**INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT (IPE)**

**What is the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)?**

The Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) is an important document that outlines all of the specific services that an MRC consumer will receive to support their chosen employment goal.

The vocational rehabilitation services that MRC provides are offered on an individualized basis in consideration of a consumer’s specific skills, interests, and their disability related limitations. Therefore, each consumer’s IPE will reflect their specific employment goal and the specific services that MRC will provide to help the consumer meet their employment goal.

**What is an employment goal?**

The employment goal is a specific employment outcome that the consumer intends to achieve by receiving vocational rehabilitation services through MRC. Reaching the employment goal will allow the consumer to enter, advance in, or retain employment.

An employment goal must be in a competitive and integrated setting and can be full or part time work. The employment goal must also be consistent with the consumer’s unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice.

If a consumer does not know what they want their goal to be, MRC will conduct an assessment to help determine what career path would make the most sense for the consumer.

**What is informed choice and how does it relate to the IPE?**

Informed choice is the process by which a consumer makes decisions about their employment goal, the services and service providers that will be provided to reach their goal, and how those services will be obtained. A consumer should have access to information about their options for services and have an opportunity to ask questions.

**How is the IPE created and developed?**

The IPE is developed collaboratively by the consumer and their VR counselor and signed by both parties. A VR consumer who needs additional support to finalize their plan can include a third party in the discussion such as a family member, friend, or service provider.

The IPE states the consumer’s chosen employment goal along with all of the corresponding vocational rehabilitation services and supports that the consumer will need to reach their goal. The IPE is a critical part of the vocational rehabilitation process and will be consistently referenced as the consumer works with MRC over time to reach their chosen employment goal. It is really important that a consumer be aware of what is written in the IPE to have the proper expectation of what services MRC has agreed to provide. Each service outlined in the IPE is determined based on the specific chosen goal and what steps are needed to reach it. Based on what is written in the IPE, MRC agrees to provide the services listed in the IPE, and the consumer agrees to follow through on any commitments for training and/or treatment.

It is required that each consumer of VR has an IPE in place 90 days within the date that they have been found eligible to receive services.

**Can the IPE be changed?**

The IPE should be reviewed on an annual basis and amended as needed. Consumers can request to amend their IPE at any point in the VR process to reflect changes to the employment goal, the services provided, or based on a need to change a provider. After doing so, the VR counselor will discuss with the consumer their requested amendment and the reasoning behind it.

All services that MRC provides will be centered around the employment goal listed on the IPE. Changing services, requesting new services, or changing an employment goal will likely require amending the IPE. MRC is not required to provide services that have not been agreed to in an IPE or services that do not correspond to the current goal. For that reason, it is important for a consumer to be aware of what is written in their IPE.

**What if I disagree with the employment goal or the services provided?**

You can discuss any concerns you have about your IPE or employment goal with your counselor. Additionally, you have the right to appeal any decision that MRC makes about your goal or the services that will be provided. You can reach out to the MRC Ombudsman (will add link) for information about the appeal process. You can also reach out to the Client Assistance Program, a separate entity that provides information and advocacy to consumers who have concerns about their vocational rehabilitation services.