

Choosing Your Employment Plan with Michigan Rehabilitation Services

Information about Your Options in Planning

Michigan Rehabilitation Services is here to assist you in entering or returning to a career. An MRS counselor will partner with you to identify a career goal and then create a pathway for you to become employed. We refer to that as an **Individual Plan for Employment, or IPE**. This plan will outline all the support services required for you to enter or return to your new career.

Making Choices About Your Plan**

IPE's are developed to address specific needs you have to begin your new career. MRS counselors are trained to assist you in identifying what those needs are and what kinds of support, accommodations, or assistive technology would help you accomplish your goals.

When developing your plan, your counselor will partner with you to identify:

- Your values, abilities, interests, and capabilities.
- Any vocational training you might need, where to get it and how it will be paid for.
- Support services like tutoring, personal assistance, note taking etc.
- Who will provide the services.
- How the services will be arranged.



***If you receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), speak to an MRS counselor about assistance and supports available to individuals desiring to enter the workforce, including benefit planning assistance.*



Learning More About Your Job Needs

To get started on your plan, your counselor may need to find out more about you. For example, they may need to ask you questions like:

- What kind of things did you do in previous jobs?
- What do you consider to be your strengths?
- What careers would you like to explore?
- How has your disability affected you on the job?
- If you are on Social Security (SSI/SSDI), Do you know how working will affect your benefits?

Are there other issues that need to be dealt with before you can work like access to transportation or childcare? There are lots of different ways for you and your counselor to explore all of your many talents and interests. These may include:

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

Exploring these different areas with you will give your counselor the framework needed to create the right support services that meet your needs.

Putting Your Written Plan Together

Once you have selected a specific job goal, your counselor will partner with you to decide which services will help you reach this goal and who will provide them. MRS offers many job-related services like:

- 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, vocational counseling, cover letter and resume writing training/assistance.

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

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Your Rights and Responsibilities as an MRS Customer (continued)

What an Employment Plan Includes

Your IPE creates a road map that outlines what services will happen, when they will happen, who will be providing them and how they will be funded. This can be used as way to monitor the progress of your case. It's important to note that all services listed in your IPE will be focused on your career goal.

You can expect to see the following details in your IPE:

- Your identified job goal and an estimated date you will become employed.
- Agreed upon support services including:
 - service providers,
 - starting dates
 - where the funding comes from.
- MRS responsibilities.
- Your responsibilities.

Who Will Pay for Services?

Most services are available to you at no cost. Please note that all services covered by MRS must be authorized for PRIOR to the service. This means MRS must process the authorization for a service upfront. Federal guidelines prohibit MRS from authorizing for a service after it has already happened.

To help thousands of individuals each year, MRS has an obligation to responsibly manage funds. As a result, you will be asked to contribute to the cost of services identified in your IPE to the extent you are able. If you are unable to contribute financially, those needed services will still be provided.

What If My Counselor and I Disagree?

While we hope this doesn't happen, there can be times when you and your counselor might disagree about a service in your employment plan. Should that happen, you have several options available to you:

- 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 sent to the MRS 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.

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 800-288-5923 (voice/TTY).

Michigan Rehabilitation Services
Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity
PO Box 30010
Lansing, MI 48909
LEO-MRS-CustomerAssistance@michigan.gov
1-800-605-6722* (toll-free, voice)

**TTY users may contact MRS by dialing 711 and providing the relay operator with the MRS toll-free number.*

Michigan.gov/MRS

We look forward to serving you and encourage you to give us a call and apply for services.