



OPWDD Employment Services Directors' Meetings

January 2024

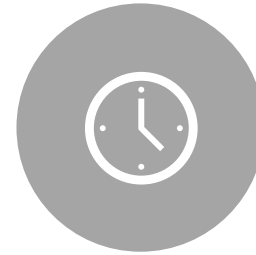
Innovations in Employment Supports



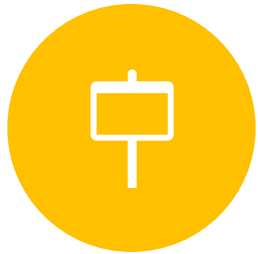
Welcome



Sign In



3 Hour Session



Sign Out



Innovations
Credits



Agenda

- OPWDD Strategic Initiatives and Projects
- New SEMP Regulations and Administrative Memo
- Updated SEMP Forms and Documents
- Managing and Planning SEMP Services
- Career Specific Vocational Training Updates
- Other Employment and Day Services Updates
- Innovations Updates





OPWDD's goal is to increase the number of people gaining and retaining competitive integrated employment.



OPWDD Strategic Goals and Projects

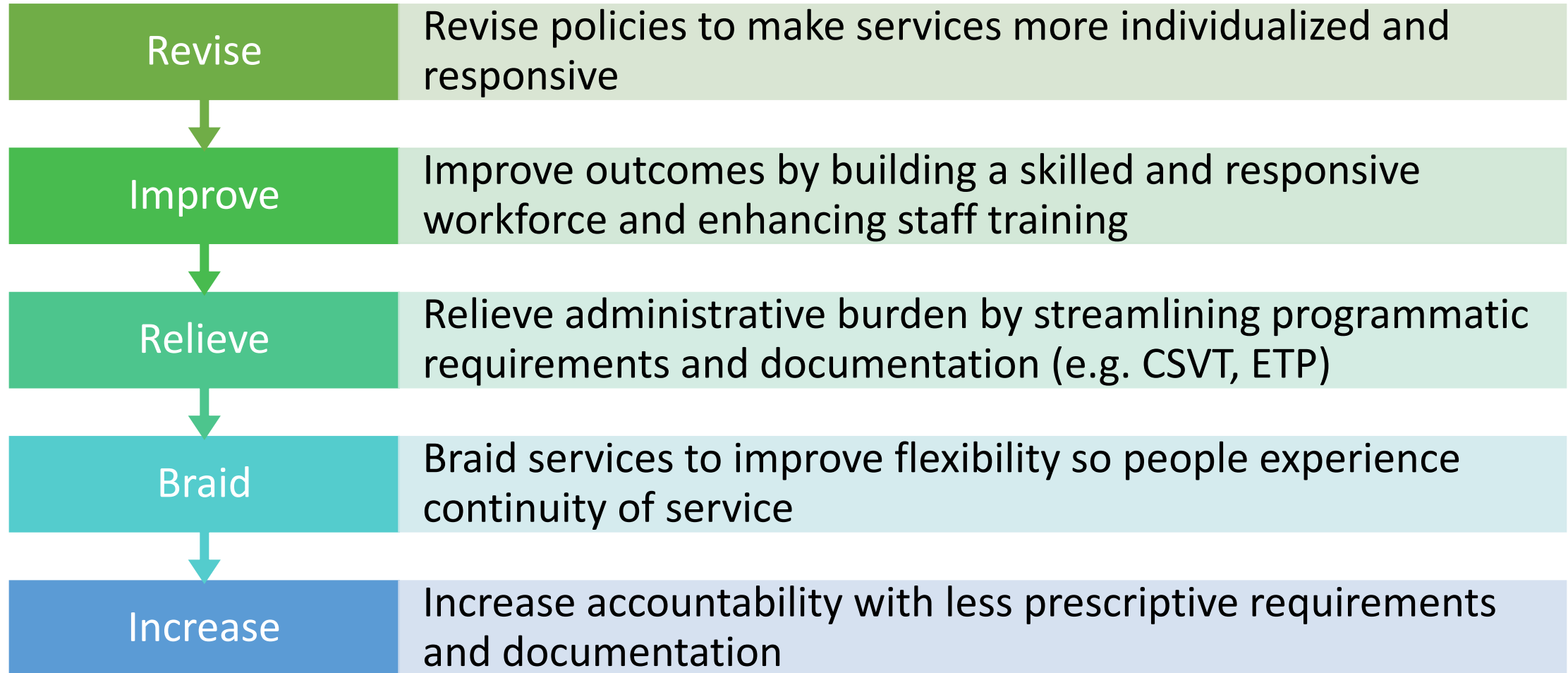
Increase	the number of individuals competitively employed
Build	the full array of day, vocational and employment services for seamless transition to employment and careers
Develop	new and innovative models that are community-based and move people toward employment
Increase	career specific training for people with I/DD and help people build careers

