

## PROGRAM POLICY - VOCATIONAL SERVICES

### 1 Description of Services

- 1.1 Vocational Services assists persons with disabilities who require support, both on and off the job, in order to choose, obtain and maintain paid employment in integrated community settings.
- 1.2 The implementation of each person's services will provide opportunities for optimal integration into a work environment that is consistent with community work practices.

### 2 Philosophy

- 2.1 All persons receiving vocational services will be provided with the training and knowledge required to obtain and maintain competitive employment.

### 3 Location of Services

- 3.1 Vocational Services will be provided at work sites in the community. Pre-employment instruction will occur at a variety of locations, most of which will be in the community.

### 4 Operating Hours

- 4.1 Vocational Services will be provided on a scheduled basis at any time the person served, his or her work supervisor, and the Vocational Services Supervisor agree the service is needed. Pre-employment instruction will be provided through either a Career Exploration Workshop or one-on-one with the Job Developer.

### 5 Entrance Criteria

- 5.1 To be eligible for admission to OPTIONS' Vocational Services, the applicant must:
  - 5.1.1 Possess a developmental disability, traumatic brain injury or identified disability that constitutes a barrier to employment;
  - 5.1.2 Be able to function independently in such self-care activities as eating, personal hygiene, taking their own medication, using public transportation, and independent movement within the familiar work setting; *or* have an aide by the referring agency to meet the criteria listed above;

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- 5.1.3 Respond positively to supervision and instruction during the initial evaluation period;
- 5.1.4 Not interfere with the well-being and vocational progress of other persons receiving services by OPTIONS; and
- 5.1.5 Be able to benefit from services offered by OPTIONS' Vocational Services
- 5.2 Race, color, creed, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, age, religion, ancestry, national origin, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state or local laws will not be factors in consideration of acceptance into OPTIONS' Vocational Services. No person meeting the entrance criteria will be denied access to services solely on the basis of the severity of their disability.
- 5.3 If a language or communication barrier exists between Vocational Services staff and a person served, arrangements will be made for the use of an interpreter or other mechanism to ensure effective communication between the person served and Vocational Services personnel.
- 5.4 Every effort will be made to secure funding for applicants. No person will be admitted to OPTIONS Vocational Services without fee sponsorship.
- 6 Referrals
  - 6.1 New Referrals
    - 6.1.1 Receive referral packet, to include: history, vocational skills, and medical information.
    - 6.1.2 Conduct initial interview to determine admission status.
    - 6.1.3 Contact the Department of Rehabilitation for status of case (open/closed).
    - 6.1.4 If referral is new to the Department of Rehabilitation, schedule intake meeting.
    - 6.1.5 If person referred is served by the Regional Center, obtain Service Coordinator authorization for services.

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- 6.1.6 Confirm authorization for services.
- 6.2 Upon admission to OPTIONS' Vocational Services:
  - 6.2.1 A Vocational Services file will be created with all required forms.
  - 6.2.2 An initial ISP will be created.
- 6.3 When a person receiving services obtains employment:
  - 6.3.1 The Department of Rehabilitation/Regional Center will be contacted and all required forms will be completed.
  - 6.3.2 Determine employment start date and work schedule.
- 6.4 Case Closure/Discharge:
  - 6.4.1 A case is closed when a person served is discharged from OPTIONS' Vocational Services.
  - 6.4.2 A case is considered closed when a person served no longer requires Vocational Services.
  - 6.4.3 An Exit/Discharge Report will be completed (Notice of Case Closure form) and forwarded to the authorizing case manager.
- 7 Anti-discrimination Complaint Procedure
  - 7.1 OPTIONS is an equal opportunity employer and will not discriminate in employment opportunities or practices on the basis of any protected class, including: race, religion (all aspects of religious beliefs, observance or practice, including religious dress and grooming practices), color, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, marital status, registered domestic partner status, veteran status, current or prospective service in the uniformed services, age or any other protected class under federal, state, or local law.
  - 7.2 Unlawful discrimination based on the perception that anyone has any of those characteristics listed above, or is associated with a person who has or is perceived as having any of those characteristics, is prohibited.
  - 7.2 OPTIONS is committed to compliance with all applicable laws providing

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equal employment opportunities. This commitment applies to all persons involved in OPTIONS' operations and prohibits unlawful discrimination by any employee of OPTIONS.

