

***Guidance on Commonly used Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) Services Definitions and Rate Structures**

The following guidance is intended to assist counselors and consumers to take advantage of the full range of services available from Community Rehabilitation Programs and to choose only those that are necessary and that will meet the specific needs of the consumer.

Note: When working with a CRP to determine appropriate services, it may at times be appropriate to consider also utilizing the CRP as the employer for the consumer. This practice will only be considered if the CRP can demonstrate through its organizational chart that the consumer is to be placed in a separate branch from the one that will provide vocational assessment or support. To maintain consistency and to prevent any prohibited practices from occurring, anytime that a counselor is considering using the CRP as employer, whether for assessment or for placement/hire, this must be done in consultation with the Central Office consultant responsible for CRP relations.

JOB COACHING

DEFINITION:

Job coaching is training and related supports provided on a one-to-one basis to an employed consumer who needs these supports in order to learn or maintain skills related to the job. It may include learning job skills (such as job tasks, appropriate behaviors, how to work with co-workers and supervisors, how to travel to work, etc.), teaching the employer or co-workers strategies of working with the consumer, advocating with the employer on behalf of the consumer, developing natural supports, etc. Supports are generally provided in person on the job, but in some cases may be provided off site, but only when on-the-job supports are not appropriate (e.g., to discuss personal issues) or when off-site services are requested by the consumer and approved in advance by the BRS counselor.

METHOD OF PAYMENT:

Providers are reimbursed on an hourly basis solely for the time spent by the job coach in providing one-to-one support to the consumer, as described above. Phone and off-site contact with the consumer may be billed only with prior approval of the BRS counselor. Job coach travel time¹, report writing and other administrative costs are included in the rate and are therefore not separately billable under the job coaching codes. Time worked by the consumer without the job coach present, job coach time spent performing the job for the consumer and "no shows" are also not billable. ***Providers should bill in increments of 1/4 hour.***

WHAT THE RATE INCLUDES:

The rate includes the following costs, which are not separately billable:

- The cost of job coach direct service time
- Job coach travel (mileage and time spent) between assignments^{1 & 2}
- Progress Report writing
- Administrative costs

¹ Several providers that regularly cover large geographic areas have a separate rate to cover job coach travel beyond their normal catchment area.

² Job coach rate does not include transporting the consumer*

INDIVIDUALIZED SITUATIONAL ASSESSMENT

DEFINITION:

A situational assessment is a type of vocational evaluation where the individual is evaluated in one or more real work situations in the community in an individual placement. The assessment site(s) must be developed based on the individual consumer's interests, abilities and needs. BRS may therefore decline to approve an assessment site and/or pay for the costs related to site development in cases where the provider has used a site for multiple consumers. Depending on the agreement of the BRS counselor, consumer and provider, the evaluation site may be one where a potential job may exist for the consumer, or may be a real job, which is being used for assessment purposes only. All consumers are expected to be paid at least minimum wage and in accordance with state and federal labor laws during the assessment. In cases where the employer is paying the consumer, BRS will not authorize this component of the Situational Assessment rates.

Note: In general, BRS may not approve situational assessment sites where the consumer performs work for the provider. In cases where an exception is required, staff must obtain approval from the Central Office consultant responsible for CRP relations. Any such evaluations that are approved should not include the cost of site development.

BRS is currently providing two different types of community situational assessments – Work Evaluations (WE) and Working Interviews (WI)

METHOD OF PAYMENT/WHAT THE RATE INCLUDES:

CRPs will be paid for each separate component of the WE or WI as agreed upon before the start of the assessment with the counselor and consumer. The Site Development Component of an SA will be paid in 1 or 2 installments depending upon the goal of the Assessment. Work Evaluation (WE) is for assessment purposes only with a job offer NOT being a goal. Working Interview (WI) is conducted with the end goal being a job offer, but with evaluation of consumer's appropriateness for the position and disability issues taking place. Site development for a Work Evaluation or Working Interview is payable when the assessment site is located. The second installment of site development for a WI is payable when the consumer has been hired as a result of the service and has retained the job for 90 days. These rates are based upon a formula that utilizes the Provider's Placement rate. These rates are payable when unique sites are developed by the Provider. This excludes payment where:

- there is an on-going contract with the employer
- there is a standing relationship with the employer and minimal development is needed
- The CRP has assessed multiple consumers at the same site (CRP has placed another consumer with the same employer, in the same site, in the same department *and* with the same employer contact person within the previous six months)

Exception : BRS requests the same site (must be noted on the SA Referral form or otherwise in writing to the CRP).

