



Statewide Collaborative Protocols

Established through the Interagency Service Agreement (ISA) between
AHCCCS and ADES/RSA

Developed in partnership with:



Note: *The Statewide Collaborative Protocols shall automatically renew on an annual basis and will only be amended as necessary to support the Interagency Service Agreement between ADES/RSA and AHCCCS.*

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The Interagency Service Agreement (ISA) between Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) is a third party cooperative agreement, as defined by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and its implementing Regulations 34 CFR 361.28, for providing enhanced and structured Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services to individuals who have a **Serious Mental Illness (SMI)**.

The purpose of this Agreement is to enhance the ability of members determined SMI to take their rightful places as participating members of the workforce and in their communities by increasing the number of employed mutually-enrolled individuals who are satisfied with their vocational roles and environments.

The RSA/VR program provides a variety of services to persons with disabilities, with the ultimate goal to prepare for, enter into, and retain employment.

Release of Information / HIPAA

AHCCCS, the Managed Care Organizations (MCOs), and MCO Provider Organizations may share verbal and written information with ADES/RSA regarding members who are receiving RSA/VR services, as well as those members who might be referred to the RSA/VR program at a later date. This may include, but not limited to, the following:

- Verbal Communication
- Providing an individual's referral packet
- Participation with the behavioral health team to coordinate care

Releasing information around HIV status and treatment for alcohol or drug abuse must follow Federal Law. For additional information, refer to the ISA found at: <https://www.azahcccs.gov/PlansProviders/HealthPlans/purchasing.html> within the tab titled "Other Agreements/Contracts".

Co-Location of VR Counselors

1. An RSA/VR Counselor are assigned to an outpatient or integrated care clinic ("Provider") providing behavioral health services. Dates of the RSA/VR Orientations will be visibly posted for individuals to review, such as the lobby. RSA/VR Counselors are to provide a schedule of the dates they will be on site and will include the RSA/VR Counselor's contact information.
2. Providers must make available functional workspace for RSA/VR, including access to a confidential area for meetings with individuals that consists of a desk, chairs, and a telephone. Computers and internet access may also be available.

VR Referral Process

RSA/VR Orientations are to be conducted for individuals to learn about the employment services offered through RSA/VR. During these Orientations, individuals will gauge their interest and decide whether or not to participate in the RSA/VR program.

1. Providers must inform individuals regarding the RSA/VR program prior to attending the Orientation, including how RSA/VR is an employment program that may assist in pursuing a job goal. Providers are also expected to promote RSA/VR and encourage attendance at Orientations.
2. Orientations will be held at the Provider at a minimum of one time per month and at least one Provider staff must be present. RSA/VR will utilize the RSA/VR Orientation Power Point presentation. Orientation may also occur at the RSA/VR office or an individual 1:1 session can be scheduled.
3. The *VR Referral Feedback Form* will be completed for each individual that plans to attend the Orientation. This includes:

- Individuals and/or Providers complete the top portion of the *VR Referral Feedback Form*
 - RSA/VR will complete the rest of the document
 - RSA/VR and Provider will sign the form and a copy will be given to the Provider
 - If an individual chooses to decline the RSA/VR program, the Provider will meet with the individual to discuss alternative options/services
 - If an individual does not attend (“no show”), the Provider will follow up with the individual
4. If the individual chooses to apply for the RSA/VR program the following must occur:
- Verification of enrollment with a Health Plan, including verification of determination (SMI, GMH, SU).
 - If verification is needed to determine SMI status, please contact the Customer Service phone line for the respective MCO. RSA/VR will need to provide their name, title, and county they serve.). The MCO Customer Service phone numbers are:
 - Arizona Complete Health: (866) 495-6738
 - Mercy Care: (602) 586-1841 or (800) 564-5465
 - Health Choice Arizona: (800) 322-8670
 - RSA/VR staff must request the referral packet from either the Provider's designated employment personnel or the Provider staff assisting with VR Orientation. Upon this request, Providers must submit the referral packet within 7 business days. Required documents included in the referral packet are listed in the table below.
 - RSA/VR will scan the *VR Referral Feedback Form* into LIBERA for individuals applying to the RSA/VR Program and will be placed into Status 00.
 - RSA/VR will complete the *Referrals Specifics Form* (in LIBERA/System 7) to indicate the Target Group “VR Seriously Mentally Ill (SMI)”.