- 7.3 Any person receiving services, employee, visitor, or member of the general public who believes they have been subjected to any form of unlawful discrimination must submit a complaint to the supervisor or the individual with day-to-day responsibilities. The complaint should be specific and include the names of the individuals involved and names of any witnesses. If assistance is needed or if it is preferred that the complaint be made in person, the person is asked to contact OPTIONS' Human Resources Director.
  - 7.4 The HR Director will inform the CEO of the complaint and conduct a comprehensive investigation into the allegations of discrimination and will report his/her findings to the complainant within 30 days.
  - 7.5 If OPTIONS determines that unlawful discrimination has occurred, effective remedial action will be taken, commensurate with the severity of the offense. Appropriate action also will be taken to deter any future discrimination.
  - 7.6 OPTIONS will not retaliate against any person for filing a complaint and will not knowingly permit retaliation by any employee of OPTIONS.
- 8 Licenses
- 8.1 Vocational Services is a non-licensed service.
  - 8.2 Vocational Services is CARF accredited with accreditation renewed every three years.
- 9 Identification
- 9.1 Each person receiving vocational services will be positively identified by a photograph in his/her file, with the permission of the person. Persons receiving only job placement services without job coaching may opt out of providing a photograph for identification purposes.
- 10 Employee Identification
- 10.1 Employees providing services in public areas will carry business cards identifying them as OPTIONS employees.

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### 11 Notification of Governmental Agencies

11.1 OPTIONS' Chief Executive Officer will notify the Department of Rehabilitation or other designated representative in writing within ten days of any of the following occurrences:

11.1.1 OPTIONS merging with another organization or dissolving.

11.1.2 Change in the principal officer (Chief Executive Officer) of the corporation.

11.1.3 Change in address of the corporate offices.

11.2 The Chief Executive Officer will notify Department of Rehabilitation or other designated representative via telephone immediately if there is intent to disrupt or discontinue services; or upon the threat of a walkout of a large number of employees, earthquake, fire, power outage or other damage to OPTIONS that threatens the safety or welfare of those served.

12 Rights and Responsibilities will be available to individuals and can be referred to in the vocational services handbook at all times. Rights will be reviewed at least once annually.

### 13 Vocational Services Responsibilities

13.1 The responsibilities of each person will be outlined in the Vocational Services Handbook which will be made available to each person at the time of admission. Additional copies will be made available upon request and may be reviewed as needed.

### 14 Guardianship Responsibility

14.1 No licensee, owner, administrator, employee of OPTIONS or representative thereof will act as guardian or conservator of any person receiving services or their estate.

### 15 Communicable Disease

15.1 Any employee or person served known to have a communicable disease, or exhibiting symptoms or signs of same will not be permitted to work or participate in Vocational Services until such time as the employee or person receiving services is sufficiently free of disease to return to work.

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- 15.2 All employees and persons receiving services may be subject to mandatory tuberculosis screening by PPD skin test at the time of employment/placement and at any other time when medically indicated.
  - 15.3 All employees will receive a mandatory medical history and physical examination at the time of employment that shows them to be sufficiently free of communicable disease and/or other health condition that may create a hazard for the employee, fellow employees, persons receiving services or visitors, or would significantly affect fulfillment of job duties.
- 16 Assessment Procedures
- 16.1 Referral data will be reviewed by the Vocational Services Supervisor. If it is incomplete, additional information will be requested from the referring agency/individual(s).
  - 16.2 A pre-admission screening evaluation and personal interview will be conducted with the applicant. A careful determination of the strengths, needs and preferences of the applicant will be made from the pre-admission interview and the referral data.
  - 16.3 On the day a new person receiving services starts vocational services, an intake and orientation interview will be conducted. The Vocational Services Handbook will be given to the new person receiving services and thoroughly discussed at this time.
  - 16.4 During job search activities, progress will be evaluated through monthly progress notes to determine the effectiveness of the job search, to make necessary changes in job search activities, and to determine if vocational services remain an appropriate objective.
  - 16.5 Monthly Progress Reports are submitted to the Department of Rehabilitation per regulations.
- 17 Individual Service Plan (ISP)/Person-Centered Planning
- 17.1 Each person served will have an Individual Service Plan (ISP) created upon admission to the Vocational Services. The ISP progress will be reviewed semi-annually.
  - 17.2 ISPs will be carefully planned and coordinated by the ID Team. The ISP will be individually tailored, establishing goals and objectives that reflect the unique needs and preferences of each individual.

