



EMPLOYMENT SERVICES FORMAT FOR SESSION FOUR DISCUSSION

NOVEMBER 1, 2017

DISCUSSION QUESTION #1:

In review session one, we shared the **HRC service policy on Employment First** in addition to the employment policies for 4 other regional centers in Los Angeles County. Please discuss the HRC service policy:

- Do you think there is anything important that is not addressed in the HRC policy?
- Did you find something in one of the other Regional Center's employment first policy that can be added to HRC's policy?
- Do you think there are parts of the policy that need clarification?
- What other suggestions do you have for changes to the policy?

DISCUSSION QUESTION #2:

In review session one and session three, we presented on **HRC's Expectations for Job Development** that included the expectations for clients, job developer, HRC employment specialist and the job coach. Please discuss the following:

- Do you think there is anything important that is not addressed in HRC's Expectations for Job Development?
- Do you think the expectations are clearly defined for each member of the team to support the individual in finding a job?
- Do you have some general guidance to provide concerning the use of these expectations?

DISCUSSION QUESTION #3:

In review session three, we shared extensive information about **service providers** and heard directly from two supported employment service providers concerning how they provide their services.

- Do you have some comments, recommendations or general guidance related to supported employment service provider issues?

DISCUSSION QUESTION #4

In review session three we talked at length about the **Paid Internship Program and the Competitive Integrated Employment Program**.

- Do you have any comments, observations or additional recommendations regarding these two programs?

DISCUSSION QUESTION #5:

In review session one, we reviewed and distributed **three HRC publications** that were about, or that included reference to, employment for our clients. They are:

1. Planning for Your Future: A Roadmap to Your Goals
2. Facing Transition: A look at your Adolescent's Future
3. Working With the Schools on transition : A Booklet for Parents of Younger Teens

Although we will not have time tonight to revise these booklets we are interested in your input.

- Share with us any general guidance regarding these booklets

DISCUSSION QUESTION #6:

Please use this time to make any observations, raise any questions, or make any suggestions concerning HRC Employment Services.

Harbor Regional Center Service Policy

EMPLOYMENT FIRST

DEFINITION:

“Employment” is defined as regular or customized employment in the workforce

- ⊙ Where employees with disabilities are included on the payroll of a competitive business or industry
- ⊙ Where the assigned employment tasks offer at least minimum or prevailing wages and benefits
- ⊙ Where there are ordinary opportunities for integration and interaction with co-workers without disabilities, with customers, and with the general public.

PHILOSOPHY:

Harbor Regional Center opposes segregated employment and subminimum wage for people with intellectual and other developmental disabilities; we seek to promote public policy:

- ⊙ That restricts the expenditure of public funds to businesses who segregate employees with disabilities from the general workforce;
- ⊙ That ends the ability of employers to pay employees with disabilities a sub-minimum wage;
- ⊙ That discontinues programs that emphasize moving young adults from the classroom to a segregated or sub-minimum wage employment environment.

Harbor Regional Center seeks to promote and facilitate integrated and comparable wage employment alternatives:

- ⊙ That strengthen existing and create new government tax incentives for employers to hire employees with disabilities into integrated environments at comparable wages.
- ⊙ That assist employees with disabilities to find employment in the general workforce in jobs that they choose.

Harbor Regional Center believes the essential ingredients needed to advance competitive integrated employment for people with developmental disabilities are:

- ⊙ A fierce commitment to make this happen;
- ⊙ A secondary school education which focuses on the development of functional employability skills, early work experiences, mobility training and a competitive employment goal.
- ⊙ Frequent and strong collaboration between the regional center, the local education agencies, the department of rehabilitation, clients and families.
- ⊙ Internship opportunities such as those provided through Project SEARCH to create opportunities for real world skill development for students as they transition out of school into the world of work.
- ⊙ Post-secondary programs that provide support for students in certificate and degree programs fully integrated with typical students.
- ⊙ Organized support from the business community.
- ⊙ Public relations activities designed to showcase successful partnerships with the business community.
- ⊙ Supporting families early to foster and build high expectations for their children

POLICY:

Harbor Regional Center believes that employment should be the first priority and preferred option for adults with intellectual and other developmental disabilities and is fiercely committed to expecting, encouraging, providing, creating and rewarding integrated employment in the workforce at minimum or competitive wages and benefits. Accordingly:

- ⦿ Employment opportunities in fully integrated work settings at or above minimum wage shall be the first and preferred option explored in the service planning for working age adults with intellectual and other developmental disabilities.
- ⦿ Working age adults with intellectual and other developmental disabilities who are being supported in segregated work settings and/or in settings where they receive sub-minimum wages will be encouraged to transition to fully integrated work settings where they may be paid at prevailing rates.
- ⦿ Harbor Regional Center will not recommend segregated work settings or sub-minimum wage work opportunities for youth and adults with intellectual and other developmental disabilities who are seeking employment.
- ⦿ Working age adults who choose non-work day activity options will be encouraged to select those options which provide maximum opportunity for volunteering and other activities which take place in integrated settings.
- ⦿ For those who successfully achieve the goal of employment in an integrated setting, future service planning must focus on maintaining employment as well as the consideration of additional career or advancement opportunities. For those not yet achieving employment, annual service planning must include and reflect employment opportunities as the first and priority service option explored.

Approved by the HRC Board of Trustees March 17, 2015

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

/ X / Purchase Of Service / / Agency Operations

/ X / DRAFT REVIEW DATES:

NEW Guideline

/ / Final P & P

Effective:

Date of Next Review:

	Habilitation Services
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ELARC is committed to identifying strategies, best practices and incentives to increase integrated and gainful employment opportunities for people with developmental disabilities.

I. DEFINITIONS:

Habilitation services (WIC 4851) means community-based services purchased or provided to an adult with a developmental disability. It includes services provided under the Work Activity Program and the Supported / Customized Employment Program proposed to prepare and maintain the individual at the highest level of vocational functioning, and/or to prepare the individual for referral to vocational rehabilitation services.

- Competitive Employment (Chapter 1, 7006.3):** is defined as work in the competitive labor market that is performed on a full-time or part-time bases in an integrated setting; and for which an individual is compensated at or above the minimum wage, but not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by individuals who are not disabled.
- Customized Employment** is defined as individualizing the employment relationship between an individual seeking employment and employers in ways that meet the needs of both. It is based on a personalized determination of the strengths, requirements, interests, and ideal employment conditions of an individual with a disability, and is also designed to meet the specific needs of the employer. Customized Employment is not a program but rather a set of principles and strategies that result in employment. It may

include employment attained through self employment job development, entrepreneurship, or restructuring strategies that result in job responsibilities being customized and individually negotiated with the employer to fit the need of the individual with a disability.

- Micro Enterprise is a subset of customized employment that is defined as a small business owned by an individual formed around the person's interest and developed based on market needs and interests. The person's talents take precedence in designing a business. A thorough self sufficient business plan is developed, implemented and maintained by the owner (the individual) with or without reasonable support. The individual will demonstrate and establish their business plan and financial means. The small business shall comply with all regulatory requirements stipulated in Title 17 sections 7136.8
- Supported Employment is defined as paid work that is integrated in the community for individuals with developmental disabilities. This includes provision of ongoing support services necessary for the individual to retain employment. Supported Employment may be provided in individual or group settings.
- Work Activity Program (WAP) is defined as services provided through the Department of Rehabilitation that include paid work, work adjustment and supportive habilitation services in a *sheltered work shop* sheltered workshops, work activity centers, or community-based work. Work activity programs WAP's may include developing good work safety practices, money management skills, and appropriate work habits. Supportive habilitation services may include social skill and community resource training as long as the services are necessary to achieve vocational objectives.
- Internship is defined as method of on-the-job training, which may be paid or unpaid, similar to apprenticeship for trade or vocational jobs, and are usually understood to be temporary positions

II. CRITERIA:

ELARC shall consider the above services if the following are applicable:

- An adult with a developmental disability who demonstrates the interest to work.
- Or a person old enough to work that has not already received a certificate of completion or graduated. If an individual is receiving services from the school district, then he/she will be referred back to the school district to access those options.
-
- Is willing to access and exhaust generic services

III. AMOUNT OF SERVICE:

The amount of service hours will be discussed with the IPP Planning Team and determined based on the assessment as well as recommendation by the interdisciplinary team, as appropriate. Alternative funding sources shall be utilized before regional center services are considered.

IV. ALTERNATIVE FUNDING RESOURCES:

Effective July 1, 2009, WIC 4659 subd. (c) was amended to include that regional centers shall not purchase any service that would otherwise be provided through generic resources.

Upon request and decision of the interdisciplinary planning team to procure an employment service, the service coordinator shall assist the consumer / parent or authorized representative to explore all generic community resources.

While the resources listed below may not in all cases serve as alternative funding resources, they must be explored as supplemental funding resources.

- Veteran's Administration (VA)
- Social Security Administration (SSA) - Ticket to Work
- SSA Work Incentives such as PASS
- Family, consumer and other private resources
- Other state and local generic resources
- Small Business Administration

- One Stop Work Source Centers
- Private Trusts
- Department of Rehabilitation
- Employment Development Department (EDD)

V. PROCESS FOR PURCHASE OF SERVICE APPROVAL:

During the IPP meeting the SC discusses with the consumer and his/her authorized representative/legal guardian, or the transition age individuals, options related to day activities, employment, education etc. If the consumer's preference is that he or she would like to work, then the SC will provide options available; competitive employment, supported employment, customized employment, micro-enterprising, work activity, internships / volunteer etc.

The SC will review the list of vendors in SANDIS and provides any other pertinent information related to the area of choice to consumer / parent or authorized representative.

The SC is encouraged to use the following resources when discussing Employment with consumers: My Choice, My Future Booklet, the PCT Employment Questionnaire (CS 11-704), The Rehabilitation Resource Directory - www.rehab.ca.gov

The service coordinator will make all efforts to provide at least three options of service providers abiding by WIC 4648(a)(6)(D and comply with *WIC section 4648 subd. (a)(6)(D ...to review the cost of providing services or supports of comparable quality by different providers and to choose the least costly available provider, including transportation, who is able to accomplish all or part of the consumer's IPP consistent with the particular needs of the consumer and family as identified in the IPP. In determining the least costly vendor, the availability of federal financial participation shall be considered. The consumer is not required to use the least costly provider if it will result in the consumer moving from an existing provider of services or support to more restrictive or less integrated services and supports.*

VI. EVALUATION OF SERVICE EFFECTIVENESS:

Consumer/family feedback will serve as the primary mode of evaluation of service effectiveness. Such feedback will be formally obtained through the quarterly review and report on progress towards the IPP objectives developed through the person centered

planning meeting. The annual review of this plan will also provide the opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of the service.