The **On-Site Evaluator time** will be paid as an hourly rate for the time spent by the Evaluator on the job with the consumer. The number of hours will vary, based on the agreement between BRS, the Provider, and the consumer. The number of hours that the consumer is on the job, and the number of hours that the Evaluator is with the consumer on the job may also vary. Included is an abbreviated report, using the BRS specified report format, if a Comprehensive Report is not requested by the BRS Counselor.

The **consumer wages** will be paid to the consumer by the vendor. The wages include the consumer's hourly wage (minimum wage), applicable taxes, worker's compensation, etc, and the Provider's administrative costs (not to exceed \$3.10 above minimum wage).

If requested by the BRS Counselor, the Provider will do a **Comprehensive Report**, using the BRS Comprehensive Report format. This rate is equivalent to 2 hours at the Provider's Job Coaching rate. The report must be submitted within 2 weeks of the completion of the assessment.

WAGES ONLY ASSESSMENT (USING CRP as FIDUCIARY)

When it is determined that it is not feasible to have an Evaluator accompany the consumer to the worksite, a situational work assessment may be conducted using specifically designated CRPs to act as fiduciary agents in paying the consumer's wages. This can occur when the employer asks not to have the CRP Staff person at the worksite due to space or safety or other reasons. It may also occur if the BRS Counselor and Consumer agree that there are no additional Assessment component services required to be authorized in conjunction with Wages.

Under this service, the consumer's wages are paid by the CRP and include the hourly wage (minimum wage), applicable taxes, worker's compensation, etc, and the Provider's administrative costs (not to exceed \$3.10 above minimum wage), the same as noted above. The employer needs to be willing to provide verification of the hours worked by the consumer as well to offer feedback as to their impression of the consumer's qualifications and to comment regarding whether the consumer meets the expected performance standards for the position. Below are the steps to follow in arranging for this type of assessment:

Process:

1. a. BRS completes section I of the *BRS Verification of Consumer Work Hours* form (below).
b. Consumer completes:
 - Section 1 of the INS Employment Eligibility Verification form,
 - Completed W-4 form
 - Completed CT-W4 (questions 1 to 4)
- c. The above are sent to the CRP, together with:
 - BRS fiscal authorization, authorizing payment to provider
 - Copy of documents as required in the INS list of acceptable documents
- d. BRS sends host Company letter to Employer
2. CRP completes section II of the *BRS Verification of Consumer Work Hours* form and returns signed form to BRS
3. BRS submits *BRS Verification of Consumer Work Hours* form to host company, who completes section III and returns to BRS after assessment completed.
4. BRS checks form, and provided there are no issues, signs in section IV and submits to CRP.
5. CRP pays consumer wages due to him/her in accordance with the documented hours, as approved by BRS, and bills BRS for reimbursement at provider's approved rate for processing consumer wages.

Verification of Consumer Work Hours*

I. Employee Name _____ Company Name _____

Hours Wages Authorized by BRS: _____

Return completed form to:
BRS Counselor: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____

II. To be completed by fiduciary community rehabilitation program (CRP):

The employee will be paid CT. minimum wage and covered by workers compensation and unemployment insurance during an assessment period, in accordance with the authorization approved by the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services up to the number of hours listed above.

_____ _____
CRP Representative Signature Date CRP Agency Name

III. To be completed by host company:

Hours Worked:

| Date | #Hrs. worked |
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Total # hours worked: _____ Employee signature: _____

Company representative completing this form:

Name (print) Signature

Phone # Date

IV. Approved for CRP payment: _____
BRS Counselor Signature Date

**State of Connecticut
Bureau of Rehabilitation Services**

Date:
(Employer Name)
(Employer Address)
(Town, CT; zip code)

Dear (Employer):

Thank you for allowing our consumer, _____, to participate in an employment assessment in the position of _____ within your company. The purpose of this assessment is to determine whether our consumer has the necessary skills and capabilities to hold the above position within your company or a similar job elsewhere. We request that you as a "host company" be willing to offer us feedback as to your impression of our consumer's qualifications, and comment regarding whether they meet your expected performance standards for the position. This letter will serve to formalize your responsibilities as a host company, as well as those of all parties involved.