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- 17.3 Based on a review of referral information and Pre-admission screening, a comprehensive initial ISP will be developed. The ISP will contain statements addressing the following areas:
- 17.3.1 Admission date.
  - 17.3.2 Rehabilitation barrier(s).
  - 17.3.3 Services to be provided.
  - 17.3.4 Goals and objectives based on knowledge of the person's needs and preferences.
  - 17.3.5 Methodologies to be used to accomplish each objective.
  - 17.3.6 Measurements employed to assess the effects of services.
  - 17.3.7 Person(s) responsible for each objective.
  - 17.3.8 Anticipated target dates for the accomplishment of each objective.
- 17.4 Changes in a person's ISP will reflect the knowledge and agreement of the person receiving services.
- 17.5 ISP's will focus on integration of the persons receiving services into the community, family and other support systems. ISP's will be reviewed periodically for continuing relevance to the goal of integration. Achieving integration may be accomplished through the following methods:
- 17.5.1 Maximizing independent functioning.
  - 17.5.2 Decision-making.
  - 17.5.3 Establishment and maintenance of relationships at work and in the community.
  - 17.5.4 Mobility training.
  - 17.5.5 Training in daily living skills.
  - 17.5.6 Working in the community.
  - 17.5.7 Utilization of community resources for recreation, shopping, worship and learning.
- 17.6 Progress toward the accomplishment of specified goals will be addressed as follows:
- 17.6.1 Reviewed regularly.
  - 17.6.2 Analyzed and modified as needed.
  - 17.6.3 Communicated to the person, staff members, and, when appropriate, the referral/funding source.
- 17.7 The provision of services to each person will be organized and implemented by the Vocational Services Supervisor.

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- 17.8 Follow-up support contacts with the person will be made at regular intervals. These intervals will be stipulated in the ISP and the results documented. Vocational services staff will maintain, as appropriate, close communication with the person's family and any others who are likely to influence the probability of a successful outcome.
- 17.9 Each person's potential for regular competitive employment will be assessed semi-annually during the ISP Review.
- 18. Persons Involved with Criminal Justice
  - 18.1 If a person has a criminal record, OPTIONS will fully cooperate to the extent required by law. Information will be provided to any enforcement agency that is formerly involved assuming there is documentation of such involvement that negates a need for a release of information. Confidential information which is not public record will remain confidential and will not be disclosed without the permission of the person involved.
  - 18.2 While job developing for a person involved with the criminal justice department, information regarding the person's criminal past will only be given with the permission of the person receiving services. The person will be urged to be open about his/her past. If a person does not want to share information regarding his/her criminal past, then the job developer will not seek a job whereby the nature of the criminal past puts the person receiving services at risk of re-offending or puts others at risk at being victimized.
- 19. Transfer and Re-entry Criteria
  - 19.1 Persons served will be informed of other Vocational Services options in the community and of OPTIONS' policies regarding transfer and re-entry.
  - 19.2 A person receiving services may transfer to another supported employment service provider if he/she believes that it can provide better employment options.
  - 19.3 A person who leaves OPTIONS' Vocational Services for other than disciplinary reasons and wishes to return may do so with approval from the Vocational Services Supervisor and their funding source case manager.
  - 19.4 The Vocational Services Supervisor will approve re-entry if it determines that returning to OPTIONS' Vocational Services is in the best interests of



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all parties involved.

19.5 If a person left Vocational Services for disciplinary reasons, the Vocational Supervisor, conferring with OPTIONS' Administration team, will withhold approval for re-entry until the person has demonstrated to the satisfaction of the ID Team that the circumstances which led to the discharge will not recur.

