TRIAL WORK AND COMMUNITY BASED ASSESSMENT

When considering the eligibility of an applicant, counselors presume that Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services will benefit an applicant with employment. However, there are occasions when the counselor may question if the individual’s disability is too significant for them to benefit. This is when trial work experiences are considered.

Trial Work Experience

Trial Work Experience (TWE) is an exploration of the individual’s abilities, capabilities, and capacity to perform realistic work in the most integrated setting possible, with supports. The VR Counselor will determine, with a high degree of certainty, whether or not there is clear and convincing evidence that the individual’s disability and associated functional limitations are too severe to benefit from VR services that lead to a competitive integrated employment outcome.

Note: Typically, trial work is completed before determining eligibility. If there is question regarding the ability of an individual who is receiving SSI/SSDI to benefit in terms of a competitive integrated employment outcome, do not presume eligibility. In rare instances trial work may occur after eligibility, but before the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) is developed.

TWE should not be used as a method to gain additional time in the process of eligibility determination, nor is it appropriate when the next steps are uncertain.

The Trial Work Experiences must:

- occur in a variety of work environments,
- be provided in the most integrated setting possible,
- be consistent with informed choice and rehabilitation needs,
- be a sufficient number of hours to replicate a realistic work setting (minimum of ten hours per week)
  - For example: three hours per day, for four consecutive days

Note: Trial Work must be approved by the Regional Administrator
The VR Counselor will determine the length and number of trial work experiences after meeting with the individual and reviewing the following:

- Existing medical or psychological information
- School information to include the IEP, summary of performance, assessments, interest inventories, work experiences, etc.
- Behavioral Plans
- Services or assessments conducted by VR

Areas to evaluate in each TWE:

- Strength and endurance (including mobility and physical limitations)
- Challenging behaviors/social interaction skills
- Ability to tolerate the typical demands of a regular work schedule or work environment
- Ability to manage self-care needs in a work environment
- Communication skills
- Performance of essential job duties (ability to follow directions, quality of work and attention to detail)
- Special or required accommodations (job coach, assistive technology, modified schedule, etc.)

During the trial work experiences VR will provide the appropriate support services such as assistive technology, personal assistance, maintenance (clothing, transportation, etc.), to accommodate the rehabilitation needs of the individual.

**Trial Work Plan (TWP)**

Services listed on the TWP will be related to the trial work experience and appropriate support services. The TWP will be developed by the VR Counselor and individual, or the individual’s authorized representative.

The TWP shall include the:

- Purpose and rationale of the plan – The counselor must describe the justification for selecting Trial Work
- Description and necessity of services for the Trial work experience
• Individual’s responsibilities

• Comparable benefits

• Location, duration and cost of the TWE to include the length in days, number of hours worked per day and week (For example: three hours per day, for four consecutive days).

• Periodic Review - Timeframes and criteria to measure outcomes (Meet with the individual at least every 90 days, or more frequently if needed).

**Note:** When authorizing use service category Assessment/Evaluation, subcategory Vocational Evaluation.

The VR Counselor will provide the Community Rehabilitation Provider (CRP) with the following background information:

• Trial Work Referral (SFN 1094)

• Release of Information – Authorization to Disclose Information (SFN 1059)

• Relevant medical and psychological information

• Trial Work Plan

• Other applicable information

**Note:** The VR Counselor will review the Trial Work report (SFN 1095) after each Trial Work Experience to determine if further trial work experiences are needed.

**Workers’ Compensation**

When making the referral the counselor will:

• Designate on the referral form (SFN 1094) what entity will be responsible for workers’ compensation.
  
  o If VR provides workers’ compensation coverage, the counselor will fax the individual’s name and social security number to Workforce Safety & Insurance (WSI). (Utilize the WSI letter found in AWARE)

  o If the provider is responsible for workers’ compensation coverage, the counselor does not need to submit the workers’ compensation letter.

**COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROVIDER (CRP) Responsibilities**

Sufficient time should be spent at each trial work experience. In the event the client cannot complete the trial work experience, the report should clearly explain the reasons why trial work cannot be completed.
- The CRP will prepare a TWE report (SFN 1095), from the information gathered at the Trial Work Experience, for each TWE.

- Evaluate the worksite and provide accommodations if necessary.

- Provide job coaching on-site. The CRP is expected to be with the individual at all times during the TWE.

**Trial Work Payment**

Counselors will designate to the CRP the number of trial work experiences, number of hours and length of each trial work experience. Payment will be made at an hourly rate of $41 per hour. The rate of pay is not negotiable.

**Note:** If the client fails to cooperate with the TWE process, VR will only pay the provider for the establishing the Trial Work Site and the actual time spent with the individual.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establish Trial Work Sites</td>
<td>2 hours per trial work site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time with Client @ Trial Work Site 1</td>
<td>__ days/wk. for __ hrs./day for __ weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time with Client @ Trial Work Site 2</td>
<td>__ days/wk. for __ hrs./day for __ weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time with Client @ Trial Work Site 3</td>
<td>__ days/wk. for __ hrs./day for __ weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write Trial Work Report</td>
<td>2 hours per trial work experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend meeting with Counselor, Provider and the Individual</td>
<td>1 hour per trial work experience</td>
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