OPWDD Strategic Goals and Projects

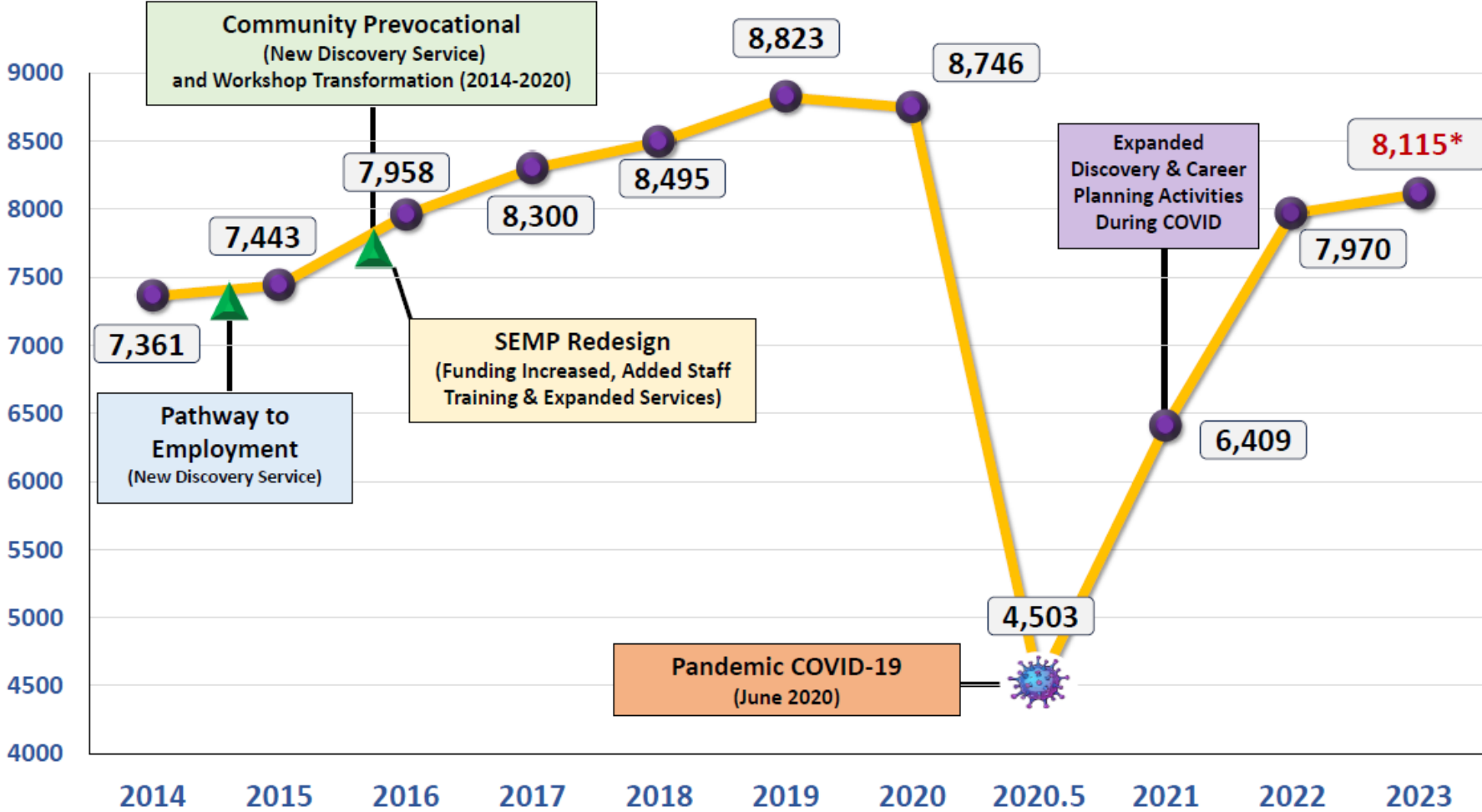
Partner	with State and Federal agencies to advance and increase employment for people with I/DD
Reduce	administrative barriers and streamline processes
Improve	processes to allow people to move easily and quickly into and between services
Increase	engagement with NYS businesses



