

## Talking Points

- The Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities and the Payment in Adult Day and Employment Services Work Group has worked together since August 2018 to review prevocational service program rules and help guide the department's efforts to clarify how Medicaid-funded Vocational Habilitation can be used and when other services might be a better fit to help someone reach their goals and outcomes.
- The group has agreed to the following changes to Ohio's prevocational services. These changes are targeted for implementation in the **October 2021**:
  - **Development of New Prevocational Service**- Ohio will develop a new pre-vocational service called Basic Employment Skills Training (BEST) that will be available in **October 2021**. If approved by CMS, this service will have multi-tiered requirements.
    - **Tier 1: Persons receiving the Vocational Habilitation service who are under 50 years of age at the time Basic Employment Skills Training becomes effective and new entries into Basic Employment Skills Training, regardless of age.**
      - This service will be required to meet all state and federal regulations related to compensation, time limits for prevocational services, etc.
      - This service will be available to anyone 18 and over who has exited from school.
      - 24-month statewide time limit to Basic Employment Skills Training Service. The 24-month time limit would be a cumulative total, which means a person could move in and out of BEST for short periods over a timeframe of no longer than 24 months if they do not exceed a total of 24 months in service. Yearly extensions would be available based on ISP span dates. These yearly extensions can be approved at the local level for 3 years. Any extensions beyond the three local level extensions must be approved by DODD. DODD will develop an authorization process for the extensions. There is no intent to limit the number of extensions that the Department may authorize.
      - 50% Wage Calculation- This figure will be calculated once per year, based on State of Ohio minimum wage and the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimate of the annual number of the average American's hours worked per week. BEST providers would be required to add annual wage earnings to the annual written progress

report submitted to SSAs. Written progress reports are a planning tool to aide a person's progression on the path to community employment

- **Tier 2: Persons receiving the Vocational Habilitation service and 50 years of age or older at the time the Basic Employment Skills Training service becomes available who are not interested in competitive, integrated employment.**
  - These individuals must benefit from BEST by gaining general employment related skills or be working to maintain current skill levels.
  - We believe we can use our efforts to right-size the Vocational Habilitation service for 18-49 year olds as justification to CMS for why this is an acceptable compromise for those 50 years or older to remain in the BEST service without the need for extensions.

DODD is developing a team to implement the changes required to move the above items into waiver amendments and rules by October 2021. It is important to note that there could be potential changes to the framework as DODD goes through the development of waiver amendments and rules.