ELARC has incorporated the Customized Wage Employment Milestones from Griffin - Hammis Associates, LLC, into this POS Guideline

EMPLOYMENT PROTOCOLS

Competitive Employment

If an individual would like to be competitively employed, ELARC will encourage job application process.

1. SC will refer individual to local generic resources (See Alternative Funding Resources Section of this Policy).
2. ELARC will monitor that employment via the IPP process. Although regional center may not be funding for support services, a need may arise to support the individual for a limited time in order to assist the individual to retain that employment. Generic resources shall be explored before regional center funding is considered.
3. The SC will document in SANDIS / database under the Primary Consumer Information Screen - Day Program Field, that the consumer is in competitive employment. In addition, the SC will document in the primary Consumer Information Financial Screen - Wages Field, the individual's hourly wage.

Internship

If Internship is selected, the referral process is coordinated by the service coordinator.

1. The SC shall contact the agency or resource, ask to speak with the Internship Coordinator/ or person in charge of internships to check if there are any internships slots available. If so, then a referral shall be made.
2. A consent for release of information will be obtained by the SC.
3. Upon receipt of the consent for release of information, the SC shall forward a referral packet to Internship Coordinator and the individual will be contacted to attend orientation and complete application.
4. Internship coordinator shall contact consumer for interview

and if accepted, the vendor shall notify consumer and ELARC.

5. The SC shall complete a POS Request for Internship if applicable and submits it to supervisor for review and approval. Once approved, the POS request is forwarded to POS for processing.
6. The IPP/Addendum is completed detailing clearly the specified roles between the Internship provider, all other providers and the individual receiving services.
7. The SC will document in SANDIS / database under the Primary Consumer Information Screen - Day Program Field that the consumer is in internship. In addition, the SC will document in the primary Consumer Information Financial Screen - Wages Field, the individual's hourly wage, if applicable.
8. The SC shall review a progress report on a semi-annual basis to determine if progress on goals has been made.
9. Within 3-6 months of the Internship ending, Internship Coordinator will assist consumer to open up a case with the Department of Rehabilitation. Internship Coordinator will contact SC with date of intake meeting with DOR, with consent from consumer. SC will attend DOR intake meeting.
10. The Internship may be up to 1 year of unpaid learning experience where consumer is gathering knowledge and competency in the work environment. There are four rotations / three slots available.

Supported Employment

If standard Supported Employment is considered, the first step is to determine whether the referral will be for individual or group type of supported employment.

1. The SC shall provide consumer/ parent with at least three options of service providers as per WIC 4648(a)(6)(D).
2. Upon selection, the SC shall obtain written consents from consumer/ parent to provide a referral to the Supported Employment vendor and to the Department of Rehabilitation.
3. The SC shall provide referral to the Supported employment vendor.
4. The SC shall refer the consumer to Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) so that an application is completed. SC will include chosen Supported Employment vendor name in the referral.
5. SC shall provide DOR with signed consent from consumer/ parent allowing exchange of information and inform the DOR

- counselor that ELARC would like to be sent copies on all progress reports and informed of DOR intake meeting.
6. SC to complete DR form DS 1968 and send to DOR counselor. SC shall accompany consumer and Service Provider (SEP) vendor to intake meeting with DOR.
 7. DOR may authorize a vocational assessment, placement and intensive services with a vocational rehabilitation – (SEP).
 8. The SEP completes a 30 day Individualized Habilitation Service Plan- Form DS1961 (IHSP) within 30 days of placement. With consent, ELARC shall also receive a copy of monthly report.
 9. DOR funds the VR-SEP services until the consumer reaches stabilization (typically no more than 6 months).
 10. The DOR Senior Vocational Rehab Counselor notifies ELARC's Employment Chair/ SC, at least 15 calendar days prior to the transfer, that the consumer has achieved stabilization and will transfer to habilitation extended services.
 11. DOR also sends ELARC the Notice of Transition to Extended services- DR387
 12. The IPP/Addendum shall be completed, detailing clearly the specified roles between SE provider, all other providers and the individual receiving services. IPP addendum shall include amount of job coaching / supervision hours per month ELARC funds as well as a fade out plan of services.
 13. SEP should provide SC with a IHSP every 6 months.
 14. SC will review case every 6 months to determine appropriateness of continued funding of services.
 15. The SC will document in SANDIS / database under the Primary Consumer Information Screen - Day Program Field, that the consumer is in supported employment. In addition, the SC will document in the primary Consumer Information Financial Screen - Wages Field, the individual's hourly wage.

Customized Employment

If it has been determined that Customized Employment is the preference or preferred choice, for example consumer (has attempted other employment, but was unsuccessful, consumer/parent has specifically requested Customized Employment, consumer has special skills and conditions of employment to negotiate)

The SC shall provide consumer/ parent with at least three options of Customized Employment service providers as per WIC 4648(a)(6)(D).

The SC completes a Customized Employment Review Committee

Referral Form and packet which includes the following documents (IPP, CDER, Psychological evaluation, other program reports, etc.) and adds an objective to IPP.

The SC then submits the referral and packet to Supervisor for review and signature.

Once approved, the supervisor routes packet to the Community Services (CSMD) Supervisor.

The CMSD Supervisor assigns a community services specialist by zip code of the vendor.

The specialist will contact the SC to schedule a meeting with the Customized Employment Review Committee, which includes the CS Supervisor, the SC, the CMSD Supervisor or the CMSD "Employment" Specialist, and the CS "Employment" Supervisor designee.

The CMSD Specialist will facilitate the Customized Employment Review Committee Meeting.

The Customized Employment review committee will:

- a) Determine if basic information still needs to be gathered
- b) Discuss if consumer could benefit from another employment option or if CE is the appropriate option
- c) Inform SC to be present for Department of Rehabilitation Meeting
- d) Provide recommendations to SC on timeframes (if and when) referral shall be made to Department of Rehabilitation
- e) May provide recommendation to SC that meeting with Department of Rehabilitation should be held immediately or after some time (Similar to one above)
- f) Provide recommendations on which milestones the individual may want to achieve (including time frames on milestones) - Refer to Griffin-Hammis Associates, LLC- Customized Wage Employment Milestones)

- g) Determine and provide an estimated number of hours authorized for provider to achieve milestones as specified in letter (f) above.
- h) Document the recommendations on a CE Review form (12- 513). It will also include who was in attendance during the meeting with copies in the consumer file and CSMD log.
- i) The SC will convene an ID team meeting to discuss the recommendations of the CE Review Committee. If the ID Team is in agreement then the plan will be implemented which may include one or more of the above.
- j) Throughout the process of CE, the SC is to take the lead role to make sure reports (The Individualized vocational Assessment, profiles, employer interviews etc.) are completed and submitted.
- k) Utilizing the assessment template, the SC to review report and provide vendor feedback and possible T.A. with guidance from CMDS.
- l) The IPP/Addendum is completed detailing clearly the specified roles between CE provider, all other providers and the individual receiving services.
- m)The SC then sends referral packet(s) to the designated employment service provider(s).
- n) Once the provider accepts the referral, the SC shall submit to his or her supervisor, a POS Request for an assessment as per the recommendation of the Customized Employment Review Committee. Upon review and approval the POS will be routed to POS for processing.
- o) Once the assessment is received by ELARC, the SC shall schedule a 2nd review with the CE Review Committee to present the assessment to the committee for appropriateness of requested hours and plans.

The review committee shall re-convene and the following will apply:

- The committee will review the assessment
- Discuss options
- The committee will determine what path the individual will take; whether wage employment or micro-enterprise is more appropriate.

- Determine an estimated number of hours for next phase / milestone
 - The specialist will document notes on the original form including new dates of most recent notes
- p. The service provider shall complete a IHC (DR) or an ISP to submit to ELARC.
- q. The Individualized Service Plan shall be developed by the service provider and a copy shall be forwarded to the Department of Rehabilitation Counselor and the Service Coordinator. In addition, the service provider shall submit an assessment which includes a transition plan, CE goals, objectives and time frames to achieve them.
- r. Quarterly progress report shall be submitted to the regional center. A review of the assessment & transition plan will be conducted and updated if indicated.
- s. Frequent contact between the Regional center and the CE agency is required. The SC is expected to attend DOR Intake meeting and shall not wait for the quarterly meeting to discuss progress.
- t. The service coordinator will ensure that the goals discussed and identified in the IPP are addressed with the provider. The goals shall be written in the Individual Service Plan (ISP), shall be time-limited and shall include a fade-out plan. No changes shall be made to the ISP unless mutually agreed to by the IPP Planning Team.
- u. The SC will document in SANDIS / database under the Primary Consumer Information Screen - Day Program Field, that the consumer is in customized employment. In addition, the SC will document in the primary Consumer Information Financial Screen - Wages Field, the individual's hourly wage.
- v. SC will report back to the committee semi annually, six months after the start of services or more frequently if the ID team deems it to be necessary to determine consumer's progress and vendor's performance. The scheduling of this meeting will be done by the SC.