Stakeholder Recommendations



OPWDD Supported Employment Number of People Employed

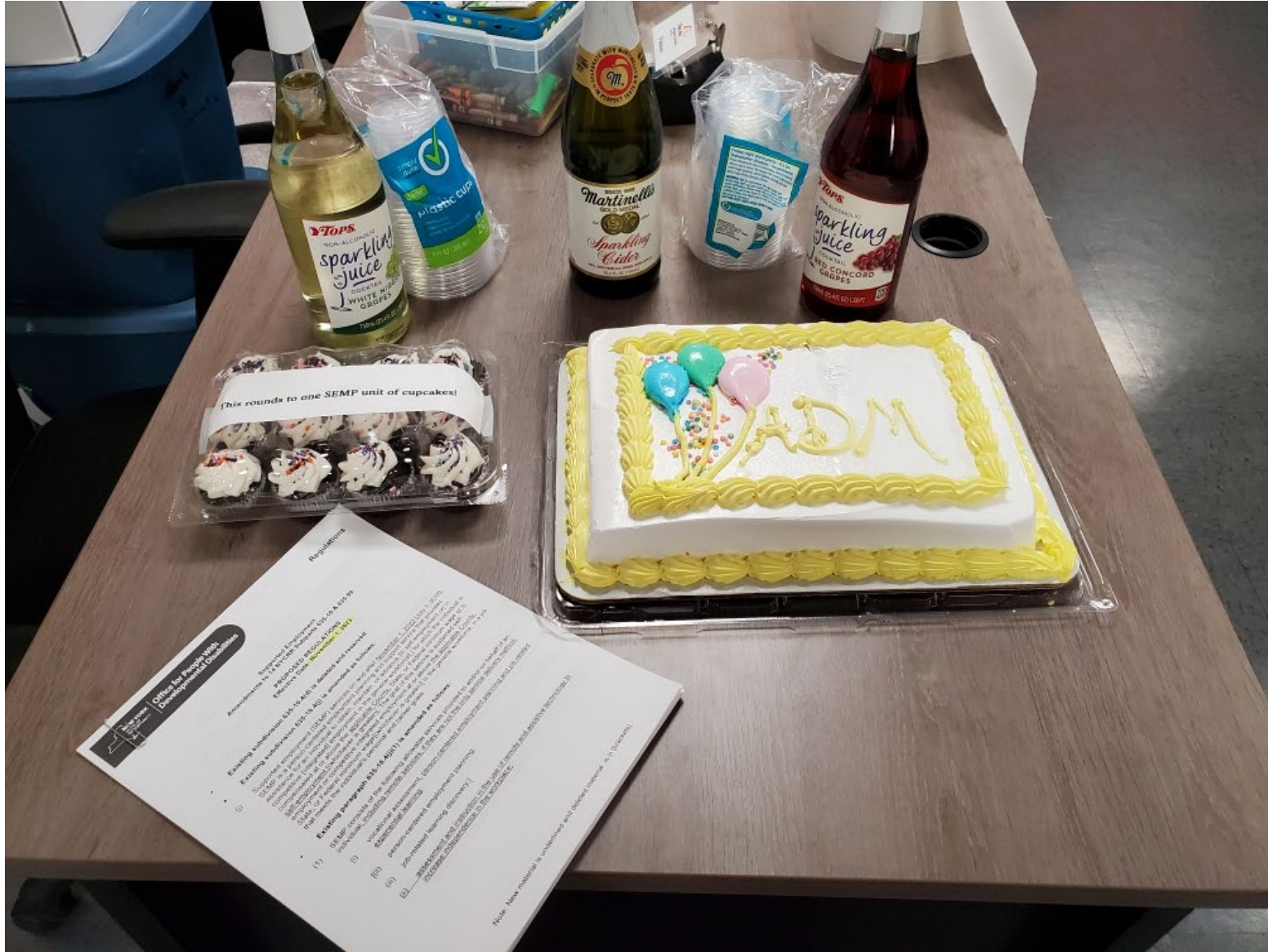


*All data points are based on December 31st annually, unless otherwise indicated

*2023 currently represents September 2023 and will be updated throughout the year



New Supported Employment Regulations and Administrative Memo



New Supported Employment ADM and Regulations (Effective 1/2/2024)

- Adds two new allowable services.
 - planning the delivery of all allowable SEMP services
 - managing the delivery of all allowable SEMP services
- Changes up to 45 days to 120 days after a person exits a job before requiring approval for Intensive SEMP services to continue billing services.
 - This relieves administrative burden on providers and allows for more individualized employment services.
 - This change starts for all job exits on 1/2/24 or after.



New Supported Employment ADM and Regulations (Effective 1/2/2024)

Staff Training

- Allows new staff up to 2 years from date of hire (or transfer) to complete 24 hours of initial staff training through Eleversity.
- After the first 2 years, annual training now aligns anniversary dates with the calendar year.
- This change only applies to staff hired on or after 1/2/24.
- Staff training is a separate allowable service (no longer under “other”).
- Clarifies that remote training can be billed either 3 or 6 hours. Billing for in person classroom training is limited to 5 hours and up to 6 hours for virtual training each day.
- *No change – staff must bill the group fee up to 5 people.*



New Supported Employment ADM and Regulations (Effective 1/2/2024)

- Allows OPWDD to approve more hours in one request for both individual and group.
 - Provider must track SEMP billing hours, project hours needed each person during each SEMP enrollment year and submit request forms proactively.
 - Retroactive requests will be approved under extenuating circumstances.
 - Reduces administrative burden.
- Adds rounding to incentivize employment services. If the provider spends at least 10 minutes, they can round to 15 minutes at the end of the day of services. This applies to both Intensive and Extended SEMP.



