Chapter 14: Work Experience
Disclaimer

• This training is to provide a high level overview of the changes to the Standards for Provider Manual to be in effect 10-01-2017.

• The contractor is responsible for all content in the manual.
Work Experience Overview
Work Experience Services

- Prepares customer for future long-term competitive integrated employment
- Allows a customer to be placed, for a short-term period of time, at a business or at agencies within the community to:
  - complete short-term experience
  - obtain transferable skills

**Note:** Short Term Experience is defined as **no less than 5 days/shifts and no more than 12 weeks.**
• Work Experience may assist in:
  • determining if a customer is ready for competitive, integrated employment
  • exploring career options for an individual
  • developing skills to include in an individual’s résumé within a certain vocation

• Work Experience Services Include:
  • Work Experience Placement
  • Work Experience Monitoring
  • Work Experience Training
Work Experience Services Facts:

- Work Experience Placement can be purchased with either
  - Work Experience Monitoring or
  - Work Experience Training

- Work Experience Monitoring and Work Experience Training can be purchased even if the provider did not provide the Work Experience Placement.

- Work Experience Monitoring and Work Experience Training **cannot** be purchased together.
When a customer is hired into permanent employment by the Work Experience site TWS-VRS will not pay any provider for:
- Job Placement
- Supported Employment

When a provider already has established a previous Work Experience Site with a business and it is not necessary to carve new job responsibilities, the provider may not be eligible for the Work Experience Placement fee.
• Multiple Work Experiences are allowed, if they are necessary, to meet the customer’s goals.

**Note:** If providers assist with multiple Work Experience Placements, a service authorization is issued for each.

**Note:** If a provider places multiple customers at the same site, it may not be appropriate to pay the Work Experience Placement fee for each customer.
Work Experience Services Staff Qualifications

**Work Experience Specialist** (placement and monitoring) must:

- Maintain a current, update-to-date UNTWISE Texas Job Placement Credential
- Have a high school diploma or GED

**Note:** It is preferred the individual have a Bachelor’s degree in rehabilitation, business, marketing, or related human services.
Work Experience Trainer (training):

• Must maintain a current UNTWISE Texas Job Skills Training credential
• Must have at least a high school diploma or GED

Note: It is preferred but not required that the individual have a varied and successful work history and experience working with individuals with disabilities.
Work Experience Placement
Work Experience Placement

• Begins with a Referral - DARS1600

• The referral will identify the date, time, and location for the Work Experience planning meeting

• The planning meeting is held with the VR counselor, customer, and Work Experience Specialist to complete the DARS1601, Work Experience Plan Plan, which outlines the criteria for the Work Experience placement

Note: A Services Authorization is issued after the Planning Meeting. Job placement services cannot begin until a service authorization has been received.
• Work Experience placement must meet the following criteria outlined on the DARS1601 (Work Experience Plan):
  • at least three of the skills, tasks, or responsibilities listed in the Work Experience skills, tasks, and responsibilities
  • 100 percent of the nonnegotiable Work Experience conditions
  • 50 percent or more of the negotiable Work Experience conditions
• The placement secured can be a paid or volunteer position.

Note: It is the responsibility of the work site to determine whether the placement should be paid or unpaid based on labor laws.
Work Experience Specialist assists with:

- research into identification of potential Work Experience sites
- paperwork (such as applications, questionnaires) required to gain Work Experience
- the steps needed to follow up on potential Work Experience opportunities
- requirements (for example, interviews, classes, meetings) necessary to gain Work Experience all required screenings, such as criminal background checks or health checks
After the Work Experience Placement is Gained

• The Work Experience Specialist accompanies the customer to the work site the first day(s) of the Work Experience to:
  • complete a Work Experience analysis
  • make recommendations for accommodations or supports the customer needs
  • educate the Work Experience site employees regarding any disability-related issues
The Work Experience Specialist may assist the work site with:

- the customer’s orientation to the workplace, roles, and responsibilities
- communicating expectations for job performance, behavior, and social interactions

**Note:** A minimum of 1 hour and up to 5 hours is the expectation for the time the provider is to accompany the customer.
Payment for Work Experience placement is made when the VR counselor approves a complete, accurate, signed, and dated:

- Work Experience Plan (DARS1601)
- Work Experience Placement Report (DARS1602)
- invoice

