

# Chapter 15: Supported Employment

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Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired  
Policy and Procedures Manual

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## Section I. Definitions

- A. **“Individual with a most significant disability”** means a person who has been determined by DBVI to have a physical or mental impairment that constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment and that seriously limits function in four or more areas of functional capacity (mobility, communication, work tolerance, work skills, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, dexterity/coordination), requiring multiple services over a period of six months or more.
- B. **“Extended services”** means ongoing support services and other appropriate services that are needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability/disabilities in supported employment, and that are provided by a State agency, a private nonprofit organization, employer, or any other appropriate resource, after an individual with a most significant disability has made the transition from DBVI services. Extended services can be provided to youth with the most significant disabilities by DBVI for a period not to exceed four years. DBVI may not provide extended services to individuals with the most significant disabilities who are not youth with the most significant disabilities.
- C. **“Supported employment”** – The term ‘supported employment’ means competitive integrated employment, including customized employment, or employment in an integrated work setting in which individuals are working on a short-term basis toward competitive integrated employment, that is individualized and customized consistent with the strengths, abilities, interests, and informed choice of the individuals involved, for individuals with the most significant disabilities:
1. For whom competitive integrated employment has not historically occurred; or for whom competitive integrated employment has been interrupted or intermittent as a result of a significant disability; and
  2. Who, because of the nature and severity of their disability, need intensive supported employment services and extended services after the transition from DBVI services in order to perform the work involved.
- D. **“Supported employment services”** – The term ‘supported employment services’ means ongoing support services, including customized employment, needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability in supported employment, that:
1. Are provided singly or in combination and are organized and made available in such a way as to assist an eligible individual to achieve competitive integrated employment;
  2. Are based on a determination of the needs of an eligible individual, as specified in an individualized plan for employment; and
  3. Are provided by VR for a period of not more than 24 months, except that period may be extended, if necessary, in order to achieve the employment outcome identified in the individualized plan for employment.
- E. **“Youth with a disability”** – The term ‘youth with a disability’ means an individual with a disability who is not younger than 14 years of age or older than 24 years of age.

## Section II. General Policy

- A. DBVI maintains a cooperative agreement with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) to provide supported employment services. DVR maintains a network of supported employment providers who will provide placement services, on-the-job support and training, and support to the employer. DBVI provides DVR with a portion of its supported employment funds known as “Title VI, Part B funds” for this purpose. The agreement states that DVR will negotiate on behalf of DBVI for the provision of extended services and long-term supports and will act as a liaison between DBVI and supported employment providers.
- B. DBVI staff, as a part of this agreement, will provide technical assistance to job developers, job coaches, tutor trainers, and employers regarding adaptive devices and techniques that relate to blindness. Additionally, DBVI will arrange for adaptive skills assessment and training (orientation and mobility and activities of daily living) and will provide any aids and appliances recommended by the Rehabilitation Technology Specialist and/or Orientation and Mobility Instructor, Rehabilitation Teacher, or Low Vision Teacher.
- C. When a consumer is in need of supported employment services, a referral should be made to the Supported Employment Coordinator at DVR who will assist the consumer and the DBVI counselor in choosing a provider, developing a written contract for services, and developing long-term supports and follow-up services as needed. (See Chapter 22, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.)
- D. The DBVI counselor, the provider, and the consumer will establish work goals (type of job, number of hours/week, etc.) to be included in the consumers’ Individualized Plan for Employment. Transition to extended services will occur when those goals are met.
- E. The cost of most supported employment services will be covered under the agreement described above. Cost of additional services purchased directly by DBVI shall be limited to \$3,000 per year unless an exception is granted by the Director or designee.

### **Guidance – Managing grant-funded supported employment services.**

*DVR provides grant funding to two major supported employment programs in the State of Vermont. These are:*

- *Developmental Services (DS) programs for adults with developmental disabilities*
- *JOBS programs for youth with severe emotional/behavioral disabilities*

*In State Fiscal Year 2012, the Agency of Human Services introduced performance based grants for supported employment programs. One performance measure that is included in all supported employment grants is the DVR rehabilitation or employment closure. Because performance incentives and holdbacks are attached to the grants, it is very important for DVR counselors to apply **consistent** criteria to considering both when to open*

*and to close a case as well as determining if a supported employment consumer has achieved a successful rehabilitation.*