



Interim CBDS and Supported Employment Service Delivery Approaches DDS-ADDP Day and Work Reopening Planning September, 2020

During this time of the COVID-19 emergency, individuals and families supported by the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) will need to make informed choices about the risks and benefits of services, as the state re-opens through its various phases. This includes selecting from a menu of service delivery approaches, some of which are modified or temporary, to re-engage or admit new participants in Community Based Day Supports, Group Employment and Individual Supported Employment. Educating participants, families and support staff about these options will be an important step in providing flexible and responsive supports for each person's unique circumstances while ensuring their health and safety.

When making decisions about services during this time, it is important to assess the risk/benefit of each service delivery model for both new and current participants. This process includes consideration of a participant's Individual Service Plan (ISP) goals, their needs, and the provider's ability and readiness to deliver the various interim service types. Service planning and decision-making will be based on funding available for the person.

Providers will vary in what services are available, based on many factors that include staff availability, facility capacity, transportation, readiness to meet personal protection equipment (PPE) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines, resources and funding allocations. It is expected that service delivery will need to be flexible over time due to all of these variables and that ISPs will be subject to change. Providers ready to provide services will evaluate the priority of service re-entry based on a comprehensive review of all participants.

All service models are intended to be delivered to the participant through direct in-person support or through remote/virtual support. The different service options are intended to be flexible and the ability to combine service approaches will be important. Based on the options selected, participants may see a reduction in hours of service delivery to meet the needs of the member and the capacity of the provider. Service options will be determined in collaboration with the individual, their family/guardian, provider and through discussion and authorization by the Area Office.

The service options are as follows:

- Community Based Day Services: CBDS Site-Based Supports, CBDS Site-less/Mobile Supports, Virtual/Remote Supports, and CBDS 1:1 Home-Based Support;
- Individual Supported Employment: In-Person and Virtual/Remote Supports; and
- Group Supported Employment: In-Person, and Virtual/Remote Supports.

The menu of support is intended to be a vehicle for individuals to explore and engage in meaningful and purposeful activities, based on individual preference and need as identified in their person-centered Individual Service Plan.

This includes employment related and non-employment related activities but must always be purposeful and supportive of the participant's goals. The overriding goal of the DDS Supported Employment and CBDS services are to promote and support the full integration and meaningful inclusion of individuals with disabilities in all aspects of community life through employment, positive community engagement and contributions, and relationship development.

DDS Community Based Day Supports (CBDS) (3163):

CBDS services are primarily intended to be pathways to employment and personal enrichment. These activities may be site-based, occur in the community or, in some specific situations, in the home. They include enrichment activities (exercise, stress relief, music, book clubs), skill building activities (health and safety, nutrition, wellness, self-advocacy, travel training, technology), volunteering, exploring places of interest (virtually or in-person), and job readiness training.

- **Site-Based (in-person services, including activities offered both within the site and in the community)**

Site-Based supports are services provided in group settings based out of a program location and include a wide array of community experiences and opportunities. This includes communal activities and contact with others. People utilizing this support will need to be aware of the CDC guidelines, such as social distancing, wearing PPE, and good hand hygiene. This support is also for those who need traditional day support due to caregiver, social and behavioral, and/or learning needs. Over time engagement in activities in the community will increase as these become more available based on safety precautions.

Site-Based supports are best for individuals who need a structured and supervised program of services during the day, that will enhance the benefits of work or allow the person to pursue particular interests and develop other skills.

This service schedule may be offered in flexible ways, such as partial day or part-time and, if funding allows, can be combined with other services and service delivery models.

Other considerations for this area would include ability to transport safely to the site. This may be done with support from a family member, group home, MBTA or available DDS and Provider options.

- **Site-less/Mobile ("CBDS without walls"):**

Site-less/Mobile supports may be provided in small groups, occurs in community locations, and involves contact with others. People utilizing this support will need to be aware of the CDC guidelines for social distancing, wearing PPE, and good hand hygiene. This support is for those who desire to work on skills in the community and social connections with others.