Micro-Enterprise

If it has been determined that Micro-Enterprise is the preferred choice and the individual has attempted other employment options , but was unsuccessful or the consumer/parent has specifically

requested micro enterprise and the individual has special skills to negotiate then the SC shall;

1. The SC shall provide consumer/ parent with at least three options of Micro -Enterprise service providers as per WIC 4648(a)(6)(D).
2. The SC completes a Micro-Enterprise CE Review Committee Referral Form and packet which includes the following documents (IPP, CDER, Psychological evaluation, other program reports, etc.) and adds an objective to IPP.
3. The SC then submits the referral and packet to Supervisor for review and signature.
4. Once approved, the supervisor routes packet to the Community Services (CSMD) Supervisor.
5. The CMSD Supervisor assigns a community services specialist by zip code of the vendor. The specialist will contact the SC to schedule a meeting with the Micro-Enterprise CE Review Committee, which includes the CS Supervisor, the SC, the CMSD Supervisor, the CMSD "Employment" Specialist, and the CS "Employment" Supervisor designee.
6. The CMSD Specialist will facilitate the Microenterprise CE Review Committee Meeting.
 - a. The Micro-Enterprise CE Review Committee will determine if basic information still needs to be gathered
 - b. Discuss if consumer could benefit Micro Enterprise and if this is the appropriate option. The expectation is that the individual has a plan of action for his/her business and that the close consideration is made regarding whether the individual has the ability to run his /her own business, the business is feasible, whether there is a market for the the proposed business, whether the business will create a profit margin (The Griffin-Hammis Associates, LLC Customized Self Employment Milestones shall be considered).
 - c. Inform SC to be present for Department of Rehabilitation Meeting.
 - d. Provide recommendations to SC on timeframes (if and when) referral shall be made to Department of Rehabilitation
 - e. May provide recommendation to SC that meeting with Department of Rehabilitation should be held immediately or after some time (Similar to one above)
 - f. Provide recommendations on which milestones the individual may want to achieve (including time frames on milestones) - Refer to Griffin-Hammis Associates, LLC- Customized Self- Employment Millstones)
 - g. Determine and provide an estimated number of hours

authorized for vendor to achieve milestones as specified in letter (f) above.

- h. Document the recommendations on a Micro Enterprise CE Review form (12- 513). It will also include who was in attendance during the meeting.
- i. The SC will convene an ID team meeting to discuss the recommendations of the Micro-enterprise CE Review Committee. If the ID Team is in agreement then the plan will be implemented which may include one or more of the above.
- j. The IPP/Addendum is completed detailing clearly the specified roles between Micro-Enterprise CE provider, all other providers and the individual receiving services.
- k. The SC then sends referral packet(s) to the designated Micro Enterprise service provider(s).
- l. Once the provider accepts the referral, the SC shall submit to his or her supervisor, a POS Request for an assessment as per the recommendation of the Micro-Enterprise CE Review Committee. Upon review and approval the POS will be routed to POS for processing.
- m. Once the assessment is received by ELARC, the SC shall schedule a 2nd review with the Micro-enterprise CE Review Committee to present the assessment to the committee for appropriateness of requested hours and plans.

The review committee shall re-convene and the following will apply:

- a) The committee will review the assessment
- b) Discuss options
- c) The committee will determine what path the individual will take; whether wage employment or micro-enterprise is more appropriate.
- d) Determine an estimated number of hours for next phase / milestone
- e) The specialist will document notes on the original form including new dates of most recent notes.
- f) The service provider shall complete a IHC (DR) or an ISP to submit to ELARC.

The Individualized Service Plan shall be developed by the service provider and a copy shall be forwarded to the Department of Rehabilitation Counselor and the Service Coordinator. In addition, the service provider shall submit an assessment which includes a transition plan, Micro Enterprise CE goals, objectives and time frames to achieve them.

Quarterly progress report shall be submitted to the regional center. A review of the assessment & transition plan will be conducted and updated if indicated.

Frequent contact between the Regional center and the Micro Enterprise CE agency is required. The SC is expected to attend DOR Intake meeting and shall not wait for the quarterly meeting to discuss progress.

The service coordinator will ensure that the goals discussed and identified in the IPP are addressed with the provider. The goals shall be written in the Individual Service Plan (ISP), shall be time-limited and shall include a fade-out plan.

It is expected that the business support be short term and if business support is needed ongoing, that it be funded by the business and included as a business expense.

No changes shall be made to the ISP unless mutually agreed to by the IPP Planning Team.

The SC will document in SANDIS / database under the Primary Consumer Information Screen - Day Program Field, that the consumer is in Micro Enterprise. In addition, the SC will document in the primary Consumer Information Financial Screen - Wages Field, the individual's hourly wage.

SC will report back to the committee semi annually, six months after the start of services to determine consumer's progree and vendor's performance. The scheduling of this meeting will be done by the CMSD committee and specialist.

Work Activity

1. SC shall determine if a referral to a Work Activity Center is appropriate and if selected the SC shall provide consumer/parent with at least three options of Work Activity service providers as per WIC 4648(a)(6)(D).
2. The SC shall obtain a consent form for release of information.
3. The SC shall submit a Referral form & referral packet to the selected work activity program. The packet shall include the physical exam form and all other pertinent information.
4. The SC contacts the WAP contact person to arrange a tour of WAP for cuonsumer, if the consumer has not already toured WAP.

5. The WAP determines if it can meet the consumer's needs. WAP accepts or denies consumer into WAP and consumer contacts SC to state if they would like to attend WAP.
6. The SC submits a POS Request for 6 months via SANDIS and the supervisor reviews and approves the POS Request and forwards it to POS for processing.
7. The WAP completes a 60 day Individualized Habilitation Service Plan- Form DS1961 (IHSP) within 60 days of placement to determine the individuals work skills.
8. WAP will provide the 60 day DS1961 form to SC, upon SC request.
9. Based on review of the 60 day IHSP, the IPP planning team makes a decision for continued work activity services or determines need for other possible options.
10. If consumer continues to attend WAP, at 6 month time, WAP will complete a semi-annual IHSP to provide update on consumer progress and goals. SC can attend Semi-Annual IHSP planning meeting and receive 6 month IHSP by contacting WAP.
11. Based on review of the Semi-annual IHSP, the IPP planning team makes a decision for continued work activity services or determines need for other possible options. SC completes authorization for another 6 months.
12. If consumer continues to attend WAP, 1 year later from start date, WAP will contact SC to attend Annual IHSP meeting. WAP will provide the Annual DS1961 form to SC, upon SC request.
13. Based on review of the IHSP, the IPP planning team makes a decision for continued work activity services or determines need for other possible options.
14. The IPP/Addendum is completed detailing clearly the specified roles between work activity provider, all other providers and the individual receiving services.
15. The SC will document in SANDIS / database under the Primary Consumer Information Screen - Day Program Field, that the consumer is in work activity. In addition, the SC will document in the primary Consumer Information Financial Screen - Wages Field, the individual's hourly wage.

EMPLOYMENT FIRST POLICY

POLICY

Inland Regional Center states that integrated employment will be the first option for every working age adult IRC supports, regardless of the severity of their disability.

PURPOSE

It is the standard of California that integrated employment shall be given the highest priority for working age individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disability. Furthermore, integrated employment is intended to be the first option considered. Inland Regional Center's (IRC) mission includes the promotion of normalization and inclusion into the everyday routines of community life. Consistent with state law and its mission, IRC has developed this Employment First Policy.

PROCEDURES FOR POLICY COMPLIANCE

- Consumers have the opportunity and support to work in employment settings that are meaningful, are valued by the community and are appropriately compensated.
- Consumers have the right to make decisions about all aspects of their lives.
- Consumers live, work, learn and recreate in settings which maximize opportunities to be with persons not paid to be with them.

STANDARDS

The intended outcome of this policy and the implementation of supports that may be needed will lead to a significant increase in:

- The number of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities who engage in integrated employment, self-employment and microenterprises, and
- The number of individuals who earn wages at or above minimum wage and
- The number of transition plans which include employment outcomes and services for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities who are 14 years of age or older.

STATUE

Assembly Bill 1041, also known as the Employment First Policy, amended Sections 4646.5 and 4868 of the Welfare and Institution Code, and assed Section 4869, effective January 1, 2014.



Frank D. Lanterman

REGIONAL CENTER

TITLE: Employment and Adult Day Services

DOCUMENT: Service Standard

DATE REVISED: Approved by the Board of Directors on February 24, 2010.
Approved by the Department of Developmental Services on July 23, 2010

Typically, clients become eligible for employment and adult day services through the regional center at age 22.

Employment

There is a strong societal value placed on employment. Further, the California legislature, through the *Employment First* policy (California Government Code Section 19230), has identified employment as the primary goal for working age adults with developmental disabilities. Therefore, the regional center actively promotes supported or competitive employment and clients who are able to work are expected to work.

Work opportunities for people with a developmental disability, in order of their level of integration, include competitive employment, individual supported employment, group supported employment, and workshops. The regional center assists clients in gaining employment at the highest level of integration consistent with their abilities and interests.

Adult Day Services

Clients who need a greater level of support than is available in a work setting, who retire from work, or who are not eligible for employment may participate in a day activity. For clients who are employed part-time, the regional center may provide funding for a day activity to supplement the hours of employment.

Day services are intended to provide clients who do not work with the opportunity to have a pattern of life similar to non-disabled individuals by providing them with planned activities for up to 30 hours per week.

Employment Training and Support Services

Employment is a significant way for adults to lead more independent and productive lives. All adults should be considered for employment training.

Referrals for this service can be made through the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), supported work programs, and work activity programs. DOR is required to fund supported work services until the adult is stabilized in a specific job. Upon stabilization, usually within six (6) months, DOR notifies the regional center at least fifteen (15) days in advance of the transition of the funding to regional center. The regional center can then continue to purchase supported work services.

When the regional center is considering referrals for employment training and support services, priority consideration shall be given to agencies that can arrange for timely job placement, preferably in a work environment with non-disabled persons.

The regional center may purchase employment training and support services if all the following criteria are met:

- 1 The adult is willing to participate in employment training and support services
- 2 The adult is ineligible for an appropriate public school funded program
- 3 The adult is ineligible for funding from the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR)

In selecting a day option, the planning team gives preference to services that offer clients the opportunity to engage in meaningful, age appropriate activities in the community. People are engaged in meaningful activities if they enjoy the activity, if they achieve something through their participation, or if they gain knowledge or skills. The planning team also selects the least costly program that meets the client's needs. The cost of a program is defined to include the cost of the program itself and the cost of transportation to and from the program. The client will not be required to accept the least costly program if it is provided in a more restrictive or less integrated setting than other options.

Integrative Employment Services

Definition

Integrative Employment service models provide highly individualized support that leads to meaningful paid work in natural work environments. These models have proven extremely successful for employment placement of persons with developmental disabilities, including those with severe and multiple challenges. Agencies providing this service tend to be innovative, and gear their approaches to individual circumstances. Therefore, not all aspects of this service category are fixed or defined.

