, if the consumer is a Social Security Recipient and working at SGA or higher. This incentive is NOT paid at placement, only when the case is successfully closed.

NOTE: If the consumer is working 25 hours per week or more **AND** working at SGA, both Incentives I and II will be paid. Also, providers may collect on both the Wage incentives and the SSA incentives.

### **\*\*\* Placement into Enclaves**

A one-time job placement package is billable when an enclave is initially developed and the DRS\SBVI client authorized for placement services is the first successful placement in the enclave. Additional enclave placements will be at the current enclave rate.

### **\*\*\* Unsuccessful Placement**

The fee rate for an unsuccessful placement should be paid to the provider when they have completed 25 hours of job placement and the individual has not obtained employment that is consistent with the individual's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice. If individuals discontinue their job placement services prior to the end of the 25 hours, the provider can prorate these services.

## **JOB COACHING SERVICES**

Job coaching services are time-limited services needed to support individuals with severe disabilities in employment. Skilled trainers (job coaches) provide these services. The length of services depends on individual needs but should be limited to six months unless the consumer is classified as a supported employment consumer on his/her IPE. If the consumer is classified as supported employment consumer, a maximum of 18 months of job coaching services can be purchased.

Job coaching is provided in one of the following manners:

- individual placement model (one job coach-one consumer),
- mobile crew model (one job coach with no more than eight consumers)
- and enclave with industry model (one job coach with no more than eight consumers)

The job coach should work with the employer to learn the job skills then begin training the consumer. Next the job coach begins training the consumer working one-on-one initially and gradually fading out as the consumer becomes more job proficient. Unless the consumer is working under a sub-minimum wage certificate, the consumer is paid the customary salary for the position.

Job coaching is purchased on an hourly basis when an individual placement model is used. When a mobile crew or enclave model is used the cost per consumer decreases depending upon the number of individuals being trained by one job coach. The rate would be divided by the number of consumers receiving job coaching from the one provider. The VR Counselor can also authorize "Out-of-House Work Adjustment" on a weekly basis for enclaves or mobile crews. When determining job coaching hours needed and to be authorized, the VR Counselor will consider the provider staff recommendations, the job requirements, the skill level of the consumer and the severity of the disability. Approval by the counselor for job coaching services should not exceed a three month period.

## **EMPLOYMENT/FOLLOW-ALONG SERVICES**

Employment/follow-along services are individualized services provided in an independent setting that enables the consumer to obtain and/or maintain vocational placement. This time-limited service should be defined (i.e., counseling, training, employer contact, etc.) on an individual basis in terms of the consumer's

needs. The length of services is based on individual need to assure smooth transition into employment and may last up to 12 months, if necessary. If this service is needed for a longer period than 12 months, a referral must be made to a more appropriate long term funding source.

Employment Follow Along services may vary, and are meant to be flexible and used to assist the individual served to obtain and/or maintain employment. These services are separate from the job placement activities which are covered under the Job Placement Package. Employment Follow Along service may also include services provided during a comprehensive assessment and are separate from Situational Assessment evaluation hours. The VR Counselor should be specific on the IPE regarding what services are being requested. These may include but are not limited to assisting the individual with resume writing, interview skills, assistance with purchasing appropriate clothing for interviews, etc. It is not limited to Follow Along after placement has occurred.

## **SITUATIONAL ASSESSMENT**

Situational assessments are essentially the observations of people performing work situations in real work settings. It involves a practice of observing, evaluating, and reporting over a period of time. During this assessment, a consumer's behavior and work performance in a job situation and interaction with other employees is observed. This type of evaluation helps the consumer learn the role of a worker and allows the evaluator to assess many more work behaviors than can be explored with standardized vocational testing approaches.

### **Requirements**

For situational assessments to be effective, an appropriate work site must be utilized, adequate supervision provided and a means to gather information. Situational assessments funded by DRS and SBVI must include the following requirements:

1. Work site must be with a business in the community, not a segregated workshop;
2. Work site must be in the area of the consumer's interest and choice;
3. Work site must not be part of an enclave, mobile crew or other group models. These models should utilize Work Adjustment rates;
4. Consumer must perform the work duties as part of the assessment. Receiving a tour or observing a job is not considered part of a situational assessment; and
5. Observations and comments will be recorded on a Situational Assessment report form DHS-347.