Site-less/Mobile supports are best for individuals who are better able to access services in their neighborhood and at community locations. These services will enhance the benefits of work or allow the person to pursue interests and develop other skills as identified in their Individual Support Plans.

This service also may be offered in flexible ways including: unit, hourly and partial day and, if funding allows, can be combined with other services and service delivery models. This service is customizable based on provider availability and funding allocations.

Other considerations for this area include ability to transport safely to community locations. This may be done with support from a family member, group home, MBTA or available DDS and Provider options.

- **Virtual/Remote Service Delivery**

Virtual/Remote supports are best for individuals who may have significant health risks or are uncomfortable accessing the community and as a supplement to site-based and mobile services. Services that are Virtual/Remote will enhance the benefits of work or allow the person to pursue particular interests and develop other skills. Virtual/remote services may also include wellness check-in, social connection with others, group daily meetings and virtual meet-ups.

Virtual supports may be provided in small groups or individually, accessing support through virtual means, including telephone and web-based platforms such as Zoom. This support may be beneficial to those with underlying health conditions or have challenges following the CDC guidelines, such as social distancing, wearing PPE, and good hand hygiene.

This service may be offered in flexible ways including: units, hourly and partial day and, if funding allows, can be combined with other services and service delivery models. This service is customizable based on member need, provider availability and funding allocations.

Other considerations for this area include access to technology (e.g. devices and Wi-Fi), ability to use platform identified by provider (virtual services may be arranged using remote communication tools, such as Skype, Zoom, Apple FaceTime, Facebook Portal or related streaming service), and technical support at home. This service may also be preferred for those with limited transportation availability.

- **1:1 CBDS Services/Home Based**

Supports using the ratio of one staff to one individual (1:1) based from the home are best for individuals/families who are unable or reluctant to access the community, have health needs that put them at high risk or behavioral health needs that prohibit site-based and mobile service participation at this time. This model may also be useful for those needing assistance in engaging in virtual supports or extra support in reengaging in more traditional CBDS supports. These one-to-one supports are intended to enhance the benefits of work or allow the person to pursue particular interests and develop other skills as outlined in their Individual Support Plan.

1:1 Supports based from a person's home will have limited access to community locations and contact with others. People utilizing this support will work on skills to comply with the CDC guidelines for social distancing, wearing PPE, and good hand hygiene, and use of technology with the goal of transitioning to site-less, site based, or virtual/remote CBDS supports. This support is for those who need training for safe community access, those with health conditions that increase risk, and those who are not able to utilize transportation.

This is a very resource-intensive service which may be offered in limited capacity, for a limited time, and, if funding allows, can be combined with other services and service delivery models. It should be noted that this

service option will require an adjustment in units purchased and significantly reduce direct support hours. This service is customizable based on provider availability, funding allocations and Area Office approval.

Other considerations for this area would include ability to host staff member in the home safely and have available space to provide service.

DDS Individual Supported Employment (3168):

Individual Supported Employment is designed to support a participant working towards independent community employment. This includes the full array of services from career exploration and planning, job development, employer outreach, job coaching, help with accommodations, and ongoing supports.

Supported Employment has been offered throughout the pandemic to those who have been able to maintain employment or those who have been job seeking. Support has also been provided to individuals needing to enroll in unemployment benefits due to furlough or loss of a job. Supported Employment may be delivered in the following way: In-person supports and remote/virtual supports. Supports are to be person specific and individualized to meet the needs of the member's goals of employment as outlined in their Individual Support Plan.

Activities may include discovery interviews, career exploration, resume development, interview skills, support and training of soft skills, instructional skills, job coaching, and benefit support (including unemployment benefits, retirement and SSI adjustments).

It should be noted that the DDS' billing guidelines has always and will continue to allow for both remote and in-person supports for Supported Employment.