New Supported Employment ADM and Regulations (Effective 1/2/2024)

- Clarifies that preparation and review of required SEMP service documentation and reporting is an allowable service.
- Sections were reordered to provide clarity and organize the regulations in a more coherent manner, e.g., all paragraphs that related to Intensive SEMP in one section, separate section for Extended SEMP to assist providers.
- Language has been clarified in many areas based on questions and input from providers.



Revised Telehealth ADM and Additional Guidance

- On July 28, 2021, OPWDD issued 21-ADM-03 to describe the permissible use of technology to remotely deliver HCBS Waiver services.
- **ADM, 21-ADM-03R** is revised and replaces 21-ADM-03. Revisions are underlined in red.

<https://opwdd.ny.gov/regulations-guidance/adm-2021-o3r-ability-use-technology-remotely-deliver-home-and-community-based>

Key points:

- Care Managers and agencies have up to 6 months to evaluate and update life plan. Providers accordingly update the Staff Action Plan.
- Care Manager ensures that the continued use of technology for remote service delivery is reviewed and reaffirmed every six (6) months or with each semi and annual Life Plan review.
- Only direct, two-way, real time remote communication requires a billing modifier.
- For SEMP, CBPV, and Pathway, indirect or services on behalf of the person do not require a billing modifier.
- All remote technology must be HIPAA compliant.



Revised Telehealth ADM and Additional Guidance

Providers must ensure that remote service delivery complies with **OPWDD ADM #2021-03R** “Ability to use Technology to Remotely Deliver Home and Community-Based Services.”

SEMP, Pathway to Employment and CBPV services delivered via remote technology

- directly to the person (i.e., direct services) must be listed in the Life Plan and reflected in the Staff Action Plan.
- on behalf of the person (i.e., indirect services) do not need to be listed in the Life Plan and must be reflected in the Staff Action Plan.

