



Eric Holcomb, Governor
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Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services
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To: Vocational Rehabilitation Employment Service Providers
From: Kelly Mitchell, Director, Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services
Theresa Koleszar, Director, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services
Date: March 8, 2022
Re: Vocational Rehabilitation employment services rate adjustments

For the past several months, Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services and Bureau of Rehabilitation Services have been engaged in dialogue with providers and staff to identify strategies to improve the capacity of DDRS service providers, including registered providers of Vocational Rehabilitation employment services who support eligible VR participants in achieving employment. To support increased provider staff retention and recruitment of qualified staff, VR employment services rates will be increased as outlined below.

Effective April 1, 2022, rates for VR employment services will be paid as follows:

- All hourly employment services will be paid at a rate of \$50 per hour, a 19% increase from the current rate of \$42 per hour.
 - Hourly employment services include Discovery, Work Experience, Job Readiness Training, Job Search/ Job Placement Assistance, On-the-Job Supports short-term, Supported Employment, Youth Extended Services and Trial Work Experience.
- Employment Services Milestone 1 will be paid at a rate of \$1,500 a 15% increase from the current rate of \$1,300.
- Employment Services Milestone 3 will be paid at a rate of \$2,000 a 54% increase from the current rate of \$1,300.

Please view the [VR Manual of Employment Services](#) for an updated rate chart in Attachment B, and applicable clarifications and changes to the operationalizing of these adjustments throughout the manual, including modified language for the supported employment 'trigger' for Employment Services Milestone 2. Please also view the billing information section for clarifications and modifications around mileage reimbursement for milestone services. All modifications take effect April 1, 2022.

Steps to facilitate a smooth transition:

1. Please review authorizations for services through March 31, 2022, and



2. If supplemental hours, new authorizations, or other authorization modifications are needed to ensure VR employment services through March 31, 2022, can proceed without disruption, please request those changes from the local VR office by March 14, 2022
 - a. Authorizations for services through March 31, 2022, will reflect current rates, with new rates taking effect on authorizations for services beginning April 1, 2022
3. VR will issue authorizations for services starting April 1, 2022, after March 21, 2022, when the rate adjustment is completed in the VR case management system
4. New authorizations can be viewed in the Claims Payment System, as is current practice
5. Please review the VR Employment Services [webpage](#) for the updated VR Manual of Employment Services
6. Employment Services forms requiring modification due to the above rate increases will be uploaded to the website in the coming weeks, e.g., Milestone billing form.

Rate increases are intended to enable providers to determine appropriate wage adjustments for staff, to aid in increasing retention of staff as well as recruitment of qualified candidates. DDRS and BRS are hopeful that rate increases will support reduced provider waiting lists and improved staff retention, contributing to improved capacity to provide quality and timely services to VR participants in need of employment services.

We also realize that additional efforts are likely to be needed to further improve provider capacity to serve VR participants in a timely and effective manner. In addition to rate adjustments taking affect April 1, 2022, BRS will be contracting with an entity to evaluate incentive-based rate approaches that effectively promote improved employment outcomes for VR participants. This evaluation will occur throughout state fiscal year 2023, with additional service enhancements implemented in SFY24. More information will be provided as that project kicks off this summer.

Additionally, BRS in partnership with Public Consulting Group, will continue the recently implemented quarterly VR provider capacity survey to gain further knowledge and insight into provider capacity, track any changes following implementation of the rate adjustments, and identify specific geographic areas where further supports are most needed to build capacity. Your time and attention to completing these brief surveys each quarter is very helpful and much appreciated.

Thank you for your continued partnership with DDRS.