### **Fee Rate**

See Current fee schedule for the hourly rate effective July 1 each calendar year. Provider types I (Traditional) and III (Private Providers) are approved to provide situational assessments. Provider type II (Consumer Certified) is not approved to provide this service.

The amount of hours authorized needs to be individualized based upon the employment setting, difficulty of the job, individual's stamina and other potential factors. The billable time for a situational assessment is the actual amount of time the provider spends with the consumer at the job site or gathering information from the employer for input in assessment. Up to 10 situational assessment hours can be authorized by the counselor to allow the provider time to develop assessment sites. The counselor needs to be contacted by the provider for approval when more than 10 hours have been utilized on trying to develop sites for the situational assessment(s). Additional hours can be authorized at the counselor's discretion up to a maximum of 25 hours utilized.

Refer to page 12 of this Program Guide for clarification on compensation for travel. Report writing or meeting time is already included in the cost of the fee rate and should not be paid as billable time.

### **\*\*\*Situational Assessment Incentive**

Good situational assessments are developed specifically to meet the needs and interest of a consumer. At times good situational assessments will lead into permanent employment for a consumer. To help promote the development of innovative assessments and quality services, a financial incentive will be paid to a provider when all the following conditions are met (see current fee schedule for rate):

1. The individual had an IPE with a specific vocational goal prior to starting the assessment;
2. The individual wants to continue working at the employment site of the situational assessment;
3. The employer offers a paid position with a definitive start date; and
4. The individual's case is a successful 26 closure as defined by DRS & SBVI.

This incentive pay can be authorized at the time of the situational assessment or prior to closing the consumer's case successfully rehabilitated.

### **Insurance Coverage**

The most significant barrier to establish an employment site for a situational assessment is the employer's concern on insurance coverage. A copy of the insurance policy can be found in the Program Guides in VRFACES (#115) or obtained from the State Office and has been purchased specifically for DRS & SBVI consumers participating in situational assessments. This policy will cover \$10,000 for medical expenses and \$5,000 for death benefits. Only DRS or SBVI consumers who are authorized for a situational assessment are covered under this policy. This includes individuals being served through the outcome based mental health contracts. Feel free to share a copy of this policy with the employer and providers.

In the event a consumer gets injured or dies during a situational assessment, please contact the DRS Manager of Special Services as soon as possible. An "Accident Claim Form" needs to be obtained from the State Office and completed immediately, and then returned to the State Office.

### **ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY**

Refer to Program Guide DRS/SBVI 08-02 for the guidelines in utilizing AT services.

### **INDEPENDENT LIVING EVALUATION**

Independent Living Evaluation can be purchased from community rehabilitation programs and Independent Living Centers. The evaluation must be community based and not in a simulated environment. VR can purchase an IL evaluation when the need is directly related to and planned for in an Individualized Plan for Employment that complements an employment outcome. The IL evaluation is authorized for and paid in hourly increments. The VR counselor must meet with the provider to identify the areas of independent living that will be evaluated and an estimate of the number of hours needed to conduct the evaluation. The provider will submit an evaluation report as a result of this service.

### **INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES**

It is recognized by public vocational rehabilitation in South Dakota that VR consumers may require extensive support and training services in the area of independent living in order to be successful in achieving an employment outcome. VR counselors are encouraged to purchase needed independent living services to enhance a consumer's chances to succeed. VR will purchase these individualized independent living services that are directly related to and planned for in an Individualized Plan for Employment that complement an employment outcome. VR will purchase quality independent living services from agencies that can demonstrate the ability to provide specifically requested IL services in a timely, outcome based manner. The DRS/SBVI counselor is responsible to authorize for services from provider agencies that have

demonstrated a sufficient capacity to deliver quality services as requested by the counselor on behalf of the vocational rehabilitation consumer.

The services purchased must be directly related to employment and do not include independent living core services as defined in the Rehabilitation Act Amendments. Independent living core services are:

1. Information and referral services;
2. IL skills training;
3. Peer counseling, including cross-disability peer counseling; and
4. Individual and systems advocacy.

DRS/SBVI will be available to independent living centers and other provider agencies to assist in developing and demonstrating the capacity to deliver these independent living services.