Our consumer will begin working at your company under our agreement as a _____ beginning on (date), for a period of _____ hours and concluding on (date). Our agency will coordinate payment to our consumer for their hours worked. We will also arrange the necessary employer liability coverage under the Worker's Compensation insurance of our fiduciary agent.

We must require you as the host company to complete section III of our "Verification of Consumer Work Hours" form and return it to us as soon as possible after our consumer has completed the assessment. We will be unable to generate payment to our consumer for their work until we receive this form completed and signed by you.

As a host company, you may terminate the above arrangement with us and our consumer at any time. If you identify any issues with our consumer that we have not anticipated or require our assistance in any way, we ask that you contact us immediately. If you do find our consumer an acceptable candidate, it is our hope that you will extend a job offer. If for any reason you do not wish to retain our consumer as an employee, you are under no obligation to do so.

We thank you for your cooperation and willingness to work with us in facilitating employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

Very truly yours,

Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor

The following persons are in accord with this agreement:

| | | | |
|--------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|
| _____ Employer: | _____ Date | _____ Consumer | _____ Date |
| _____ Counselor | _____ Date | _____ Supervisor | _____ Date |

JOB PLACEMENT

DEFINITION:

Job placement is the process of locating and securing a permanent job in the competitive labor market for a client of BRS. Placement services may be used only for securing independent employment or for an individual who needs time-limited or ongoing support in an individual placement site. It does not apply to group employment placements, temporary jobs or situational assessment site development.

METHOD OF PAYMENT:

Providers will be paid in three equal installments:

1. The first to be made after, a.) the referral has been made by BRS to the provider for placement services, b.) the individual has been seen for an initial interview by the provider, and c.) the provider and consumer mutually agree to work together in securing employment
2. The second will be made at the time a suitable placement is located and secured by the provider. A placement is considered "suitable" if the consumer has had an opportunity to see the job site and it is approved by both the BRS counselor and consumer.
3. The third installment will be made after the individual has successfully maintained employment for 90 calendar days. The provider must verify that the employer remains satisfied with the consumer's performance. In addition, the BRS counselor must verify with the consumer that s/he is satisfied with the placement and it is good practice for the counselor to also make contact with the employer before the third installment is made.

In those cases where all three installments are not made due to the inability to secure employment or maintain employment for 90 days, the provider must submit a written report to BRS detailing the reason why this has occurred and the consumer's need, if any, for additional services.

The placement rates are based on an estimated statewide average time to secure placements for BRS consumers (33 hours). With using this average, it is anticipated that many placements will take less time to secure, while some may require significantly more.

WHAT THE RATE INCLUDES:

- Placement specialist's time to secure placement (rate is based on a statewide average time to place consumers)
- Placement specialist's mileage
- Administrative costs

OTHER SERVICES PROVIDED BY CRP'S

All other services provided by CRP's are based on proposals submitted by the provider. Staff should refer to those proposals for more information about the particular service and provider. Proposals should be available in the district offices or can be obtained from the central office consultant responsible for CRP relations.

Customized Services Procedures:

Each referral will be custom designed from the following menu:

| Service | Payment Rate | Terms and Conditions |
|--|---|--|
| Assessment Site Development - Two Options: | Rates are configured based upon single Installment of Fee-for-Placement Rate: | Provider must develop an individualized site acceptable to VR Counselor. Cannot replicate a site developed within the previous six months unless specifically requested by VR Counselor at time of referral. |
| Work Evaluation | Equivalent to first Installment of Fee-for-Placement Rate plus \$50. Payable when acceptable site is developed. | |
| Working Interview | Equivalent to first Installment of Fee-for-Placement Rate. Payable when acceptable site is developed. | |
| On-Site Evaluator | Hourly rate for SA without site development. For most providers this is the same Hourly Rate as their Job Coaching Rate. | VR Counselor and Consumer must agree that site is appropriate. Number of hours of on-site evaluation to be mutually agreed upon by consumer, BRS, and CRP. Rate includes Standardized Abbreviated report, if comprehensive report not requested. |
| Job Coaching | Hourly Job Coaching Rate | Number of hours of on-site coaching to be mutually agreed upon by consumer, BRS, and CRP. Job Coaching reports included in hourly rate. |
| Consumer Wages | Rate encompasses: - Actual wages paid to Consumer (usually minimum wage) - Administrative overhead costs to CRP - Worker’s Compensation Coverage - FICA Not to exceed \$3.10 above min. wage | Number of hours of Consumer Wages to be mutually agreed upon by consumer, BRS, and CRP. Number of Consumer Wage hours can exceed number of On-Site Evaluator Hours. |

