



Choosing Your Employment Plan with Michigan Rehabilitation Services

Your Options in Planning

When you become eligible for MRS services, you will need to develop a written Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) or Employment Plan. This plan will show how you will achieve your employment goal. You have several options in developing this plan:

- You and your MRS counselor can work together to write all or part of your plan.
- You can arrange for other persons to help write all or part of your plan.
- You or your representative can write your own plan on a form provided by MRS.

If you write your own plan, or if others help you write the plan, your counselor must approve it. A plan is approved when:

- The job goal and services you choose will lead to a suitable job;
- The services you choose are required to reach your job goal;
- Your plan is complete, including resources and funds needed; and
- MRS funds are correctly applied

Making Choices About Your Plan

You will need to make many choices in planning. MRS counselors are specially trained to assist you in making these choices. And, they have important information that can help you make informed choices.

You can make choices about:

- How you and MRS will learn about your job strengths and career needs
- Your employment goal
- The services you will need to reach your goal
- Who will provide the services
- How the services will be arranged

Learning More About Your Job Needs

To develop your job goal and IPE, you and your counselor may need to find out more about your job needs.

Questions will need to be asked, such as what are your skills, abilities, and job interests? How does your disability affect working? What careers would you like to explore? How will working affect your current benefits? Are there other issues that need to be dealt with before you can work?

Your counselor can discuss many ways you can find answers to these questions. These may include:

- Exploring your job skills and needs
- Reviewing school, work, and health records or other information
- Interest and aptitude testing
- Helping you know the job market
- Work assessments or job tryouts
- Exploring helpful technology

Putting Your Written Plan Together

Once you have selected a specific job goal, you will have to decide which services will help you reach this goal. MRS offers many job-related services. These include:

- Job and career counseling
- Training and job placement
- Physical aids or devices
- Help in exploring self-employment
- Support services, such as interpreters, job coaches, and transportation

Your counselor can give you details about these and other services, qualified service providers, and costs.

continued

What an Employment Plan Includes

Your written IPE must contain the following:

- A specific job goal and when you will reach it;
- Services to reach the job goal— including service providers, starting dates, and funding arrangements;
- How MRS will know if you are making progress toward your job goal;
- Services and benefits from other programs that will help you reach your job goal;
- MRS responsibilities;
- Your responsibilities; and
- Approval signatures from you and your MRS counselor

Who Will Pay for Services?

MRS can provide vocational assessments when needed, job counseling, and help in finding and keeping a job free of charge. You will be asked to pay for other services as you are able and for training, based on your financial need.

MRS must use many services available at no cost or low cost in the community before MRS funds can be used. Examples are medical, mental health, job training, and transportation services. MRS also cannot pay for services that are the responsibility of another party, such as Medicaid, public education, Workers' Compensation, or another insurance provider. MRS can help pay for other services required in your employment plan when these services are the lowest cost to MRS while meeting your job-related needs.

MRS can assist eligible college students with academic expenses only if they have applied for student financial aid and have made every effort to obtain and accept federal, state, and local grants, and demonstrate financial need.

Services must be approved in writing and authorized in advance by MRS before MRS can pay for them.

What if My Counselor and I Disagree?

You have several choices if you and your counselor disagree about your employment plan. You can:

- Talk with your counselor to see if the disagreement can be worked out.
- Talk to the counselor's supervisor.
- Ask for a formal hearing in writing within 30 days after the decision you wish to appeal was made. The hearing request must be addressed to Jaye Shamsiddeen, Bureau Director, Michigan Rehabilitation Services, P.O. Box 30010, Lansing, MI 48909. The formal hearing will be held before an impartial hearing officer within 60 days after your appeal request is received, unless both parties agree to extend the time.
- Once you request a hearing, you also have the right to ask for mediation by an impartial mediator. Mediation will not interfere with your right to a hearing.

In addition, the Client Assistance Program (CAP) can help you understand your rights and help you with an appeal. You can reach CAP by calling the toll-free number 1-800-292-5896 (voice/TTY).

**Michigan Rehabilitation Services
Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth
P.O. Box 30010
Lansing, MI 48909
1-800-605-6722 (toll free, voice); 1-888-605-6722 (toll free, TTY)
MRS-CustomerAssistance@michigan.gov
www.michigan.gov/mrs**

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