### **ALCOHOL AND DRUG TREATMENT SERVICES**

The following are alcohol and drug treatment services that can be purchased from an accredited chemical dependency facility:

- Inpatient/Residential
- Structure Outpatient Treatment
- Transitional/Halfway House
- Assessment/Evaluation

### **COMMUNITY TRANSITIONS PROGRAM TO PROVIDE TBI SERVICES**

Community Transitions provides post-acute rehabilitation services which assist eligible clients with traumatic brain injury in acquiring, improving or maintaining their cognition, perception, language, physical, social-emotional, vocational and independent living skills necessary to improve their ability to function independently at home, on the job and within the community.

- TBI Day Services (cognitive training/evaluation) in half-day units. The maximum units per day are 2 units.
- TBI Overnight Evaluation - rate is each night

### **INTERPRETER SERVICES**

The Divisions have established provider agreements with interpreters for the deaf. These interpreters are maintained on the vendor list of the VR FACES. Interpreters will have a valid South Dakota Interpreter Certification at a Level III or higher. When interpreting assignments take place at the same location (i.e.: office location, Human Services Center, campus, school, etc.) and the appointments occur back to back or are in continuous block, the two hour minimum for each individual assignment does not apply. Time billed to the Department of Human Services shall represent the actual hours of interpreting, which may include breaks between individual assignments if the total time of interpreting is less than the two hour minimum.

If interpreters of foreign language are needed, the District Office should contact local resources to help identify potential interpreters of foreign language.

### **INTERPRETING SERVICES FOR VR CONSUMERS ATTENDING POST SECONDARY EDUCATION**

Effective with the 2007 Fall Semester, the Division of Rehabilitation Services will implement cost sharing for interpreting services with the public and private post secondary programs in South Dakota. The cost

sharing will only apply to those situations where the individual is entitled to interpreting services as an accommodation, the individual is a Vocational Rehabilitation consumer, and the VR Counselor has approved the services and pre-authorized the interpreting services, based on the current approved fee schedule of the Division.

The cost sharing of the interpreter services a consumer of vocational rehabilitation will be paid at a rate of twenty one and three-tenths percent (21.3 %) by the post secondary program and seventy eight and seven-tenths percent (78.7 %) by the Division of Rehabilitation Services. The billing for interpreting services needs to include a detailed list of the dates and units of services.

For further detailed information regarding interpreting services for VR consumers attending Post Secondary Education, please refer to the South Dakota VR Counselor Manual located on the VRFACES, section 1.6.9.

## **SPECIALTY SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING THROUGH CSD**

### **Communication Assessment**

This is a one-time service that would be provided early in the VR process. It is intended for those consumers who the counselor or staff interpreter suspects might have minimal language skills. It would provide the counselor with a communications baseline to develop services around. A skilled CSD staff member will meet with the consumer and assess their communication style/skills. For individuals with very limited language, this evaluation may include meeting with family members, teachers and other service providers. CSD will determine the individual's preferred mode of communication (i.e. signs, gestures, pantomime, use of physical objects, and/or demonstration to convey meaning). The counselor and the consumer will be provided a completed evaluation form, including recommendations. This service will be provided by Level V interpreters or trained deaf relay interpreters. The service is authorized on an hourly basis and typically 5 hours is authorized for this assessment.

### **Comprehensive Communication Assistance Services**

This is a service that would be authorized on an hourly basis. It would contain the following components:

- CSD staff would participate in person center planning, IEP and IPE meeting upon request.
- CSD would function as a team member with the VR counselor directing the team.
- CSD staff would provide service coordination and communication assistance services on behalf of the team and consumer. This would include meetings and coordination of services with other service providers and job site consultations.
- CSD would be responsible for ongoing follow along services with the consumer to ensure they are accomplishing the goals established in their service plan.
- CSD would meet monthly with the VR counselor to review the consumer's progress and provide monthly written reports. This service would not include ongoing interpreter services, independent living skills training or job coaching. Advocacy services would be the responsibility of the VR counselor.

### **Employment Incentive Rates**

When individuals are closed successfully rehabilitated by the VR Counselor, CSD will receive the following incentives:

- Level 1 - when individuals who require and receive between 20 to 49 hours of employment services authorized by VR.
- Level 2 - when individuals who require and receive between 50 to 74 hours of employment services authorized by VR.

- Level 3 - when individuals who require and receive between 75 to 100 hours of employment services authorized by VR.
- Level 4 - when individuals who require and receive 100 hours or more of employment services authorized by VR.