Providers delivering HCBS Waiver services via telehealth must use the following procedure code and modifier when billing these services to Medicaid:

- Procedure code, T2025 – Waiver services, not otherwise specified
- Modifier, GT – Via interactive audio and video telecommunication systems

State-funded SEMP services billing process will not change. Staff Action Plans should reflect if person is using telehealth in accordance with ADM #2021-03R.



Additional Telehealth Guidance

In SEMP, Pathway to Employment and Community Based Prevocational services, revised 2024 ADM's provide additional guidance as follows:

Providers **can call individuals over the phone as an incidental component of service** delivery to check-in with participants as allowed in the service definition or **in emergency circumstances**. This is different from phone calls that involve teaching/training with the staff that are considered telehealth. Examples of incidental calls to individuals include:

- reminding the individual about a volunteer or job interview;
- reminding the individual to wash their uniform;
- informing the individual of volunteer/job schedule changes;
- learning about the individual's volunteer/work schedule so the staff know when to visit sites;
- checking in to see if there are any unforeseen challenges; and
- scheduling upcoming service activities.

Emergency phone calls include helping the individual trouble shoot an unexpected, non-regular problem at volunteer or work site.



ACCES-VR Updates

- OPWDD and ACCES-VR are reviewing the ways in which our respective services can be utilized to best support people and will issue revised guidance to the field in the future.
- At this point, OPWDD's requirements remain the same. OPWDD Extended SEMP funding is not available during the first 90 days of employment post stabilization.
- ACCES-VR changes are listed in the '24-'28 ACCES-VR CRS Program Guide on pages 45-47, the following excerpt applies: "ACCES-VR Supported Employment Extended services (Adults and Youth) will be utilized for ALL customers during the first 90 days of employment post stabilization with ACCES-VR approval, if extended services by OPWDD or OMH are not provided at time of stabilization. Once 90 days of successful employment post stabilization has been achieved, vendors are expected to utilize the appropriate supported employment extended source."



Updated SEMP Forms and Documents



Attachments to SEMP ADM

- Attachment 1: Verification that Job Meets SEMP Criteria
- Attachment 2: Request for SEMP Staff Training Period Extension
- Attachment 3: Request to Bill OPWDD SEMP Intensive Services
- Attachment 4: Request to Bill OPWDD Additional Extended SEMP Service
- Attachment 5: Supported Employment Quarterly Status Report



Downloadable Files & Resources on Eleversity Website

Website Link

<https://eleversity.org/resources/opwdd-innovations-resources/>

OPWDD FORMS & FILLABLE DOCUMENTS

Request to Bill Intensive SEMP Services 6/2022

Request to Bill OPWDD Additional Extended SEMP Services 4.22

Request to Bill Additional Pathway Services

Verification Job Meets SEMP Criteria

SEMP Billing Guidebook 9.9.19 rev. 4-22-2022

Request For SEMP Staff Training Period Extension 3/10/2022



Attachment 1: Verification that Job Meets SEMP Criteria

Summary of changes:

- Updated wage verification language in response to public comment to clarify that completion of the form does not replace the collection of paystubs or other documentation that the person earns at least minimum wage, which must be maintained by the provider to bill SEMP.
- Form now requires provider to indicate the type of wage/compensation verification obtained (e.g. pay stub, appointment letter, other). The documentation obtained should be attached to this form for audit purposes.



Attachment 2: Request for SEMP Staff Training Period Extension

Summary of changes:

- Moved SEMP Staff Training Requirements language from ADM to page 2
- Updated technical assistance mailbox
- Added Training Requirement Not Met – Initial Training or Annual Continuing Education



Attachment 3: Request to Bill OPWDD SEMP Intensive Services

Summary of changes:

- Changed *Individual has several years of positive and continuous work history, has been employed within the last year and has previously completed ACCES-VR or ETP* to *Individual has several years of positive and continuous work history, has been employed within the last year and has previously utilized ACCES-VR or ETP.*
- Added *Last date individual worked at an integrated job earning at least minimum wage.*
- Changed *Is the individual funded by State SEMP (Non-HCBS Waiver)* to *Is the individual receiving State-Funded SEMP: (non-HCBS Waiver).*
- Added Total Cost of SEMP Services in Budget
- Added the option to attach a resume in lieu of listing previous work/volunteer experience



Attachment 4: Request to Bill OPWDD Additional Extended SEMP Service

Summary of changes:

- Removed *You may receive multiple requests, up to 200 hours approved on each request.*
- Form will be continuously updated to reflect the most current SEMP Fees.
- Provider must track SEMP billing hours, project hours needed each person during each SEMP enrollment year and submit request forms proactively.
- Retroactive requests will be approved under extenuating circumstances.