Member Referral Packet from Provider
Comprehensive Intake Assessment and/or SMI Determination/2 nd Level Review
Annual Assessment (Part E)
Service Plan
Service Plan Review/Update
Most recent Psychiatric Evaluation
Most recent Psychiatric Progress Note
Medication Flow Sheet
Crisis Plan
Progress Notes (not to exceed 60 days)
Any relevant Vocational Assessment
Arizona Disability Benefits 101 (AZ DB101) Calculator Summary, if available
Other information to the extent required to meet the purposes of this agreement
Guardianship paperwork, if applicable

5. Upon receipt of the referral packet, RSA/VR has **3 business days** to make initial contact to schedule an intake appointment. If unsuccessful in contacting the individual, the Provider will be notified. RSA/VR should schedule the intake appointment at the earliest possible availability.
6. VR eligibility should be determined as soon as possible, with the best practice of Eligibility Determination occurring within **30 days** of a signed VR application. The RSA/VR *Application Signature Form* should specify the Special Project “SMI”.
7. The individual must be notified of the eligibility decision via letter and a copy must be provided to the Provider by RSA/VR.

Communication/Coordination

1. RSA/VR and Provider’s designated employment personnel are required to meet on a frequent and ongoing basis at a minimum every 5 business days. These meetings are referred to as “weekly consultations”.
2. Weekly consultations may be face-to-face, via email, or via telephone to discuss, at a minimum, the following:
 - Potential referrals
 - Recent RSA/VR program case status movement
 - Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) Development
 - Significant changes (i.e. obtained employment, lost employment, graduated from training/school, hospitalizations, medication changes, changes in contact information, etc.)
 - Provision of Extended Supported Employment (ESE) services (individuals engaged in ESE services)
 - Individuals identified as needing additional support to remain engaged throughout the RSA/VR program
 - Closures
3. If individuals are not maintaining engagement with the RSA/VR program due to loss of contact, inability to locate, or no longer interested in RSA/VR services, prior to initiating the RSA/VR closure process, discussions regarding the individual must occur.
 - a. Along with attempting to contact the individual per RSA/VR policy, RSA/VR will also attempt to contact the individual’s emergency contact and the Provider the individual is enrolled with. If contacting the Provider and unable to reach an employment staff, RSA/VR will contact the individual’s case manager, or another clinical team member.
 - b. Providers will make all reasonable efforts to meet with individual and discuss their RSA/VR services. Providers may also utilize different techniques, such as Motivational Interviewing, to assess the individual’s readiness and ability to continue with their RSA/VR services. Providers will educate the individual on the benefits of remaining with RSA/VR and then update RSA/VR on the outcome.
 - c. All re-engagement efforts need to be documented and available for review in the member records.
4. Providers are responsible for seeking RSA/VR input for the individual’s Service Plan.
5. RSA/VR and Providers are responsible for sharing pertinent information with any involved third-party employment providers.
6. Required RSA/VR documentation to be provided to the Providers as listed in the table below. These documents should be filed in the individual’s Medical Record.

RSA/VR Documentation
VR Referral Feedback Form
Combined VR Eligibility Letter
Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)
ESE meeting progress note
Closure Decision Letter (15-days until closure)
Closure Justification Template (officially closed)
Other information to the extent required to meet the purposes of this agreement

6. RSA/VR will provide a LIBERA/System 7 list of mutually-enrolled individuals to the Provider on a monthly basis that includes, but not limited to, date of birth, RSA/VR status, and status date.

Supported Employment/Extended Supported Employment (SE/ESE)

Everyone could benefit from support at work. For many people that support can come from family members or friends. For others, the best support comes from co-workers. For working individuals who also have mental health challenges, additional and specialized supports may be needed. These specialized supports are often referred to as Job Coaching Services, or ongoing support.

