

Chapter IV - Successful Case Closure and Post-Employment

Section 1: Status 26 Case Closure

Guidance

The goal of the vocational rehabilitation program is to enable consumers to enter gainful employment that is consistent with their abilities and *informed choice**. A consumer's BRS file may therefore be closed as "successfully rehabilitated" when the individual is performing satisfactorily in employment that has been maintained for a minimum of 90 days and which is reasonably consistent with his/her choice. While the number of Status 26 closures is an important measure of the agency's success in meeting its goal, there should not be a rush to close cases where it is clear that the job placement is unstable or inappropriate and where additional *vocational rehabilitation services** are necessary and appropriate.

Legal Requirements

- A. The following criteria must be met in order to make a determination that a consumer has been rehabilitated and to close his/her case record in Status 26:
1. The *employment outcome** is consistent with the individual's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and *informed choice**;

There may be isolated situations where, despite BRS attempts to work with the consumer to develop a goal that is consistent with all of the above criteria (strengths, resources, etc.), the individual's choice continues to clearly be inconsistent with their abilities, resources, etc. In cases where it is determined that it is not likely that the consumer can be placed in employment that is both consistent with his/her *informed choice** and his/her abilities, it may be appropriate to close a case rehabilitated if the remaining criteria are nonetheless met.

2. The *employment outcome** is in the most *integrated setting** possible, consistent with the individual's *informed choice**;
3. Rehabilitation services provided under an Employment Plan have contributed to the achievement of the *employment outcome**;

4. The consumer has maintained the *employment outcome** for an appropriate period of time (but not less than 90 days) necessary to ensure the stability of the *employment outcome**, and the individual no longer needs *vocational rehabilitation services**. ;

There may be a number of cases where it is inappropriate to close the case after only 90 days of employment. For example, persons in *supported employment** who require additional time-limited services until the transition to *extended services** will generally need to have their cases remain open for a longer period of time. Other persons who need assistance to maintain employment (such as individuals who are self-employed or who need other job-related supports) may also need the case open longer to ensure success on the job.

5. At the end of the 90-day period, the consumer and BRS consider the *employment outcome** to be satisfactory and agree that the consumer is performing well on the job.

When applicable, as consumers complete vocational rehabilitation services and enter employment, BRS should provide them with information and assistance in managing their government benefits with respect to their earnings. See Appendix H for further information concerning staff roles in this process.

6. The individual has been informed through *appropriate modes of communication** of the availability of *post-employment services**.

B. Annual Review of Cases Closed Status 26.

1. An annual review must be conducted on consumers whose *employment outcome** at the time of case closure is in extended (sheltered) employment or in any other setting where the individual is compensated below minimum wage or below the prevailing wage paid to non-disabled individuals performing the same or similar functions. The purpose of the review is to determine the interests, priorities and needs of the individual with respect to *competitive employment** or training for *competitive employment**.
2. This review must be done for two years after the individual achieves an *employment outcome**, and thereafter if requested by the individual or his/her *representative**.
3. The consumer or, if appropriate, his/her *representative** must be given the opportunity to provide input into the review and reevaluation and documents that are put into the case record.
4. The consumer or, as appropriate, his/her *representative** must provide a signed acknowledgment that the review and reevaluation have been conducted.

5. During the review, BRS must make maximum efforts to assist the consumer in engaging in *competitive employment**. This includes identifying and providing *vocational rehabilitation services**, reasonable accommodations and other necessary support services.