- **In-Person Supports**

In-Person supports are best for individuals who are better able to access services in community locations and in job settings at businesses. These services include accessing community locations and contact with others. People utilizing this support will need to be aware of the CDC guidelines for social distancing, wearing PPE, and good hand hygiene. This support is for those who desire to work on skills in the community, looking for community employment or maintaining employment.

This service is to be offered in accordance with an employment plan. This is a one-to-one support and is billed in units.

Other considerations for this area include ability to transport safely to community locations. This may be done with support from a family member, group home, MBTA or available DDS and Provider options.

- **Remote Service Delivery**

Virtual/Remote supports are best for individuals who are at risk for group and community accessibility and as a supplement to in-person supported employment services. This can be an effective way to provide job coaching supports and communication with supervisors/employers.

Virtual supports may be provided individually as it relates to individualized supported employment goals. Support will be provided through virtual means, such as telephone and web-based platforms. This support may be beneficial to those experiencing challenges with the CDC guidelines for social distancing, wearing PPE, and good hand hygiene. This support may be utilized for those with health risks themselves or those they live with and for people who have not yet returned to work sites due to the COVID emergency.

This service is to be offered in accordance with an employment plan. This is a 1:1 support and billed in units.

Other considerations for this area include access to technology (e.g. devices and Wi-Fi), ability to use platform identified by provider (virtual services may be arranged using remote communication tools, such as Skype, Zoom, Apple FaceTime, Facebook Portal or related streaming service), and technical support at home.

DDS Group Supported Employment (3181):

Group Supported Employment is designed to support participants working towards or employed in group community employment in a local community business. This can include career exploration and planning, employer outreach, job coaching, help with accommodations, and ongoing supports.

Group Supported Employment may be delivered in the following way: In-person supports and remote/virtual supports. Supports are to be person specific and individualized to meet the needs of the member's goals of employment. Activities may include: discovery interviews, career exploration, resume development, interview skills, support and training of soft skills, instructional skills, job coaching, and benefit support.

- **In-Person Supports**

In-Person supports are best for individuals who can access their community job and business location. People utilizing this support will need to be aware of the CDC guidelines for social distancing, wearing PPE, and good hand hygiene. This support is for those who desire to work on skills in the community, seek community employment or maintain employment.

This service is to be offered in accordance with an employment plan. This is a group support and billed in units.

Other considerations for this area include ability to transport safely to community locations. This may be done with support from a family member, group home, MBTA or available DDS and Provider options.

- **Remote Service Delivery**

Though ideally, Group Supported Employment is an in-person service, virtual/remote supports can be provided in a couple of different circumstances. First, for individuals employed by a business that is not yet opened or at full workforce capacity and second, for individuals who are working toward independence at their group employment in which site-based supervision is in the process of fading. Both examples should be time limited and have a clear end date. These services will enhance goals toward re-entry into Group Supported Employment or enhanced independence.

Virtual supports may be provided in small groups and, at times, individually as it relates to developing skills specific to re-opening planning at their job site before they return or as a means of fading group supports while

at their job. Support will be provided through virtual means, including telephone and web-based platforms. This support may be used to train on-the-job specific protocols, PPE use, travel planning and worksite specific training before they return to work or during the transition.

This service is to be offered in accordance with an employment plan. This is a group service.

Other considerations for this area include access to technology (e.g. devices and Wi-Fi), ability to use platform identified by provider (virtual services may be arranged using remote communication tools, including Skype, Zoom, Apple FaceTime, Facebook Portal or related streaming service), and technical support at home.

Also for consideration is moving units from group supported employment into another day/employment support model if a job site has no imminent plan for re-opening or offering employment to those individuals supported by DDS.

Service Delivery Resources:

The Institute for Community Inclusion has an ongoing series of Publications and Resources to help professionals, individuals and families maintain an Employment First Focus during these challenging times.

<https://covid19.communityinclusion.org/>