

## **Requirements for an EPR Extension**

### **Definitions-**

Competitive integrated employment, or CIE, means that individuals with disabilities are able to work in the community with people of all abilities; and that they are paid at a rate comparable to those people without disabilities who work in the same place.

Prevocational skills mean general skills that are needed for most jobs in the community. This includes skills like:

- Talking to supervisors, customers and co-workers
- How to dress and act professionally
- Following directions and staying on task
- Problem solving
- Remembering and following the steps of a task
- Workplace safety

The Vocational Rehabilitation or VR program assists eligible individuals with disabilities to prepare for, get or keep employment. They help the person to achieve as much independence on the job as possible. VR services are designed to meet the unique needs of individuals who are eligible.

Supported Employment services are offered by the Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD) to help a person get, keep, and advance in Competitive Integrated Employment or self-employment.

### **Extension Requirements-**

EPR is a time-limited service providing prevocational skill building, and general employment exploration activities for no more than 24 consecutive months (beginning with the first day of EPR service). An extension can be requested for up to 12 consecutive months, based on individual need meeting the criteria below. If needed, an extension could occur immediately after an initial 24 months or years later, depending on the individual situation. There is not a specific limit to the number of extensions allowed, however, this is a time-limited service and requests will not be approved indefinitely. All requests for new or additional EPR must be submitted through the Request for Services (RFS) process by a Support Coordinator.

The criteria for an extension of EPR is:

1. Person remains interested in CIE; and
2. Person has identified specific prevocational skills they need support to develop to be successful in CIE in the future.

## **Requirements for an EPR Extension**

An EPR extension would typically be considered in the following situations:

- Person is currently working in a sheltered workshop setting and needs additional prevocational skill training prior to beginning the CIE job search.
  - Prevocational skill areas must be identified and listed as part of the EPR extension request.
  - A plan, schedule and strategies for skill training must be submitted as part of the EPR extension request.
- Person held a CIE position, lost the job, and needs general prevocational skill training to find and keep future jobs.
- Person had a significant life event, or medical need that required a pause to prevocational training or caused a CIE job loss.

An EPR extension would not typically be considered in the following situations:

- 24 months or more in a sheltered workshop was utilized previously.
- Person is employed and stable in a CIE position.
- Person has communicated no intention to seek CIE, and is 65+ years of age.

What to do if a request for an extension is denied:

- The person may appeal that decision if they choose.
- Identify meaningful activities through person-centered planning tools such as [Charting the LifeCourse](#) or the [DSPD Employment Pathway Tool](#).
- Talk with the support team about other services that could be used to meet the person's needs, interests, and desires. No one will be without services.