Accessing OPWDD Rates/Fees on DOH Website

Website Link https://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/rates/mental_hygiene/

DOH AND OPWDD RATE REGIONS

DOH Rate Regions

Region 1 (Downstate)

Five boroughs of NYC, Nassau, Suffolk, Westchester counties

Region 2 (Hudson Valley)

Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster counties

Region 3 (Upstate Metro)

Albany, Erie, Fulton, Genesee, Madison, Monroe, Montgomery, Niagara, Onondaga, Orleans, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Warren, Washington, Wyoming counties

Region 4 (Rest of State)

All Remaining Counties

OPWDD Geographic Regions

Region 1

Five boroughs of NYC

Region 2

Nassau, Suffolk, Putnam, Rockland, Westchester counties

Region 3

All Remaining Counties



Attachment 5: Supported Employment Quarterly Status Report

Summary of changes:

- SEMP Quarterly Reports were always required and are now in Regulation/ADM.
- OPWDD is developing a new web-based application, the Employment Tracking System (SEMP ETS), to collect SEMP Quarterly Reports.
- SEMP ETS will replace the existing Excel SEMP Quarterly Reports.



Managing and Planning SEMP Services



What Makes Work Meaningful?

Boston Consulting Group which surveyed over 200,000 people around the world found that the #1 factor for employee happiness on the job is to be appreciated for their work!

The top 10 factors are:

- Appreciation for your work
- **Good relationships with colleagues**
- Good work-life balance
- **Good relationships with superiors**
- Company's financial stability
- **Learning and career development**
- Job security
- Attractive fixed salary
- Interesting job content
- Company values



<https://www.forbes.com/sites/jacobmorgan/2014/12/15/the-top-10-factors-for-on-the-job-employee-happiness/?sh=1e2d64fa5afa>



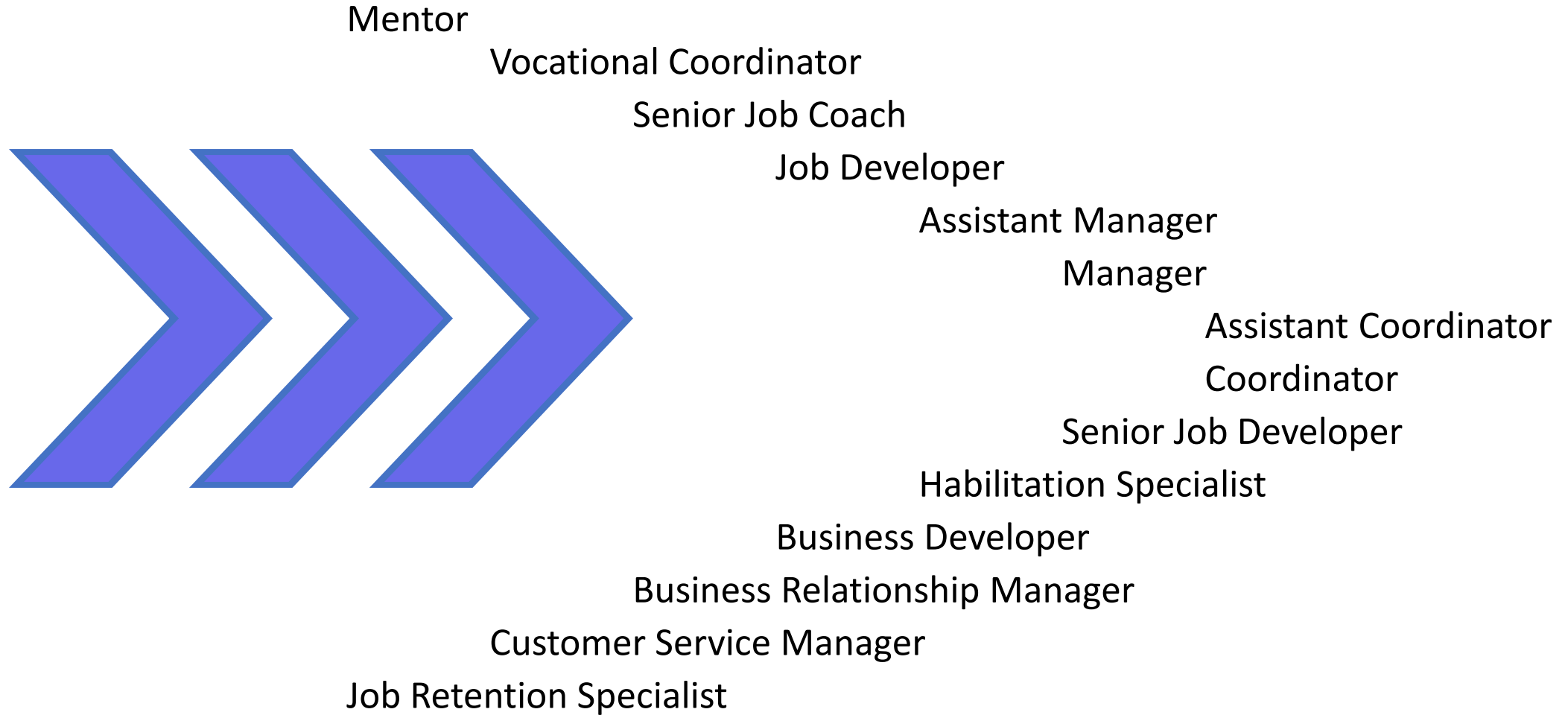
Association of People Supporting Employment First's Universal Employment Competencies

