



Division of Disability and  
Rehabilitative Services  
*Bureau of Disability Services*

# Career Exploration and Planning Guide for Providers

*Effective July 1, 2024*



# Career Exploration and Planning

## What Career Exploration and Planning is

Career exploration is a targeted service designed to help an individual make an informed choice about whether they wish to pursue competitive integrated employment (CIE) including self-employment, obtain information to dissuade myths around or hesitation about CIE, and to identify the career path they would like to pursue either independently or with other available supports.

## Who it's for

This service is ideal for individuals newly transitioning from school-based services who are unsure as to their path toward CIE and may be used to gather information in preparation for a referral to Vocational Rehabilitation Services, an American Jobs Center, or other employment supports. If the individual is employed, career exploration may be used to explore advancement opportunities in their chosen career, or to explore other CIE career objectives which are more consistent with their skills and interests.

It's important to note, career exploration is not appropriate for individuals who have determined their desired career path and are already actively seeking CIE in that career path, either independently or with employment supports. Individuals with identified career outcomes documented in the PCISP should be referred to Vocational Rehabilitation Services, American Job Centers, or other employment supports.

## What the service includes

In addition to the information above, this service also includes, when applicable, introductory education on the numerous work incentives for individuals receiving publicly funded benefits (e.g., SSI, SSDI, Medicaid, Medicare, etc.), and how Supported Employment services work (including Vocational Rehabilitation services). Educational information is provided to the individual and the legal guardian and/or most involved family member(s), if applicable, to ensure legal guardian/family support for the individual's choice to pursue CIE. The educational aspects of this service shall include addressing any concerns, hesitations or objections of the individual and the legal guardian/family, if applicable.

## Who provides the service

All providers of Prevocational Services in good standing with BDS were offered auto-approval to add Career Exploration and Planning with an option to "opt out". No provider opted out.

## How and where it is provided

Service may be provided on an individual basis or in groups dependent on participant choice. When group services are offered, the group shall not exceed 4-persons and must be formed based on shared CIE interests of the group members.

Services must be provided in community settings.

See the "Limitations" section below for time frames, limitations, and examples.

## Reimbursable activities

- Activities to identify an individual's specific interests and aptitudes for CIE, including experience and skills transferable to CIE.
- Exploration of CIE opportunities in the local area that are specifically related to the individual's identified interests, experiences and/or skills can include:
  - business tours,
  - informational interviews,
  - job shadows, and
  - work experience.
- Set-up, preparation for, and debriefing of each exploration opportunity.
- Introductory education on available employment supports, work incentives, supported employment services, and benefits of working in competitive integrated employment settings.
- Development of documentation around individual's interests and aptitudes, stated career objectives, and development of a strengths-based career profile for use and guidance when seeking individual employment support. This profile must include the individual's determined career path and outcome documented in the PCISP. Career profiles may also be used to develop an individual's resume and inform outreach to local employers.
- When applicable, career profiles should include:
  - dreams, goals, and interests,
  - talents, skills, and knowledge,
  - learning styles, - positive personality traits and values,
  - workplace and environmental preferences,
  - dislikes and situations/careers to avoid,
  - previous work experiences,
  - support system and community resources,
  - specific challenges and possible solutions (including benefits considerations and accommodation needs), andcareer opportunities (including preferred career paths and potential contributions to community employers).

## Limitations

Career Exploration and Planning services are intended to be a time-limited service along the continuum of employment supports. Career Exploration and Planning services shall not exceed twenty (20) hours a month for six (6) months in any PCISP plan year.

While it's preferred that all six (6) months are provided concurrently, BDS recognizes there may be times when it is necessary for services to pause and return at a later month.

Individuals are encouraged to start the service at the beginning of a month as any part of a month constitutes use of the service in that month.

## Examples of use

- The service starts at the beginning of the PCISP plan year and is utilized for 6 consecutive months. The person can't access the service again until the next PCISP plan year.
- The service starts at the beginning of the PCISP plan year and is utilized across 6 random months throughout the plan year. The person can't access the service again until the next PCISP plan year.
- The service starts 10 months after the PCISP plan year begins and has been utilized for the last 2 months. The person can access the service again in the next PCISP plan year.

## Activities not allowed

Services that are available under section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or section 602(16)&(17) of the Individual with Disabilities Act (IDEA). Documentation must be maintained verifying the service is not otherwise available or funded under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended, or the IDEA.

## Provider qualifications

Providers must meet the following criteria:

- Be enrolled as an active Medicaid provider
- Be FSSA/DDRS approved
- Comply with Indiana Administrative Code, 460 IAC 6, including but not limited to:
  - 460 IAC 6-10-5 Documentation of Criminal Histories
  - 460 IAC 6-12-1 and 460 IAC 6-12-2 Insurance
  - 460 IAC 6-11-1 to 460 IAC 6-11-3 Financial Status of Providers
  - 460 IAC 6-5-20 Prevocational Services Provider Qualifications
  - 460 IAC 6-14-5 Requirements for Direct Care Staff
  - 460 IAC 6-14-4 Training
- Comply with any applicable FSSA/BDS service standards, guidelines, policies and/or manuals, including FSSA/DDRS/BDS policies and this module accessible from the IHCP Bulletins, Banner Pages and Reference Modules page at [in.gov/Medicaid/providers](http://in.gov/Medicaid/providers)
- Must obtain/maintain accreditation (specific to Indiana programs) by at least one of the following organizations:
  - The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitative Facilities (CARF), or its successor
  - The Council on Quality and Leadership in Supports for People with Disabilities, or its successor
  - The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO), or its successor
  - The National Community for Quality Assurance, or its successor
  - The ISO-9001 human services quality assurance (QA) system
  - An independent national accreditation organization approved by the FSSA Secretary