Commonly recognized *best practice* characteristics of Integrative Employment Services include:

1. Placement of individuals in meaningful jobs in which they are in proximity to persons without disabilities. Jobs are in natural work settings in the community.
 2. Work is for prevailing wages. Preference is given to full-time work, but opportunities for part-time employment are included to enable persons with more severe challenges to work. Employees with developmental disabilities receive the same benefits as other employees in their work place.
 3. Employees are involved in the decision-making concerning choice of jobs.
 4. Assistance provided is as non-intrusive as possible. The ultimate objective is that support and assistance be provided by other employees within the work place, and that outside assistance from program staff be removed or minimized as quickly as possible. However, long-term minimal follow-up may be provided to assure maintenance of employment and to assist with job changes or crisis situations.
 5. Employees are accepted, included, and involved in the social fabric of the work place.
 6. Service agencies employ a positive, business-oriented approach, and strive to locate jobs that enhance the status and image of the employees.
 7. Service agencies are outcome oriented, with innovative, flexible approaches to achieve results. Creativity in selection of jobs, in use of support, and use of adaptive technology are employed to remove barriers to employment. Vital statistics are compiled to show effectiveness.
 8. Integrative Employment agencies offer services inclusively to people with severe and multiple disabilities. *Readiness* is not a pre-requisite for employment. The model is not a *continuum* of services through which
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consumers move to the next step. It offers a range of opportunities and approaches so as to meet individual needs and desires.

9. Service agencies are strong advocates for the rights of persons with disabilities to have access to the community, to be fairly compensated, etc.

Some of the Integrative Employment opportunities currently available are as follows:

1. **Individual Competitive Employment.** Individual placement in full or part-time work for which minimum wage or better is earned. On-site support is not intensive, and time-limited follow-up may be provided.
2. **Supported Employment.** Individual placement in full or part-time work that may involve intensive on-site support initially, and may require ongoing follow-up. Earnings may be at or below minimum wage.
3. **Group Supported Employment.** A group of persons (maximum of eight) with developmental disabilities work in close proximity to each other (sometimes called *enclaves*, or *work crews*). Earnings are often less than minimum wage, although they may be above the minimum. Work can be either full-time or part-time.
4. **Transitional Employment.** Time-limited support leading to employment. It may include on-the-job training, apprenticeship training, work/training stations, and at times, enclaves. Pay is typically less than the minimum wage. Like other integrative options, it occurs in regular employment settings.

Note that all Integrative Employment Services take place in integrated settings, and individuals are paid prevailing wages for their work. Service agencies may vary in approaches to job development. Some teach self-directed job search skills. Some may also offer assistance with money management and budgeting, social skills related to the job, and setting employment goals. Some also provide travel/mobility training. Because Integrative Employment is a cutting edge, innovative, and growing service area, new models may develop over time.

Policy

Westside Regional Center believes strongly that most people with developmental disabilities can work, regardless of the severity of their challenges. The Center has given strong support to Integrative Employment models in the past, as the workability of these has been fully demonstrated. The Center also promotes participation by employers within its service area by conducting public relations and dissemination activities designed to inform and attract employers. An employer advisory committee has been established for this purpose.

Westside Regional Center believes that individuals can begin at an early age to establish basic employment goals and gain experiences that lead to a greater likelihood of future employability. Therefore the staff of the Center will make every effort to advocate for

expansion of integrative employment and employment orientation opportunities within the public school system.

Innovative approaches that achieve the outcomes of employment in natural work settings alongside members of the general public are encouraged. Priority will be given to those services that follow the *best practices* principles delineated above.

Consumers may be offered volunteer service opportunities under Integrative Employment Services, in order to learn job related skills and interact with others on the job. However, Westside Regional Center highly discourages volunteer work if there is the possibility that the consumer could be working for pay. Volunteer placements should only be made if they are temporary, or if it can be shown that the volunteer job will lead to a paid position within a short period of time (no longer than six months). Consumers should not be placed in volunteer jobs if the employer would normally pay wages for the work, as this violates federal labor laws.

All consumers who express the desire to work, or who choose to explore the possibility that they may be able to work, will be referred for an Integrative Employment assessment. All adult consumers leaving the public school system will be offered the opportunity to receive Integrative Employment Services.

Westside Regional Center will not pay Integrative Employment service agencies to provide supervision during non-work hours. Integrative work opportunities will most likely involve time to research and make decisions about potential job opportunities, to go through the interview process, to prepare for travel, clothing requirements, etc. These are considered part of Integrative Employment Services. However, supervision of activities while waiting for a job, or during non-work hours if the employee is working part time, will be provided under other categories of daytime activities services.

The Department of Rehabilitation, and its sub-divisions of Habilitation Services and Vocational Rehabilitation, provide funding for some Integrative Employment Services. However, consumers funded under that department must meet certain criteria. Westside Regional Center will pay for Integrative Employment Services only for those who do not qualify for similar services funded by the Department of Rehabilitation. Furthermore, the Center will continue to advocate for inclusion of all consumers, regardless of the level of challenges, in services offered by the Department of Rehabilitation. If the Department of Rehabilitation will pay for a portion of service for a consumer, for example, for hours on the job only, then the Center will purchase other portions of the service in a blended funding arrangement.



HARBOR REGIONAL CENTER EXPECTATIONS FOR JOB DEVELOPMENT

HRC Employment Orientation:

- Clients and families are encouraged to attend HRC's Employment Orientation to find out more about what the classes will entail and answer any questions families may have about the Supported Employment process.
- Within a calendar year two orientations will be held in Long Beach and two will be held in Torrance announcements of dates and times are available on the HRC website.

HRC Job Preparation Classes:

- HRC clients seeking supported employment or assistance in job search may choose to attend a job preparation series offered by an HRC provider. This series is not a requirement; however may be an option to better prepare the client for the job search process and to assist clients to better understand what their role is when finding a job.
- Clients will be assisted in job seeking, resume development and job interviewing skills.
- Upon successful completion clients will be referred to a supported employment provider for job development services.

Expectations for Clients during Job Development:

- Clients may be interested in enrolling in a day program up to three days/week while engaged in the job search/development process;
- Clients who have requested job development are encouraged to spend at least two day's/week engaged in job-seeking activities (applying on-line or in-person for jobs, interviewing for jobs, meeting with job developer, etc.)
- Clients are NOT expected to attend day program if/when attendance would conflict with a possible job interview or with other important job-related activity

Assessment & Planning:

- The job developer should complete a vocational assessment for each client prior to beginning the job development process (a copy of the assessment should be provided to HRC)
- The job developer and the client should develop a plan for job-seeking activities which the client will be encouraged to follow (a copy of the plan should be provided to HRC)

Frequency of Contact:

- The job developer should meet with clients in a small group (up to 5 clients) at least weekly (two hour sessions)
 - Share prior week's experience in job seeking and discuss
 - Provide support and advice

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- Plan for coming week's job-seeking activities
- Discuss job seeking skills (practice job interviews, etc.)
- The job developer should meet with each client on his/her caseload individually at least once per month
 - Individual meetings could include job site visits or job interviews
 - Individual meetings could include personal assistance with job applications

Other Job Developer Expectations during Job Development:

- Each Job Developer's caseload is expected to be approximately 15 clients at any point in time
- Job Developers should provide the HRC Service Coordinator with monthly reports during the job development period with copy sent to the HRC Employment Specialist (monthly reports should include progress with each individual client);
- Job Development activities should be **personalized** and based upon **client preference**

Transition:

- **Average** job development time for each client is estimated to be 3 months but job development may be continued up to 6 months
- Job developers should meet with HRC Service Coordinator and the client if the client has not found employment by the end of month 4; purpose of the meeting is to explore client's continued interest in work, analysis of barriers to achieving employment and other alternatives for the client; a plan for continued job development or a plan for transition to an alternative day activity should be developed

Role of the HRC Employment Specialist:

- The HRC Employment Specialist is the coordinator of all job development and supported employment services for HRC clients who are seeking assistance in job seeking or supported employment;
- The HRC Employment Specialist provides assistance to Service Coordinators in a variety of ways including identifying job developers with current capacity and identifying job developers with experience in job development in specific industries
- The HRC Employment Specialist collects and maintains data related to all referrals for job development and supported employment for HRC clients who are seeking assistance in job development and supported employment
- The HRC Employment Specialist meets quarterly with all job developers in order to assure effective communication and collaboration, to share resources and to provide support

Harbor Regional Center asks our job development partners to make efforts to identify jobs for HRC clients that are **non-traditional**. We are hopeful that our job development partners will also incentivize their job development staff to help our clients to access non-traditional jobs.

Notwithstanding this aspiration, we want to acknowledge all of the effort that is involved with job development of any kind...and to note that **any minimum wage job constitutes honorable work.**

Traditional Jobs:

Janitorial work
Car washing
Dish washing
Grocery bagger
Courtesy clerk
Theater ticket taker
Big box store stocker
Gardening

Non-Traditional Jobs or Settings:

Clerical/office work
Hospitality/hotel services
Hospital settings
Government settings
Small business settings (family owned restaurant)
Banks
Warehouse work
Construction (any trade)

Welfare and Institutions Code, section 4870

4870. (a) To encourage competitive integrated employment opportunities statewide for individuals with developmental disabilities, the department shall establish guidelines and oversee a program, to the extent funds are appropriated in the annual Budget Act for this purpose, to increase paid internship opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities that produce outcomes consistent with the individual program plan. The department shall consult with the State Council on Developmental Disabilities, regional centers, employers, supported employment provider organizations, and clients' rights advocates, to establish a program that shall be administered by community service providers and that meets all of the following criteria:

(1) Payments for internships shall not exceed ten thousand four hundred dollars (\$10,400) per year for each individual placed in an internship.

(2) Placements shall be made into competitive, integrated work environments.

(3) Placements shall be made into internships that develop skills that will facilitate paid employment opportunities in the future.

(4) Regional centers shall increase awareness of these internships to consumers outside of current employment programs through outreach to consumers once the program is implemented, as well as during the individual program plan process.

(b) The department shall require annual reporting by regional centers and vendors that ensures program accountability and achievement of program goals. This shall include, but is not limited to, all of the following:

(1) The number of interns placed who might not otherwise have achieved the placement absent this internship program.