These universal employment competencies represent the skills and standards of practice for providers of supported, customized and self-employment services for ALL people with disabilities.


- Assessment and Career Planning
- Marketing and Job Development
- Job Acquisition
- Job Analysis
- Worker Orientation
- Workplace Supports
- Adapting the Job Site
- Professionalism on the Job
- Retention
- Ongoing Supports
- Managing Benefits



Employee Roles to Plan and Manage Services



Higher Level Allowable SEMP Services That Can Increase Quality Outcomes



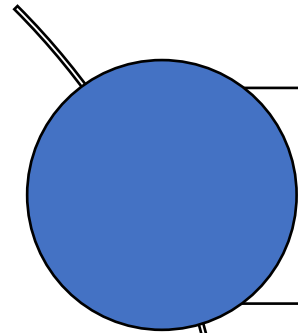
(iii) job development, analysis, customization, and carving, including negotiating and creating potential jobs with prospective employers on behalf of an individual or group of individuals;

(vi) development and review of a business plan (for individuals who are pursuing self-employment or are self-employed);

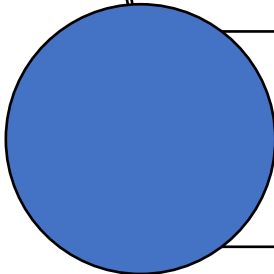
(x) benefits support, advisement, and asset development;

(xv) negotiating potential jobs with prospective employers on behalf of an individual;

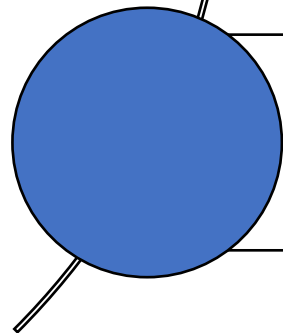
Higher Level Allowable SEMP Services That Can Increase Quality Outcomes



(xii) communication with an existing employer to review the individual's progress in meeting workforce expectations and to discuss and address any challenges the individual may have in the work environment and career advancement services;