Job Coaching supports or services for an individual may include, but are not limited to, the following: handling pressure; adjusting to change; getting along with co-workers; dealing with mental health issues; negotiating for “reasonable accommodations”; discrimination on the job; and managing finances and benefits.

For the purposes of the ISA and these Statewide Collaborative Protocols, Job Coaching is referred to as Supported Employment (SE) and is provided by and funded by RSA/VR, while Extended Supported Employment (ESE), or long-term Job Coaching, is provided by and funded by the MCOs.

RSA/VR and Providers will have conversations with the individual regarding the benefits of ESE services throughout the rehabilitation process.

1. Upon obtaining employment, RSA/VR will place the case into Status 22.
 - RSA/VR will inform the Provider of the individual’s decision regarding ESE services. If an individual chooses not to accept ESE services, no ESE meeting is necessary. The discussion and decision must be documented.
 - RSA/VR will have monthly meetings with all employed individuals to follow up on any needs, services, and updates.
2. Once job stability has been attained, as determined by the individual, RSA/VR, the Provider, and the RSA/VR contracted Job Coach, RSA/VR will schedule an ESE meeting. Prior to the ESE meeting, Providers will need to facilitate the update of the individual’s behavioral health Service Plan to indicate the individual’s service need for long-term job coaching. The ESE meeting is intended to discuss the individual’s employment and successes, next steps with RSA/VR, and how the ongoing employment support services are provided through the MCO moving forward. Attendance at the ESE meeting must include the individual, RSA/VR staff, the Job Coach, the Provider, and anyone else the individual would like to invite.
 - ESE meeting may occur in-person or by phone and is organized by the RSA/VR staff.
 - ESE meeting progress note must be provided to the Provider for the individual’s medical record.
 - ESE meeting must occur to transfer the funding source from RSA/VR to the MCO, after which ESE services begin. With this shift in funding, Providers are now responsible for ensuring Job Coaching services occur with the member when the need is identified.
3. The individual must remain in Status 22 with RSA/VR for a minimum of 90 calendar days after the ESE meeting occurs. RSA/VR closure (Status 26) will occur after that timeframe, as long as the individual continues to have job stability.
4. After the ESE meeting, Providers are responsible for ensuring Job Coaching services occur with the member when the need is identified.

Training

1. The AHCCCS Employment Administrator, the RSA/VR Statewide Behavioral Health Coordinator, MCO Employment/Vocational Administrators, RSA/VR Behavioral Health Counselors, and Provider employment personnel are required to attend the Bi-Annual ISA Coordination Meetings.
2. On a quarterly basis, the Provider is responsible to provide training on employment-related topics to the Provider clinical staff.

Dispute Resolution

In effort to resolve any disputes/concerns at the lowest level of intervention, a dialogue between the two involved parties is encouraged. Staff may consult with supervisory staff for guidance at any time, but the dispute/concern should first be addressed between the people directly involved.

A dispute or concern that is not able to be resolved between the parties will employ the following procedures to achieve a resolution.

Steps for Dispute Resolution:

1. Meeting will occur with the involved parties and their direct supervisors.
2. Meeting will occur with the involved parties; their direct supervisors; Provider leadership; MCO Employment/Vocational Administrator, or designee; the RSA Statewide Behavioral Health Coordinator, or designee; and the AHCCCS Employment Administrator.

The MCO Employment/Vocational Administrator and the RSA Statewide Behavioral Health Coordinator, or designee, may be consulted at any point in the dispute resolution process and respond accordingly.

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Signature Page


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AHCCCS Employment Administrator

8/20/2020


Date

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RSA Statewide Behavioral Health Coordinator

8/20/2020


Date

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Mercy Care Employment/Vocational Administrator (or designee)

8/20/2020

Date

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Arizona Complete Health Employment/Vocational Administrator (or designee)

8/20/2020

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Health Choice Arizona Employment/Vocational Administrator (or designee)

8/20/2020

Date

Effective Date: 10/01/2018

Revision Date: 11/15/2019; 8/5/2020