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|---------------------------------|--|---|
| Comprehensive Assessment Report | Two Hours at Job Coach Rate | Report must be submitted utilizing Standardized Comprehensive Report format. Report must be submitted to BRS within two weeks of conclusion of Assessment/On-Site Evaluation. Approval by VR Counselor for payment. |
| 90 Day Job Retention | 50% of Third Fee-for-Placement Installment plus \$50. Payable at 90 calendar days from date of hire. | Provider must have done the original site development under referral for Working Interview |
| Fee for Placement | Approved Fee for Placement payable in three equal installments: (1) at referral, (2) at placement, (3) upon successful job retention for 90 days | Placement must be in integrated, competitive employment with no consumer wages provided by the CRP. Must be approved by the consumer and the BRS counselor. |

On the Job Training Opportunity Development

The purpose of this service is to request a Community Rehabilitation Provider to arrange an opportunity for a VR Counselor to negotiate an On-the-Job Training (OJT) contract with an Employer. The role of the CRP in providing this service is limited to their finding an employer willing to hire and provide training to a BRS Consumer under the general terms of our standard OJT Contract. It is to be understood that the VR Counselor is solely responsible for negotiating and approving the specific terms of the contract, including but not limited to the per hour training rate, duration of the training period and training progress reporting requirements. The CRP's involvement in providing this specific service will cease upon the contract being signed by all required parties. In most situations, the additional service of Job Coaching will not be authorized in conjunction with On the Job Training. However, should Job Coaching be necessary for the Consumer to fully benefit from the training they will receive under the OJT Contract it may be authorized. (Example: A Consumer with a cognitive disability may require employment of specific compensatory strategies to remediate for memory deficits on the job)

Guidance: Under ideal conditions the Consumer will be specifically referred to a CRP for "On the Job Training Opportunity Development". Under less ideal conditions a CRP may contact a VR Counselor requesting a switch to "On the Job Training Opportunity Development" from another Job/Site Development model. This can be considered an acceptable practice, but Counselors are encouraged to base their decision-making with respect to the individual needs of the Consumer and not out of respect to the employment opportunity at hand.

If a CRP who is working with a Consumer referred by BRS to develop a "straight" **Fee for Placement** (with no OJT) finds an OJT opportunity, the Counselor is encouraged to examine whether additional training is necessary for successful Placement in a job commensurate with the Consumers Employment Plan. If it is determined to be appropriate, the Counselor may cancel authorization for the second and third installments of Job Placement and authorize funding under "On the Job Training Opportunity Development". Once the requirements for payment listed below under "Payment Terms" are satisfied, the CRP will be eligible to bill for an amount equal to 50% of their Total On-the-Job Opportunity Development Rate, which will be equivalent to an additional "Fee for Placement" installment.

If a CRP who is working with a Consumer referred by BRS to develop a “**Working Interview Site**” finds an OJT opportunity, the Counselor is encouraged to examine their initial reason for referring the Consumer for an “Assessment Service” to begin with and whether they have all the necessary information to determine whether the Consumer will be able to capitalize on an OJT opportunity. As above, the Counselor must also examine whether additional training is necessary for successful Placement in a job commensurate with the Consumers Employment Plan. If the decision is made to switch models, the authorizations for WI should be cancelled and funds authorized under the full rate for “On the Job Training Opportunity Development”. If the offer of OJT should occur any time after the start of a Working Interview, the offer will be viewed as an outcome of the assessment and the CRP WILL NOT be eligible for any additional reimbursement. The CRP should be paid ONLY under the guidelines of the Working Interview Model.

Referral Process: *A written referral detailing the desired Employment/Training outcome of the service is essential (standardized form is attached).* An intake meeting with the CRP and Consumer may be scheduled at the Counselor’s discretion. At a minimum, a discussion with the CRP regarding the Consumers functional limitations and how/if they will be presented to prospective employers/trainers is expected to occur.

Rate Structure: specific to each CRP and based upon 66.7% of their total (i.e. all 3 installments) “Pay for Placement” Rate and thus equal to two “Fee for Placement” installments. This service is to be authorized and payable as a single installment. Rates are established and present for all providers who have a Fee for Placement Rate.

Payment Terms: Payment is to occur upon the following condition being met:

- An OJT Contract is successfully negotiated and is signed by the Employer, the Consumer, the VR Counselor and by a Supervisor (if required)