(2) Types of employment in which interns are placed.

(3) Length of internships.

(4) Demographic information of interns.

(5) Amount of each intern placement payment.

(6) Employment-related supports provided by another agency or individual to the intern.

(7) Number of interns who subsequently entered paid employment, including salary and benefit information.

(8) Any additional information, as determined by the department.

(c) The department shall include in its annual May Revision fiscal estimate a description of the implementation of the program, including, but not limited to, a description of the stakeholder consultation, the data described in subdivision (b), aggregated by regional center and statewide, and any recommendations for program changes that may be necessary or desirable to maximize program effectiveness and accountability.

Welfare and Institutions Code, section 4870(d-g)

4870. (d) Consistent with the individual program plan, the program shall increase sustained and appropriate competitive integrated employment placements by regional center service providers, as follows:

- (1) A payment of one thousand dollars (\$1,000) shall be made to the regional center service provider that, on or after July 1, 2016, places an individual into competitive integrated employment, and the individual is still competitively employed after 30 consecutive days, as described in subdivision (o) of Section 4851 and subdivision (d) of Section 4868.
 - (2) An additional payment of one thousand two hundred fifty dollars (\$1,250) shall be made to the regional center service provider for an individual described in paragraph (1) who remains in competitive integrated employment for six consecutive months.
 - (3) An additional payment of one thousand five hundred dollars (\$1,500) shall be made to the regional center service provider for an individual described in paragraphs (1) and (2) who remains in competitive integrated employment for 12 consecutive months.
- (e) Regional centers shall annually report to the department the payments for placements pursuant to subdivision (d). The information shall be reported in a format determined by the department, and shall include the number of individuals placed in internships or other employment as described in this section each year.
- (f) The payments made pursuant to this section shall not be in addition to the placement payments made pursuant to subdivision (d) of Section 4860.
- (g) Regional center service providers that place individuals into internships under subdivision (a) are not eligible for the employment placement incentives under this section, until the individual is transitioned into a competitive integrated employment placement that is not funded as an internship.

Planning for your future

A ROADMAP TO YOUR GOALS



Planning for your future

PLANNING FOR YOUR FUTURE. Soon your Harbor Regional Center Counselor will meet with you and the important people in your life. This meeting is a chance for you and your family and friends to sit down and think about where you are now, where you want to be in the future, and what support you might need to help you get there. If you fill out this form, or even if you just think about some of the questions it asks, you will be better prepared for your planning meeting. You can fill out this form by yourself, or you can ask a family member or friend to help you fill it out or just think about it together. If you don't want to fill out this form, that is okay too.

However, we think that you will find it useful and fun too!

This is about you. What is your name? _____

Who is on your team? Who helps or supports you? Who are your friends? Whom do you turn to for help when you need it? Whom do you want to invite to your planning meeting? _____

THINGS ABOUT YOU

About you

1. What are some great things about you? What do people like about you?

What can you do well? _____

2. What things do you like to do? Around town? At home? For fun? _____

3. What NEW things would you like to do? Around town? At home? For fun? _____

4. What makes you happy? _____

5. What makes you mad or sad or frustrated? _____

6. Who is your favorite person to talk to and do things with? (You can name more than one person if you want to.) _____

THINGS ABOUT WORK. If you are not interested in working, please turn to page 4.

If you have never worked before, please skip to question #8. If you are already working, please skip to question #10.

7. If you have worked in the past, what jobs did you like best? _____

8. If you are interested in working, what kinds of jobs interest you? _____

9. Do you need help in getting a job? Yes No

Does it take you a long time to learn a job? Yes No

Do you get SSI? Yes No

Do you need help in using money or in using transportation to get to work? Yes No

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, you may need some help in getting and keeping a job.

Already Working? How's Your Job?

10. Is it the kind of job you like? Yes No

Are the hours and days okay? Yes No

Do you get the support you need? Yes No

Are you satisfied with the amount of pay you get? Yes No

Do you get benefits from your job? Yes No

Is your job close enough to where you live? Yes No

Is there anything you need more help with? Yes No

How do you get along with the people at work? Great Okay Not very well

When you think about your job (check the one that shows how you feel most of the time)

You are glad that you got it It's okay that you got it You are sorry that you got it

THINGS ABOUT DAYTIME ACTIVITIES.

If you work during the daytime, skip to question #16.

11. If you are not working now, what do you do during the day? _____

12. What do you like best about what you do during the day? _____

13. What are the things you don't like about what you do during the day? _____

14. If you go to a day program with other people with disabilities:

Do you like what you do at the day program? Yes No

If no, would you like a different day program? Yes No

15. If anything were possible, what would you most like to do during the day? _____

THINGS ABOUT WHERE & WITH WHOM YOU LIVE

16. How do you live now?

Alone? With one or more roommates? With your parents?

With other relatives? In a group home?

Other? _____

17. What do you see as the best things about where you live right now? _____

18. What are the things that you don't like about where you live right now? _____

19. What kind of help do you need where you live right now? _____

20. Are you living where you want to live and with whom you want to live? Yes No

If no, explain: _____

If you are living where you want to live for now, please go to question #24.

21. If anything were possible, where would you like to live and with whom? _____

THINGS ABOUT YOUR HEALTH

22. How are you feeling? Do you have any health problems that concern you or your family?

23. Do you have a doctor and, if so, when did you last see him or her? What for?

24. Is the doctor treating you for something? Do you take any medications? If so, what are they?

25. Do you have a dentist and, if so, when did you last see him or her?

26. Do you need help going to the doctor or dentist, and if so, who helps you?

27. How tall are you and how much do you weigh? Do you think you weigh too much or too little? Are you on a special diet?

THINGS ABOUT YOUR SPIRITUAL LIFE

28. Do you go to a church or synagogue or other place of worship? Yes No
29. Do you need assistance in getting to your place of worship and, if so, who helps you?
 Yes No
-
-
30. If you do not go to church or another place of worship, is this something you would like to do? Yes No

THINGS ABOUT YOUR HELPERS

31. If you have a job, do you have someone like a “job coach” who helps you when you work? Yes No
- If you have a job coach, is it someone that you feel is helpful? Yes No
- If no, would you like a different job coach? Yes No
32. Do you have someone who helps you at home? Someone like a “supported living coach” who helps you budget your money, shop, cook and things like that? Yes No
- If you have a supported living coach, is it someone that you feel is helpful? Yes No
- If no, would you like a different supported living coach? Yes No
33. Do you have enough contact with your Harbor Regional Center Counselor? Yes No
- When you call your Harbor Regional Center Counselor, does he or she call you back in a reasonable time? Yes No
- Are you satisfied with your Harbor Regional Center Counselor? Yes No

34. Do you have any other helpers? If so, who are they and how do they help you? Are you satisfied with how they help you? Would you like help in finding someone different to assist you with these things?

THINGS ABOUT YOUR FUTURE

35. What are your hopes and dreams for the future? Think about what you want for yourself in the next year. What about three or four years from now?

36. What kinds of support will you need from your family, friends, neighbors, and others in the community who can help you reach your goals?

37. What kinds of support will you need from Harbor Regional Center to help you reach your goals?

38. What worries you most about your future?

39. If your family is not available, whom would you turn to for support? _____

OTHER THINGS THAT ARE IMPORTANT TO YOU. You can use this space to write about any other things that you think are important for the people who will help you plan for your future to know. _____



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**WORKING WITH THE
SCHOOLS ON TRANSITION**
A BOOKLET FOR PARENTS OF YOUNGER TEENS



This booklet was written to help parents understand the Individualized Transition Planning (ITP) Process through which a young adult with a disability prepares for and makes the transition from high school to adult life. It also discusses how the regional center and your regional center Counselor can give you the help and support you may need for your son or daughter to get the most out of Transition.

THE IEP AND TRANSITION

Transition occurs in the context of the Individualized Educational Program (IEP) process, something with which you are most likely already familiar. Because it is part of the IEP, all of the rights and responsibilities accorded in the IEP process by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) also apply to Transition. We do not deal with those issues in this booklet. Instead, we discuss the unique things that the Transition component brings to the IEP.

For parents who want more specific information on the IEP, we suggest you ask your regional center Counselor or go to the HRC Resource Center for a copy of the HRC booklet, *Team up with your school! Making special education work for your child*. The regional center also offers parent education sessions on the IEP process. Information on these sessions can be found in the *Training and Events Catalog* on the HRC Web site, www.harborrc.org.

YOUR HRC COUNSELOR: AN ADVOCATE FOR YOU AND YOUR CHILD

As you approach Transition, we encourage you to think of your Harbor Regional Center Counselor as a partner in the process. Your Counselor can be a valuable asset in her role as an advocate for you and your child. She can help you prepare for the Transition IEP by gathering information that can allow you to be a more active and empowered participant. She can also get together with you in advance to plan for the meeting, identify potential problems, and come up with possible solutions.

Keep in mind, however, that the Counselor may not attend the Transition meeting without an invitation. For this reason, you should invite her far enough in advance so she can ensure her availability. Advance notice will also allow her to adequately prepare herself to support you at the meeting and to effectively advocate for you with the school and other agencies involved in the Transition process.



PREPARING FOR YOUR CHILD'S TRANSITION

Now that your child is a teenager, the IEP team will, through the Transition process, begin to focus special attention on the things he needs to do to prepare for adult life. The law states that at the latest, a Transition component must be included in the IEP that is in effect when the student reaches age 16. It may be included as early as 14 if the IEP team thinks that is appropriate.

The ITP focuses specifically on the kinds of things the student needs to learn or achieve to maximize his independence as an adult. The process allows the family to give advanced thought to what his future will be like and what he needs to do to achieve his desired future.

The Transition planning process helps your son or daughter answer questions such as:

Do I want to get more education or training after high school?

Do I want to have a job? If so, what kind?

What can I do during the day instead of work or until I find a job?

Do I want to live with my family, with someone else, or on my own?

Whom do I want to spend time with and what do I want to do for fun?

How am I going to get around in the community?

How am I going to ensure that I have access to the health care I will need as an adult?

The responsibility of the planning team is to help you and your child answer those questions and help him develop the skills and knowledge he needs to achieve his life goals.