Fee: $750.00
Work Experience Monitoring
For each month Work Experience Monitoring (four weeks, 28 days),

**VR staff:**

- provides Work Experience Specialist with Work Experience Referral (DARS1600)
- provides Service Authorization for Work Experience Monitoring

**Work Experience specialist will:**

- complete Work Experience observations
- make recommendations for accommodations or supports the customer needs
- educate the Work Experience site employees regarding any disability-related issues
Work Experience Monitoring

• begins after the Work Experience placement is achieved
• it’s purpose is to support and monitor the customer at the Work Experience site
• VR counselor determines if the service is necessary for a customer based on the amount of assistance and/or supervision a customer will need to meet the Work Experience Site’s expectations

Note: Do not promise to the customer any of your recommendations for services, goods, or accommodations will be purchased or provided by TWS VRS or the employer.
Work Experience specialist documents

• in descriptive terms the information required on the DARS1603, including evidence:
  • the hours the customer worked/volunteered for the reporting period
  • verification the customer continues with same Work Experience position
    • performing skills, tasks, and responsibilities established in the Work Experience Plan
    • achieving all nonnegotiable Work Experience conditions established in the DARS1601
• the customer’s soft and hard skills have been evaluated for the reporting period

• all monitoring visits and contacts (training or supports) were conducted between the start date and end date of the month
  • a minimum of one face-to-face in person meeting with the customer and work site supervisor is required
  • minimum weekly face to face in person “check-in” contacts are required

Note: A summary of each visit describing the supports, training, and/or the customer’s job performance provided or observed during each visit.
Note: Work Experience monitoring cannot be purchased simultaneously with Work Experience training.

Note: When it is determined that a customer needs Work Experience training after Work Experience monitoring has begun, the fee for Work Experience monitoring will be prorated for the time the service was provided.
Payment for Work Experience Monitoring is made when the Work Experience Specialist:

- provides monitoring and assistance for each month (every 4 weeks, 28 days)
- completes and submits the DARS1603 Work Experience Monitoring Report
- invoices

Fee: $200.00 per month
Work Experience Training
Work Experience Training

**VR staff:**

- provides Work Experience Trainer with Work Experience Referral (DARS1600)
- When the provider did not secure the Work Experience Placement, the VR counselor and customer will complete the DARS1602 and submit with referral
- provides Service Authorization for Work Experience Training

**Note:** The VR Counselor determine when Work Experience training is needed and the number of hours to be provided.
Work Experience training:

• begins after Work Experience placement services are complete, and can be authorized when the customer gains work experience on his or her own, with assistance, or via the provider

• can be purchased per individual participant or as a group

Note: group size cannot exceed 4 individuals
Work Experience Trainer:

• provides training and support when a customer needs more than offered a Work Experience site can provide:
  • teaching skills
  • reinforcing skills
  • establishing and setting up accommodations and/or compensatory techniques to increase the customer’s independence and ability to meet the Work Experience site’s expectations
The Work Experience trainer:

• address the goals on the Work Experience Referral, and discuss with the VR counselor any additional goals or changes that may be necessary

• use structured most effective, but least intrusive techniques to help the customer:
  • learn the essential soft and hard skills of the Work Experience
  • learn the skills necessary to arrange and use transportation to get to and from the Work Experience site

• work with customer, employer, and VR staff to establish support services, accommodations, compensatory techniques, and training necessary to remove barriers to ensure successful participation in the Work Experience
• monitor the customer’s performance
• gradually reduce the time spent with the customer at the Work Experience site as customer becomes better adjusted, more independent, and no longer needs training supports

Work Experience Trainer
• documents in descriptive terms the information required on the DARS1604 Work Experience Training Report
• Includes the goals and focus areas prescribed on the referral
• Report of each training session that includes:
  • date the service was provided
  • start time of session
  • end time of session
  • number of goals addressed in the training session
  • a descriptive narrative of the services provided and customer’s performance

**Note:** Record session time using quarter-hour .25 increments (Use 0 for non-billable notation)
Fees

• Individual: Negotiated up to $37.50 per hour
• Group: Negotiated up to $19.00 per hour, per individual

Note: There are no premiums available for Work Experience Training
Future Questions

Contact your assigned
• Quality Assurance Specialist or
• Regional Program Support Specialist

Or

Send email to the Standards for Providers mailbox at VR.Standards@twc.state.tx.us
Quality Assurance Specialist

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