### 20 Follow-up Procedures

20.1 Any individual leaving OPTIONS' Vocational Services may be followed for a period of time related to the reason for exit.

20.2 Follow-up will be documented using the OPTIONS follow-up report.

20.3 Information gathered will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the Vocational Services in meeting the persons receiving services' needs.

### 21 Development of Work Sites

21.1 The following categories of work sites will be developed:

- 21.1.1 Individual placement with a single OPTIONS Job Coach
- 21.1.2 Group of three or more persons with a single OPTIONS Job Coach at one work site
- 21.1.3 Employment preparation and placement for those who do not need a job coach
- 21.1.4 Situational Assessment
- 21.1.5 Work adjustment evaluation

21.2 The following factors are to be considered in the development of work sites:

- 21.2.1 The number of people without disabilities who work at the site
- 21.2.2 Job preference
- 21.2.3 Opportunities for interaction with people without disabilities
- 21.2.4 Employer commitment to integration
- 21.2.5 Orientation of employees at the work site who will be working closely with OPTIONS' Vocational Services
- 21.2.6 Accessibility barriers

21.3 When supervision and job coaching is provided at the work site, the Job

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Coach will be knowledgeable about the type of work performed for the work assignment. Provisions for Job Coach supervision at the work site will include both immediate supervision of the person receiving services in case of emergency and supervision for planned absences as well. Information on emergencies and absences will be communicated to all appropriate parties.

- 21.4 When OPTIONS is involved with the employment of persons receiving services, such as contract work, sound and acceptable pricing practices will be observed in all business and industrial activities, including the purchase of materials, sale of products, and subcontracting for all service approaches for vocational services including individual, group and other strategies.

### 22 Work Site Integration

- 22.1 Opportunities for work site integration will be promoted during OPTIONS' job development activities within the community.
- 22.2 Integration at the work site will be promoted through social interaction, physical proximity to others, participation in social activities available to all employees, and opportunities for supervision by non-OPTIONS employer personnel.
- 22.3 Only work sites that allow side-by-side opportunities to work with non-disabled employees will be developed by OPTIONS' Vocational Services.
- 22.4 Integration in job-related social activities will be encouraged.
- 22.5 OPTIONS will encourage the presence and participation of persons receiving services in their communities.

### 23 Transportation

- 23.1 Persons receiving services will travel to and from work either using their own transportation (car, bike, walking) or generic forms of community transportation; e.g. car pools, coworkers, buses, etc. whenever possible.
- 23.2 OPTIONS does not provide transportation to and from the work site for persons served, except in unique circumstances, such as the employer funding the transportation or a pre-approved group site. Initially, until mobility training is completed, a Job Coach may temporarily provide transportation to and from the work site. All other options will be considered first.

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### 24 Outcomes

24.1 The following data will be recorded and made available at quarterly reviews of OPTIONS' Vocational Services:

- 24.1.1 Number of persons served
- 24.1.2 Earnings on an hourly rate
- 24.1.3 Number of placements

### 25 Work Site Training

25.1 Based on the employer's field or industry, the following work site training functions will be reviewed:

- 25.1.1 Job specifications or Job description.
- 25.1.2 Systematic plan of instruction or support in work skills and behavior modification for those with Job Coaching.
- 25.1.3 Plan to foster development of appropriate social and interpersonal skills necessary to maintain employment.

25.2 There will be clear lines of communication between OPTIONS and designated persons at the work site to sustain mutually beneficial services as indicated in the service agreement.

### 26 Work Site Health, Safety, and Accessibility

26.1 Provisions for meeting health and safety standards will apply uniformly to all employees. Health and safety considerations will be taken into account in the workplace of persons served. Emergency contact numbers and procedures will be clearly communicated in writing to the employee's supervisory personnel.

26.2 Work sites will be accessible to accommodate the particular disability of the person served or OPTIONS will provide consultation to remove barriers in order to make reasonable accommodations.