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HOW MANY YEARS WILL MY CHILD HAVE TO COMPLETE THE TRANSITION PROCESS?

Most children finish high school at around age 18, after 13 years of schooling. A student with a disability has the option of remaining in school until age 22. Part of Transition planning is deciding how long your child will need before he is ready to move on from high school.

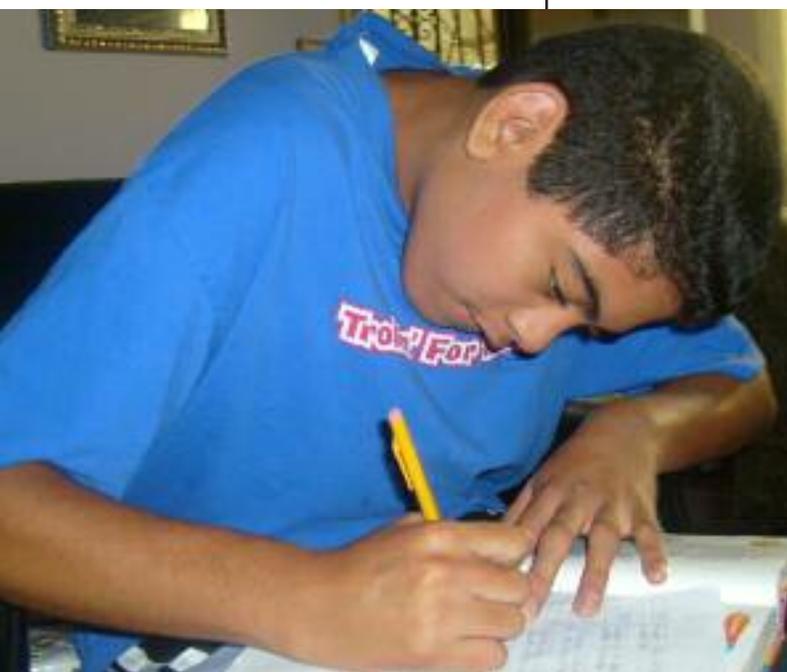
Parents sometimes express surprise that Transition can consume so many years, believing that the process could be completed in much less time for

their child. However, once involved they see how much can be gained by their son or daughter from the extra years of participation in a wide array of activities while still in the supportive environment of the school. Every experience – from joining a school club to being involved in community service to gaining work experience – helps the child master new skills, learn what he likes and what he does well, and gives him a basis for deciding what kind of life he wants to have as an adult.

There are three options for completing Transition. The one that you and your child decide will best meet his needs should be written into the ITP.

Option 1: Diploma. The young person completes all academic requirements and passes the California high school exit exam. He graduates and the school district no longer has a responsibility to provide him with services.

Option 2: Certificate. The student does not meet or is not likely to meet the requirements for graduation. He may continue attending school until he reaches age 22 and the school has a responsibility to continue providing services.



Option 3: A Combination. The student delays graduation to obtain vocational training or other services needed to become a more independent adult. The end result may be either a diploma or a certificate. Sometimes school districts do not present this option to students and their parents, but it is a viable option and you may select it if you believe it will best meet your child's needs.

WHAT IS A TRANSITION PLAN?

As we have said, the ITP is part of the IEP that outlines Transition goals as well as the services and supports needed to achieve those goals. The ITP is based on the student's needs and takes into account his strengths, preferences and interests. It prepares him to achieve his desired post-school goals such as continuing his education, finding a job, living on his own, making new friends, and learning new skills that will make him more independent.

Because it is part of the IEP, the Transition Plan has all of the required components of the IEP, including assessment of performance, measurable goals and objectives, classroom placement, related services, and evaluation and review. The law mandates, however, that ITP goals specifically address four areas:

- Living independently in the community
- Meaningful employment
- Further educational opportunities
- Recreation and leisure activities in the community

As with the IEP, the ITP component should be based on a **comprehensive evaluation** that may include: personal history, daily living skills, vocational aptitudes and interests, learning style, academic skills, motivation, physical skills and social skills.





Services that may be required to address the Transition goals and objectives include: vocational assessment, functional academics, vocational training and counseling, daily living skills training, job placement and support, social skills development and mobility training.

The ITP must also identify other agencies that will be involved in implementing the plan and their responsibilities. These agencies must be invited to the planning meeting, either by you or by the school. If one of these agencies is not able to send a representative, the school is required to take other steps to ensure that the agency participates appropriately in carrying out its role in Transition.

Agencies that may play a role in Transition include the Department of Rehabilitation, the Employment Development Department, Regional Occupational Programs, and community colleges. Your regional center Counselor can help you find out about these agencies, what they do, and how they can help your child achieve his goals.

The regional center is, of course, an additional resource for Transition. We can help you learn about services such as independent living skills training, housing options, day activities, and supported employment – all of which will be important resources for your child as he enters adulthood.

The Transition meeting. The law requires that in all cases families receive a written notice that an IEP meeting will be held and that the notice include certain information. In addition to the information required for the IEP, the notice the school sends about a Transition meeting must include: a statement that the purpose of the meeting is to discuss Transition, a statement that the student is invited to attend the meeting, and the names of any other agencies that will be invited.

THE PARENTS' ROLE IN TRANSITION PLANNING

Obviously, parents have an important role as members of the IEP team, advocating for their child and providing information about him and about the values and priorities of the child and family. You should not hesitate to tell the team about the plans and ideas you and your child have discussed about his future, and about his life and experiences outside of school (for example, what he does particularly well and what he likes to do). You should encourage your child to participate in these discussions to the extent he is able, advocate for what he wants rather than only what may be offered, and take responsibility for following through with activities included in the Transition Plan.

You also have an important role in personally helping your child develop the kinds of skills he will need as an adult. For example, you can become directly involved in helping him develop skills that he will need in the workplace, independent living skills, social and communication skills, and the ability to advocate for himself.

When considering options, you should try to think creatively about how your child's interests and skills might be realized in adult life. For example, a young man who loves motorcycles might be happy working in any capacity in a place where motorcycles are sold or repaired. A young woman who would like to be a nurse but is unable to master the academic requirements might think about becoming a nurse's assistant or working in a hospital or other environment where medical services are delivered.

Involvement after your child's 18th birthday. When your child reaches age 18 he is regarded as an adult under the law. As an adult, he is responsible for making his own decisions about many things, including his education. Your child may be able to make his own educational decisions or he may want or need your help. You should discuss this with him and if you and he decide that you should continue to be involved in





his educational planning, you should ask him to sign an *Assignment of Educational Decision-making Authority*. When signed by the student, this document assigns to the parent the right to make “any and all decisions... regarding [the child’s] entitlement to a Free Appropriate Public Special Education.” A copy of that document is included at the end of this booklet.

Conservatorship. Another way of maintaining authority for educational decisions for your child is through a conservatorship. This is a legal process that gives one person the power to make decisions in specific life areas for another person who is unable to make decisions for himself. One of these areas is education. Obtaining a conservatorship is a legal process that takes some time, has associated costs, and may require a lawyer. The regional center does not normally encourage that parents take this step, but you should be aware that this is an option. Some parents do decide that this option is the best way to ensure the safety and welfare of their son or daughter. You can find more information about conservatorships in the HRC *Making it Happen* booklet, *Conservatorship: A Guide for Families*.

GENERIC SERVICES IMPORTANT TO TRANSITION

An important part of the parents’ role is to learn about the generic supports and services that adults with disabilities can access when living and working in the community. The most essential of these are financial and health supports. It is important to find out whether your child will be eligible for these programs and if so, to ensure timely applications so he can begin benefiting from the programs as soon as he is eligible. Below are thumbnail descriptions of the programs most often used by regional center clients.

- **Supplemental Security Income (SSI).** Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is the primary source of income for people with disabilities. Your child may now be receiving SSI, but even if he is not he will probably be eligible for this program when he reaches age 18. You should begin the application for SSI the month your son or daughter reaches age 18. In general, the individual must have reached age 18 by the first of day of the month that the application is filed.
- **Medi-Cal.** Medi-Cal is California's version of Medicaid, the joint federal-state program that covers medical care for people of low income. Medi-Cal is the major source of medical support for people with developmental disabilities in California. A person is automatically eligible for Medi-Cal if he receives SSI.
- **In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS).** This program provides personal care and other assistance in their homes for people with a disability. Many regional center clients living on their own in the community receive help through this program. Families may also be eligible for IHSS services under certain circumstances if they have a son or daughter of any age with a disability living with them.

There are several additional medical programs that can be accessed by regional center clients under certain circumstances. You can get information about these and other benefit programs from your regional center Counselor. In addition, your Counselor can arrange for you to meet with HRC's Benefits Specialist who can answer your questions about medical, income support and other programs for which your child may be eligible.



WHERE TO FIND HELP AND INFORMATION

In the HRC Resource Center you can find additional information about Transition, about generic services and supports, and about a wide range of other subjects that can help you and your child successfully navigate Transition. Among the resources is a series of booklets produced by Harbor Regional Center for parents and clients. This *Making it Happen* series is available in the Resource Center or on the HRC Web site, www.harborrc.org. References for some of the *Making it Happen* booklets are provided at the end of this document.

Harbor Regional Center also offers a variety of educational sessions and workshops where parents can learn about services and supports that are important for adults with disabilities. For example, we offer sessions on employment and other daytime activities, living options, and estate planning. Information about these programs can be found in the *HRC Training and Events Catalog* that is available in the Resource Center or online at www.harborrc.org.

Finally, we remind you again that your HRC Counselor is a valuable resource and willing partner who can support you and help you find the kinds of information and services your son or daughter will need to live a more satisfying life as a productive member of the community.



REFERENCES

These and many other books, videos and DVDs are available in the HRC Resource Center.

Making it Happen booklets:

- Facing Transition: A Look at Your Adolescent's Future
- Team up with your school! Making special education work for your child.
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for Adults
- What is Medi-Cal? A Booklet for Families
- In-Home Supportive Services
- Conservatorship: A Guide for Families

Transition to Adult Living: An Information and Resource Guide

www.calstat.org/transitionGuide.html

This comprehensive handbook, revised in 2008 and including changes as related to the regulations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004), is written for students, parents and teachers. It offers practical guidance and resources in support of transition efforts for students with disabilities as they move from their junior high and high school years into the world of adulthood and/or independent living.

