

# **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, 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.

# While Securing a Work Experience Site

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.



# Fee

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.

# Fee

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

# 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](mailto:VR.Standards@twc.state.tx.us)

## Quality Assurance Specialist

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## Regional Program Support Specialist

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