Note: The above incentives are for employment services only. Interpreting services do not count towards meeting the incentives.

## **MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

The Division of Mental Health maintains a list and rates of commonly purchased services from community mental health centers. These services are based upon CPT codes and the current fee schedule. A copy of these services and rates are available from the State Office the beginning of each State Fiscal Year. Contract Services authorized to mental health centers for the provision of job search, job placement, employment follow along, etc provided by mental health centers are separate from the Job Placement Package and incentives described on pages 4-7. For those counselors who utilize Contract Services, please refer to the contract for your local mental health center for additional information.

## **PHYSICIAN & HOSPITAL REPORTING**

When DRS or SBVI staff purchase medical records from physicians or hospitals, the CPT rates are used. A list of the common report rates is available from the State Office. Reports obtained from out-of-state providers will utilize their authorized amount.

## **BILLABLE TIME**

Services reimbursed on hourly rates are for the time spent providing direct services for the consumer. Billable time can include the provider's time involved in meetings if the VR Counselor has requested the meeting. Billable time includes the time spent on travel as described below. Time spent in writing reports and other non-service activities are already part of the hourly costs and should not be duplicated.

## **COMPENSATION FOR TRAVEL**

Cost for local travel is included in all fee rates. But to promote services in rural areas and compensate these additional costs, the following reimbursement procedure has been established:

- Reimbursement is allowable when authorized services are provided at a location of 20 miles out of the city limits where the destination facility is located, with the exception of the Sioux Falls and Rapid City District Offices. For these cities, travel reimbursement is allowable when authorized services are provided at a location of 20 miles or more from the District Office address versus from the city limits. In all locations, travel reimbursement is allowable to start at a “home base” to the destination location and back when it involves traveling over 20 miles one way. For example, if the provider lives in Madison and will provide job placement for a consumer living in Sioux Falls, the provider is allow to bill for mileage starting at his or her “home base” in Madison to Sioux Falls and back.
- Travel time will be reimbursed at 80% of the current fee rate.
- Reimbursement must be authorized by the counselor prior to the start of services.

Reimbursement may include travel time and mileage. Travel time will be calculated from portal to portal. Mileage will to be paid in accordance with the rates and rules established by the South Dakota State Board of Finance Travel Regulations. For billing purposes, the number of hours worked and number of miles traveled.

## **COMPARABLE BENEFITS**

The VR Counselor must determine, prior to providing any vocational rehabilitation services to an eligible individual, or to members of the individual's family, whether comparable services and benefits exist under any other program and whether those services and benefits are available to the individual. Duplicate funding for services is not allowed. Comparable benefits are services and benefits that are:

1. Provided or paid for, in whole or in part, by other Federal, State, or local public agencies, by health insurance, or by employee benefits;
2. Available to the individual at the time needed to ensure the progress of the individual toward achieving the employment outcome in the individual's individualized plan for employment in accordance with §361.53; and
3. Commensurate to the services that the individual would otherwise receive from the designated State vocational rehabilitation agency.

Please refer to the South Dakota VR Counselor Manual Sections 1.7.4 and 1.7.5 for more detailed information on comparable benefits and funding from Adjustment Training Centers and Mental Health Centers.

Awards and scholarships based on merit cannot be considered as comparable benefits. For more information on when to apply or not apply awards and scholarships as comparable benefits, please refer to Program Guide 02-05 Tuition Fee Policy. Services exempt from applying comparable benefits include:

1. Assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs.
2. Counseling and guidance, including information and support services to assist an individual in exercising informed choice.
3. Referral and other services to secure needed services from other agencies, including other components of the statewide workforce investment system, if those services are not available under this part.
4. Job-related services, including job search and placement assistance, job retention services, follow-up services, and follow-along services.
5. Rehabilitation technology, including telecommunications, sensory, and other technological aids and devices.
6. Post-employment services consisting of the services listed under (1) through (5) of this section.

Except those services listed above that are exempt from applying comparable benefits, comparable benefits will not be applied in situations that would interrupt or delay the following:

1. The progress of the individual toward achieving the employment outcome identified in the individualized plan for employment;
2. An immediate job placement; or
3. The provision of vocational rehabilitation services to any individual who is determined to be at extreme medical risk, based on medical evidence provided by an appropriate qualified medical professional.