ASSIGNMENT OF EDUCATIONAL DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY

California Education Code Section 56041.5

I, _____, having reached the age of 18 years, having never been determined to be incompetent for any purpose by a court of competent jurisdiction, and having received, at the age of majority, all educational decision-making authority pursuant to California Education Code Section 56041.5, hereby authorize my parent, _____, to make any and all decisions for me regarding my entitlement to a Free Appropriate Public Special Education. Such authority shall include, but is not limited to:

Filing complaints with any public agency, such as the California Department of Education and U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights;

Initiating and pursuing special education due process proceedings pursuant to Cal. Education Code Sec. 56500, et seq. and any judicial appeals thereof;

Attending IEP meetings and due process mediations and pre-due process mediations and signing IEP documents and mediation agreements with the same legal effect and authority as I would have absent this assignment;

Authorizing or refusing to authorize assessments, services, or placements;

Obtaining copies of any of my educational, psychological, medical, behavioral, or juvenile justice records, or any other materials and information related in any way to my special education, related services, supplementary aids and services, or transition services;

Receiving information orally from any individual or agency (public or private) regarding my special education rights or services;

Exercising any other right or action on my behalf concerning my education with the same authority as I would have absent this assignment.

A photocopy or facsimile of this document shall have the same effect as the original.

Dated: _____

Source: http://www.pai-ca.org/pubs/505001.htm#_Toc122236172





HARBOR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES FOUNDATION, INC.

21231 Hawthorne Boulevard, Torrance, CA 90503

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FACIN
A LOOK AT YOUR
ADOLESCENT'S FUTURE
FACING
TRANSITION
TRANSIT



If your son or daughter is an adolescent, an important life transition is just ahead. This is the transition from adolescence to adulthood – from school into the world. The move to adulthood is an exciting time that will provide new opportunities for your son or daughter.

Transition also presents challenges. As the parent of a teenager with a developmental disability, you may be dealing with the usual challenges of adolescence as well as additional challenges related to your child's disability.

Transitions require decisions. We encourage you to start thinking about transition long before it is time for your child to leave school. Age 12 or 13 is not too early. To make good decisions, you and your family need to have enough information about all of your options. Gathering the information, thinking things through, making decisions and trying out options – all these things take time. Now is a good time to begin.

This booklet was designed to help you and your child prepare for transition. In it, we answer questions most often asked by parents about this stage of their child's life. We also tell you where to get additional information that adolescents and their families frequently ask for. We hope that this information, as well as the help and support you get from your regional center Counselor, will make this transition go smoothly.

FACING TRANSITION: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES



WHAT WILL MY CHILD'S FUTURE BE LIKE?

If you are like other parents of children with developmental disabilities, you have probably often wondered what your child's life will be like when he is an adult. Parents of teenagers often have conversations with themselves that sound like this:

I'm worried about my child's future. He'll soon be an adult but he's not like other adults. Up until now we've depended a lot on the schools. What happens when he's no longer in school?

All my child's friends have been at school with her. How will she find new friends or keep her old friends when she no longer goes to school?

What if my child wants to move out on his own? How will he find a place to live or a roommate? How will he be able to look after himself if he lives in his own place?

My child's friends are talking about getting jobs. What if she wants to get a job? How will we even know what jobs are available for her?

What if my child does not want to have a job? What will I do if she doesn't have something to keep her busy during the day?

Who will look after my child after I die? How will he support himself when I'm no longer here?

This booklet is for all parents who have had these kinds of conversations with themselves. In it, we answer five questions frequently asked by parents of adolescents:

Question 1: How will we get services and supports after my child leaves school?

Question 2: How will my child make friends after leaving school?

Question 3: How will my child find a job or something else to do during the day?

Question 4: Where will my child live as an adult?

Question 5: What legal and benefit issues will I need to deal with as my child gets older?

Before we address these five questions, take a moment to ask yourself how you will know which of the options are right for your child. For example, once you know what kinds of jobs or living arrangements are possible, how will you know which one will be best? The answers to such questions lie within your child. Answers will depend upon his strengths and preferences. So, a first step for you and your child is to begin finding out what he likes or doesn't like and what he does well.



People are happiest when they are doing things they like and things they do well. Your teenager is no different. Help him find greater success and happiness by identifying these strengths and preferences now and helping him find activities that will let him take advantage of them.

People cannot know what they do well or what they like to do without being exposed to different options. Options include places to live, jobs, recreational activities, hobbies, or anything else. It is very important for you to help your child learn what options exist in the world. This means taking him into the community to see how people live, how they work, and how they spend their time.

Whenever you go out with your child, pay attention to jobs or other activities that you see people doing. It may be especially helpful for your adolescent to see people with disabilities who have already made the transition from school. Ask your child if he knows what the person is doing and what he likes or does not like about that particular activity. This will allow you to gather information that you can use in the future to make decisions.

In the back of this booklet is a simple form that will help you and your child begin to identify what he likes and what he does well. It has sections to write observations about your child and to rate how much he likes different activities and places. There is also a second form you can use to record how your child reacts to things that he sees in the community.

RECOGNIZING YOUR CHILD'S STRENGTHS AND PREFERENCES



FACING TRANSITION

QUESTION 1



HOW WILL WE GET SERVICES AND SUPPORTS AFTER MY CHILD LEAVES SCHOOL?

One of the biggest challenges of transition is finding the supports and services you need after your son or daughter leaves the public school system. You may have wondered what's out there for an adult with developmental disabilities who has left school.

The good news is that many supports and services already exist, and new options are opening up all the time. This is especially true now that people with disabilities are taking a more active part in the community. Many of the social and physical barriers that in the past kept people with a disability from making full use of the community are being broken down. The emphasis now is on giving people the support they need to live as active, involved members of the community. When your child becomes an adult, the chances are very good that he will live in the community, have a job, and have access to community resources just like his non-disabled peers.

Your son or daughter will have opportunities for:

- continuing his or her education at a university, community college, trade school or specialized training programs
- paid or volunteer work, with special supports as needed
- living in their own home or apartment, with or without roommates, and with supports as needed – or living in a licensed group home
- learning new skills, such as how to manage money, how to get around on the public buses, how to cook, and how to take care of a home
- socializing with friends and making new friends

So, the services are there. Now, how do you find out about them?

Your Harbor Regional Center Counselor Will Help

The primary responsibility for providing your child with most services while he remains in school rests with the school. An Individual Educational Plan (IEP) has been guiding your child's academic progress since he first began to attend school. Starting at age 14, the child's annual IEP will have an Individual Transition Plan (ITP) component which then becomes the driving force of the IEP. The ITP addresses the knowledge and skills that you decide your child will need once he leaves school.

Your Harbor Regional Center Counselor will work with you, the schools, and service providers in the community to help smooth the transition from school. He or she will help you and your child learn about the different education, work, recreation, and community living options.

Before your child leaves school, your HRC Counselor can suggest programs that you and your child can visit to see which ones might best meet his or her needs. Your Counselor can also give you a tool that will help you know what questions to ask when you visit the programs. If you find a program that you believe may meet your child's needs, you may be able to have someone from the program attend your child's ITP meeting near the time of graduation. If you find a specific service that would be right for your child, your Counselor may help you find funding for that service. In these ways, your Counselor will be your guide through the transition years.



FACING TRANSITION

QUESTION 2

HOW WILL MY CHILD MAKE FRIENDS AFTER LEAVING SCHOOL?

When your child leaves school, he may choose to be involved in some type of daily activity where he will be able to make friends, just as he did in school. He may want more education or training (for example, at a community college), he may want to get a job, or he may choose to get involved in some other kind of organized day activity. In any case, he will probably be doing it with his peers.

To help prepare your child to make friends in these new settings, you can give him opportunities to practice meeting people while he is still in school. A good way to do this is to involve him in community recreational activities. Local communities sometimes offer social and recreational activities designed for young people with developmental disabilities. Sometimes other programs, such as regular youth sports leagues, can be adapted to support a boy or girl with special needs. This is particularly true if a family member, friend, or non-disabled peer is available to give the child extra help.

Getting involved in social activities with non-disabled peers is a good way for your adolescent to develop behaviors that are appropriate for his age. Teenagers have a great need to be accepted by their peers, and looking and acting like their peers is a sure road to acceptance. If your child has opportunities to interact with non-disabled peers, he is more likely to understand the norms in behavior and dress and want to adopt them. This may make it more likely that he will be accepted by non-disabled peers. It also makes it less likely that he will be exploited by people who would take advantage of someone who appears different.

Your child may also benefit from having a “special friend” who can take him into the community or go with him to particular activities. This special friend might be a brother or sister, a neighbor of the same age, or a volunteer from the community. Ask your HRC Counselor about the Best Buddies program or other ways that your child may find a special friend.



For some teenagers, being with non-disabled peers, having a special friend, or other typical social or recreational interactions may not be enough to help them learn the social behaviors they will need to get along with others. These adolescents may need extra help. Inappropriate or immature behavior can be a barrier to social acceptance. It can also interfere with the child's ability to be successful in school or other settings. Your Harbor Regional Center Counselor can help you find out about activities aimed at helping young people develop social skills. Activities may range from structured socialization training in a group setting to individual behavior intervention for behaviors that are more disruptive.

Helping your child deal with sexuality

As your teenager approaches adulthood, you may want help teaching him about human sexuality. Training in human sexuality involves learning about one's own body, how it functions, and how it changes as a person ages. This training helps adolescents understand their feelings about themselves and how they relate to others. It teaches them about grooming, nutrition, and health needs. Finally, it helps them learn to take more responsibility for themselves and to make good, safe decisions so they can avoid exploitation. Your Harbor Regional Center Counselor can help you identify the right training in human sexuality for your son or daughter.



FACING TRANSITION

QUESTION 3

HOW WILL MY CHILD FIND A JOB OR SOMETHING ELSE TO DO DURING THE DAY?

More and more people with developmental disabilities are entering the job market. Employers are hiring them because they have found that people with disabilities make good employees. They are reliable, they work hard, and they take pride in their work. Often these people may need extra support to learn a job, learn to get along with others in the work setting, and learn related skills such as using public transportation to get to the job. Once they've learned these things, they are excellent employees.