26.3 All persons employed by the employer will have equal access to equipment required to accomplish job tasks. To meet requirements of reasonable accommodation, there will be modified equipment, fixtures, and other tools and techniques available as necessary to increase the disabled employee's productivity rate, provide greater safety in equipment use, and enhance earning potential.

26.4 Other forms of reasonable accommodation may include, but not be limited to, modification of the work site and commonly used surrounding

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areas, purchase of assistive aids and devices, adoption of personnel policies that allow the use of extended rest periods, flextime, part-time hours, reassignment of nonessential tasks, and task training.

26.5 OPTIONS will not assist nor aid persons taking prescription medication other than to remind them to take such medication as needed.

### 27 Wages

27.1 Prevailing competitive wages will be sought for persons served in Vocational Services prior to consideration of the use of sub-minimum wage certificates. Any person paid less than the minimum wage will be covered by a California Department of Labor Sub-minimum Wage Certificate as well as Federal Sub-minimum Wage Certificate.

27.2 Any sub-minimum wages paid will be based on industrial norms calculated on the average productivity of non-disabled workers performing similar job tasks at the same work site, as established by an accepted system of work measurement.

27.3 Employees served by OPTIONS' Vocational Services will be compensated using the principle of commensurate wages.

27.4 All persons served in Vocational Services who meet all criteria to be considered regular full time employees, will receive the usual employee benefits. The only exception is for persons working in group supported employment.

27.5 OPTIONS will assist persons receiving services in understanding the impact of employment on disability (SSI) and other benefits and will assist them in maintaining access to these benefits.

27.6 Wage rates and production norms will be reviewed and adjusted whenever the methods of performing work tasks are changed.

27.7 The wages and work performance of each person served employed by OPTIONS will be reviewed semi-annually.

27.8 Wage rates will be based on a system of individual performance, rather than on pooled or group wage rate calculations.

27.9 Wage payments will be of a monetary nature and not of payments in kind.

27.10 Pay periods will not exceed fourteen (14) calendar days.

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27.11 Each person served in OPTIONS' Vocational Services will receive a written statement for each pay period indicating gross pay, hours worked, deductions, and net pay.

27.11 Wages will be paid in full for all work performed during the pay period. Employees engaged in the production of products or the provision of services will not be subject to delays in wage payments due to contingency on subsequent sales or payments.

27.12 There will be no charge to employees for the privilege of employment. There may, however, be reasonable charges for transportation, uniforms, meals, and lodging. Invoices for these items or services will be submitted to the employee, his/her legal guardian, or a third party sponsor.

### 28 Records

28.1 In addition to the regular record for each Vocational Services person served, OPTIONS will maintain the following information related to the person's employment:

- 28.1.1 Name of the work supervisor.
- 28.1.2 Rate of pay, earnings, and fringe benefits.
- 28.1.3 Date of employment.
- 28.1.4 Information on work progress.
- 28.1.5 Information on performance reviews, whenever possible.
- 28.1.6 Special work considerations.
- 28.1.7 Employer termination reports, whenever possible.
- 28.1.8 Emergency contact numbers.
- 28.1.9 Immigration and naturalization status (I-9 Form), as needed.

28.2 If OPTIONS generates the payroll check, the person will be presented with a handbook written in a manner that is understandable to the person. The handbook will outline the following:

- 28.2.1 Conditions, benefits, and responsibilities of each party.
- 28.2.2 Wage payment practices.
- 28.2.3 Work rules.
- 28.2.4 Nondiscrimination provisions.
- 28.2.5 Grievance and appeal procedures.

### 29 Strike Work Policy

29.1 No person will be served by OPTIONS in a work setting where a labor strike is in progress.

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29.2 OPTIONS will not accept contract work from any manufacturer or business whose personnel are actively engaged in a labor strike.

### 30 Informed Choice

30.1 Informed choice means you have obtained all the information you need through the Vocational Assessment process to make sound decisions about your career path. You and your counselor will work as partners and may have several meetings to discuss the details of your employment plan.

POLICY DATE: February 1996

REVISED: April 2004, January 2011, May 2012, May 2013, April 2014, July 2014, May 2015, November 2016

REVIEWED: October 2017