

Attachment 4.8(b)(4) Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services

This attachment describes the efforts of the designated state agency to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other state agencies and other appropriate entities in order to provide the following services to individuals with the most significant disabilities:

- Supported employment services; and
- Extended services.

New York State, in response to recommendations made by other State agencies, service providers, advocacy organizations, parents and consumers, has moved to improve the State's delivery system for supported employment by establishing clear roles and responsibilities for this vocational service outcome. Through the passage of Chapter 515 of the Laws of 1992, integrated employment, including supported employment, is implemented through a collaborative interagency process in New York State. ACCES-VR has been designated as having the primary statewide responsibility for program development and administration of integrated employment, including intensive supported employment services. Relevant State agencies are still responsible for the extended phases of supported employment and are working collaboratively with ACCES-VR to ensure the provision of comprehensive supported employment services in New York State.

In addition to Chapter 515, the framework for implementing supported employment has been established by the interagency "Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Supported Employment", the "Principles and Operating Guidelines for Vocational Rehabilitation Services and Employment" and the "Quality Indicators for Supported Employment". These documents constitute the policy and procedural base for the delivery of supported employment services in New York State.

As a requirement of Chapter 515, the State Education Department, through ACCES-VR, in collaboration with the Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD), Office of Mental Health (OMH) and the Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped (CBVH), must develop an implementation plan for integrated employment. This implementation plan sets forth the manner in which appropriate responsibilities for funding and administering intensive and extended supported employment services are to be identified.

Implementation Strategies Used to Increase Employment Outcomes:

The integrated employment outcomes that have been achieved occurred by implementing specific interagency strategies and action steps. The strategies and action steps were developed from implementation themes established through interagency consensus. The four major implementation themes driving these strategies include:

- Employment opportunities and employer partnerships;
- Consumer empowerment and informed choice;
- Coordination and delivery of supports; and
- Management and administration of the system.

These implementation strategies were agreed upon through interagency consensus and were revised as necessary to accommodate the employment needs of consumers and the employment opportunities offered by employers. The following summarizes the major implementation strategies and employment outcomes achieved as a result of these strategies:

- Increased the use of options that promote consumer choice;
- Increased activity with regional employer consortia and/or business advisory councils;
- Established local marketing efforts;
- Promoted the development of entrepreneurship;
- Facilitated school-to-work transition opportunities;
- Established formal methods of assessing consumer satisfaction;
- Increased coordination between ACCES-VR and mental health providers;
- Increased coordination to enhance support services;
- Restructured consumer assessment methodology to a community-based approach;
- Coordinated job development and placement activities;
- Promoted cost effectiveness through innovative service delivery mechanisms; and
- Coordinated program development, requests for proposal (RFP) and program evaluation activities.

Provider Guidelines for Supported Employment:

At the request of service providers, advocacy organizations, consumers, family members and other key State agencies, ACCES-VR revised the "Provider Guidelines for Supported Employment" in May 2008 to assist in establishing a common base of accepted practices and procedures for supported employment. These guidelines, which are on the ACCES-VR website, are intended to facilitate service delivery and cooperation between ACCES-VR and supported employment service providers.

Through Chapter 515 of the Laws of 1992, ACCES-VR has been assigned the responsibility for administering, establishing standards and monitoring the intensive service component of supported employment programs. ACCES-VR also has responsibility for the provision of extended services to individuals who are not eligible for such services through other sources.