

EMPLOYMENT FIRST

CAREER DISCOVERY and CAREER EXPLORATION GUIDANCE

What is the Discovery Process?

The Discovery Process is key to providing person-centered employment supports and reveals information and insight other services may not. There are both Home and Community Based Waiver Services (HCBS) and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) supports that help reveal:

- The individual's interests in one or more specific aspects of the job market
- Skills, strengths, and other contributions likely to be valuable to employers or valuable to the community if offered through self-employment
- Conditions necessary for the individual's successful employment including self-employment.

What are Career Discovery and Career Exploration?

Career Discovery is an HCBS waiver service that is outcome-based. A thorough Career Profile is the end result of the service that includes a home visit and a process that connects the person's interests, skills and talents with vocational themes and community-based opportunities and insights. It is one of nine supports offered under "Career Planning."

Career Exploration is a VR service offered through Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD). This fee schedule service can be authorized by VR Staff and VR Coordinators "for extended support planning and discovery activities in preparation for Supported Employment." In this version of discovery, activities with the individual may include interviewing the individual, family or service support personnel, observing the participant in the community, exploring interests and identifying potential vocational interest areas. The outcome of the service is to identify and provide supporting data and documentation of viable employment options.

When do you authorize Career Discovery and/or Career Exploration?

When to authorize Career Discovery or Career Exploration is up to the individual and person-centered planning team, based on a variety of factors, including the place on the Path to Community Employment, level of need, budget, and obstacles that may be preventing participation in community employment, activities and/or supports.

The Places on the Path to Community Employment:

1. I have a job, but would like a better one or to move up.
2. I want a job and I need help to find one.
3. I'm not sure about work. I need help to learn more.
4. I don't think I want to work, but I may not know enough about it.

For more information on the Path to Community Employment and when to make a referral to OOD, please reference the DODD/OOD Joint Guidance on Referrals for Vocational Rehabilitation Services: www.ohioemploymentfirst.org/up_doc/OOD_DODD_Joint_Guidance_11_2017.pdf.

When person-centered planning teams are contemplating which support to authorize, Career Discovery may be more applicable to individuals who don't have a lot of community-employment experiences, and are in need of a more holistic approach to help them focus on their abilities, interests, and possible opportunities. Career Exploration may be more useful to individuals who have developed more of a work history, and now need information and insight into specific career choices they want to make.

Case Scenarios

In the following scenarios, instead of considering facility-based work or other facility-based supports as the first option when initiating or returning for services, an individual and his/her team can either begin with Career Discovery or Career Exploration supports, or at any other point in the supported employment process prior to a successful outcome.

- Alan has been receiving services in a facility-based setting for years. He's 35 years old and is receiving OOD services. He secures employment at a restaurant, but two weeks after starting the job, he quits. He stated that he did not like the mealtime "rushes" and general fast pace of the job. He says he does not have any ideas on what community job he wants to do, or what he is capable of. As a result, the team reconvenes. Alan says he wants to return to the sheltered workshop. He tried competitive integrated employment, and it just did not work out.
- Jane is receiving adult day services, and she has told her family she would like to try working at a competitive job in the community. She is not sure what she would like to do, and she does not know where to start. She does not have a work history. An OOD referral is being considered.
- Jeff is in group employment and was referred to OOD because he expressed an interest in competitive integrated employment. He has had several group-employment experience in the past few years. He is not sure if he would like to work in hospitality or distribution, but would like to explore his options.