Special services, called supported employment services, help people with disabilities find a job, learn the skills required to do the job, and provide the direct support they need to be successful on the job. This support may be time limited or it may continue as long as the person keeps the job. Jobs are available in a wide variety of settings. HRC clients work in many different places, including Target Stores, Home Depot, Honda Motor Company, Hilton Hotels, TRW, and the Bagel Factory. For more information on supported employment, see the HRC booklet, "A Partnership That Works: Supported Work At Harbor Regional Center." Pick up a copy in the Family Resource Center or ask your Counselor.

If employment is not the best option for your son or daughter, there are other formal and informal opportunities for things to do during the day. The most common one is an organized day activity. Most day activity services offer clients a variety of things to do during the day, both in the community and at a central location. They range from purely recreational activities to activities that allow clients to increase their skill levels. Your Counselor can give you information on the kinds of day activities that are available.



WHERE WILL MY CHILD LIVE AS AN ADULT?

Most parents expect their children to move into homes of their own when they become adults. The age at which a son or daughter with a disability actually makes a move will depend on things such as what the young person wants to do and what is common in the family's culture.

A number of living options are available for individuals with developmental disabilities. These options differ in how much independence and self-determination they offer clients. The two most common types of arrangements are licensed homes and supported living.

Licensed Homes

Licensed homes are residences for a small group of people with developmental disabilities. Usually between 2 and 6 people live in these homes. Residents receive 24-hour supervision from trained staff according to their individual needs. Adults living in licensed homes receive training in self-care, in activities required to look after a home (cooking, cleaning, etc.), and in a range of other skills they need to be more independent at home and in the community. Some licensed homes are designed for people who have special needs, for example, those who are technology dependent, have other serious medical needs, or have challenging behaviors.

Supported Living

Supported living offers the most freedom and self-determination for adult clients. Clients live in apartments, condos, or houses in the community. They live alone or with roommates. They receive training in the skills they need to live on their own. They also receive ongoing support in those areas where it is needed. Skills training can help adults learn things such as cooking, cleaning, shopping, menu planning, personal hygiene and health care, money management, and use of public transportation and other community resources.

For more information on supported living visit the HRC Family Resource Center or ask your Counselor for a copy of the brochure, "You're In Charge: Supported Living at HRC." For more information on licensed homes, ask for "It's All About Options: A Guide to Living Arrangements for Children and Adults with Developmental Disabilities."

Options for Family Support

Having a son or daughter with a disability move from the family home can be difficult for parents. Your Counselor understands that planning for such a move may be stressful for your family. He or she will help you prepare long in advance

FACING TRANSITION QUESTION 4





for the move so that when it does occur, you can feel confident that your young adult will be able to deal with the challenges he will face. Your Counselor can also help you find other resources that can support you and your family as you work through the transition process.

Parent Support

Sometimes the best source of support for parents going through a stressful period comes from other parents who have already dealt with the same situation with their own son or daughter. Parents of Harbor Regional Center have organized a large number of support groups that reach out to families having similar concerns and interests. Two of specific interest to parents of teenagers and young adults are the Living Options Support Group and the Transition Support Workshops. The regional center also maintains a roster of parents (called Parent Mentors) who are trained to offer emotional support and information to other parents on a one-to-one basis. Just ask your Counselor if you would like to talk with another parent or join a support group.

Respite

Family stress may make the road to transition more rocky for you and your family. If so, you may want to consider some period of respite during which you and your son or daughter can have time away from one another. You may ask a friend or relative to help out so you can take time for yourself. If your friends and family are not available to help you, you may talk to your regional center Counselor about respite services. Respite agencies provide trained attendants who come into your home to provide supervision while you take a needed break. Respite care may also be provided out of the home, in a licensed residential setting.

A Final Note

Parents and clients often tell us that one of the most difficult things about transition for clients is leaving friends that they may have had for many years. This is especially true when clients leave school. Often they express sadness or signs of loss when they are no longer surrounded by the school structure they have enjoyed since age three. To help lessen the impact of this type of loss, you may want to limit the number of changes that your son or daughter makes at any one time. For example, if he or she is moving from school to a day activity or supported employment, you may want to delay any change in his or her residence until he or she is used to the new environment and has made friends there. Making changes gradually will help ensure that your son or daughter always has a circle of support made up of people he or she knows, trusts, and can talk to.

WHAT LEGAL AND BENEFIT ISSUES WILL I NEED TO DEAL WITH AS MY CHILD GETS OLDER?

When they turn 18, individuals with developmental disabilities gain the same rights and responsibilities as other adults. Many of these adults routinely make decisions on their own behalf with guidance from their family, Counselor, advocate, or trusted friends. We at Harbor Regional Center encourage families to involve their sons or daughters in decision-making, allowing them to practice self-determination to the extent they are able.

Some adults with developmental disabilities have limited ability to make informed decisions. Often, families tell us that their biggest concern is that their son or daughter will be unable to provide informed consent for medical care. For families who have concerns about their child's ability to make decisions, there are several legal arrangements that allow them or a third party to retain responsibility for some or all aspects of their child's life. Arrangements that families most often use are conservatorships, trusts, and powers of attorney.

Conservatorship

A conservatorship takes away some of an adult's basic rights and gives those rights to another individual, often either a family member or a professional conservator. A conservator may make decisions about things such as the conserved person's health care, his living arrangement, and his finances. A conservatorship can only be established in a court of law, and it is the court that decides what the conservator will be allowed to make decisions about. Because it takes away a person's basic rights, a conservatorship should be used only when a less restrictive arrangement does not give the disabled person enough protection.

Trust

A trust is a legal arrangement that gives an independent person, called a trustee, control of a disabled person's assets such as money and property. A trustee may be a relative, family friend, or independent agent. He or she is responsible for making sure the assets are handled responsibly and in the best interests of the person with a disability.

A trust is particularly useful if parents or other relatives wish to leave a person with a disability money or other things of value in their will. The assets are placed under the control of the trustee, who gives payments to the disabled person at regular periods. The payments can be adjusted so they provide financial support over the client's lifetime. They may also be limited so they do not affect the person's government benefits.

FACING TRANSITION QUESTION 5





Social Security

Once a person turns 18 years of age, he becomes eligible for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Medi-Cal. Whether or not an adult qualifies for these programs depends on two things: his personal income and the severity of his disability. When your son or daughter turns 18, you should contact your local Social Security Office to begin the process of applying for SSI and Medi-Cal. Be sure to let them know that your son's or daughter's records are available from Harbor Regional Center. With your signed consent, we will forward these records to the Social Security Office so they can be used in determining eligibility.

Until recently, people receiving SSI and Medi-Cal who went to work risked losing one or both of these benefits once they began to get a paycheck. The government recently changed this to give people more of an incentive to work. Under the new rules, a person may earn \$85.00 in a month and still receive his full SSI check. For every two dollars a person earns over \$85.00, the government deducts \$1.00 from the person's SSI check. The person remains eligible for Medi-Cal to pay for doctor visits, hospital care, and medicines even when he earns too much money to receive cash SSI benefits. This is true as long as the person's savings do not go over a certain level (currently \$2,000). People working under these new rules may go back to receiving regular SSI payments if they stop working or if they don't earn enough income.

Harbor Regional Center has written a booklet, "Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Benefits for Adults," to help families understand SSI. Ask your Counselor for a copy or stop by the Family Resource Center and pick one up.

In-Home Supportive Services

The In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program, operated by the California Department of Social Services, helps provide care and supervision for people with disabilities in their homes. It is intended for people who need care to remain safely in their own homes. Your son or daughter could receive IHSS support while living with you or while living on his or her own in an apartment, condo, or house.

To qualify for IHSS, your son or daughter must be a lawful resident of California with low income and limited resources (such as would make him or her eligible for SSI) and must need care to remain safely in his or her home. Minor children may be eligible to receive IHSS when their parents are out of the home working or going to school. Children may also be eligible if they are living at home with parents who cannot provide assistance because of their own disability or when they are sleeping.

You can get more information on the IHSS program from the Harbor Regional Center booklet called “In-Home Supportive Services.” Ask your Counselor about it, or visit the Family Resource Center and pick up a copy.

Where Can We Find Additional Information?

We know you want to help your child make the best choices. Notice that we say the “best” choice, not the “right” choice. No one can tell you what is the “right” choice. Only you and your son or daughter can decide that. The best choice for another family may not be the best choice for your family, even when your circumstances are similar.

We also encourage you to get to know the Family Resource Center (FRC), located at the Harbor Regional Center offices in Torrance. The FRC is staffed by family members, just like you, who can direct you to the many written, audio, video, and online resources available on a wide range of topics, including those mentioned in this booklet. At the FRC you can also get a list of parent support groups that meet in the HRC and greater Los Angeles/Orange County areas. Finally, you can pick up a copy of any of the large number of other HRC publications that have been written especially for our clients and families.

Remember that you and your child are not alone as you face transition. Your regional center Counselor and other staff are here to assist you and your family. We will continue to provide you with the information you need to make good choices and support you in those choices. We encourage you to call your Counselor at any time and begin planning the transition years ahead of time.



FACING
TRANSITION
LOOKING AT MY
CHILD



1. My child's greatest strength is: _____

2. My child truly loves to: _____

3. My child tries to avoid: _____

4. My child's favorite class(es) and hobbies are : _____

5. My child's chores at home include: _____

Circle the number that best describes how true each statement is.

My child:	Always True	Often True	Not True
Prefers to be outdoors	1	2	3
Prefers to work as part of a group	1	2	3
Prefers to work with people	1	2	3
Prefers to work with animals	1	2	3
Prefers to work with plants	1	2	3
Prefers to work with things	1	2	3
Prefers to keep neat and clean	1	2	3
Can repeat a task without losing interest	1	2	3
Enjoys learning new things	1	2	3

(Any other strong preference) _____



LEARNING ABOUT WORK AND LEISURE OPTIONS

Complete the following items for each type of work you discuss with your child:

Kind of job: _____

Understanding of job duties: _____

Likes about this job: _____

Doesn't like about this job: _____

Complete the following items for each social, leisure, or creative activity you explore with your child:

Social, leisure or creative activity: _____

Previous experience with this activity: _____

Likes about this activity: _____

Doesn't like about this activity: _____





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