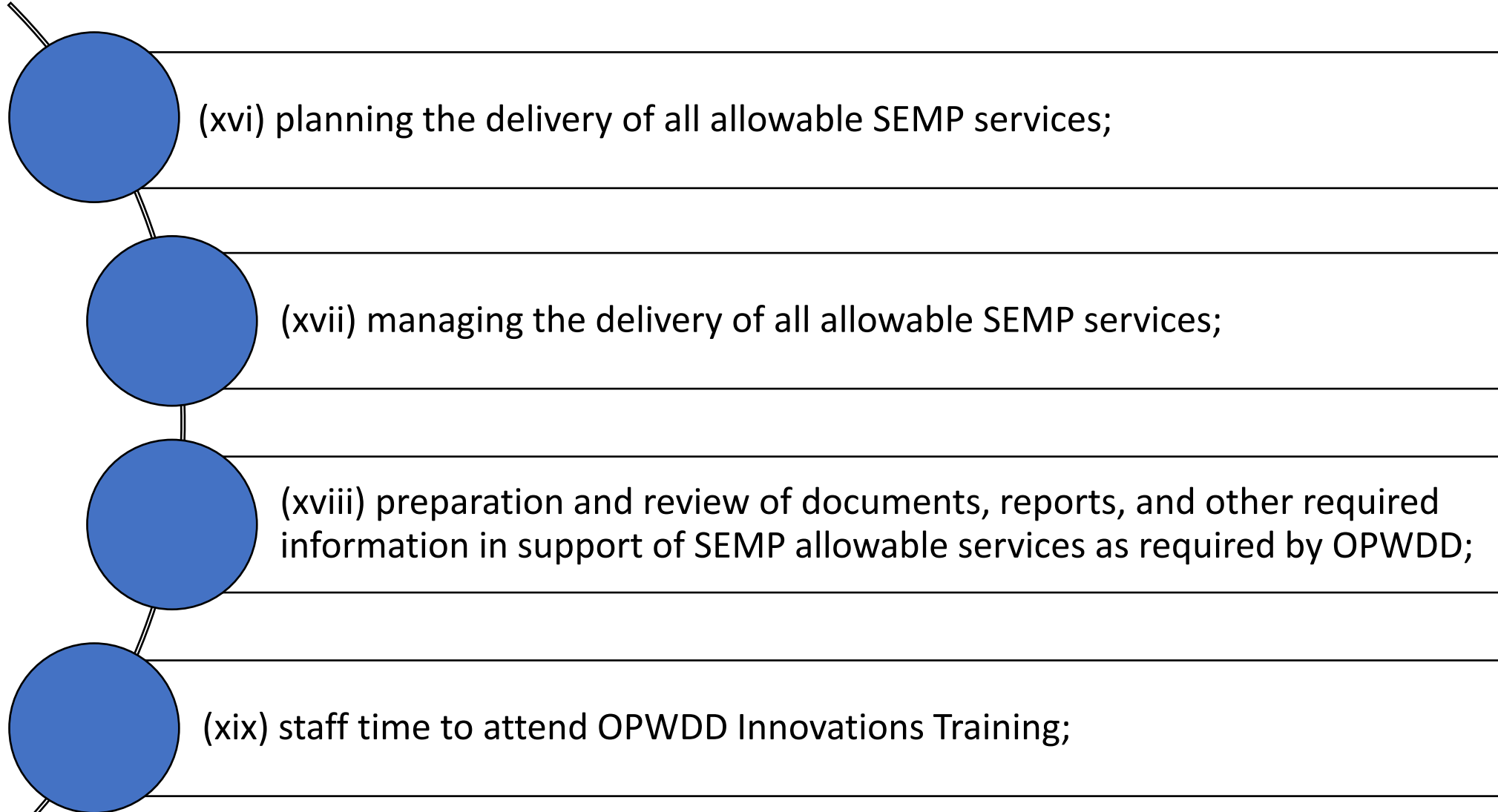


(xiii) communication with the individual, family or other members of the individual's circle of support to discuss and address employment-related issues, such as management of benefits or challenges the individual may have in the work environment;



(xiv) meetings, reports, and communication with OPWDD staff including staff regarding progress and outcomes for individuals receiving SEMP services;

Higher Level Allowable SEMP Services That Can Increase Quality Outcomes



SEMP Services Delivered With and Without the Person Present

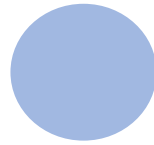
SEMP services delivered without the individual present are services delivered on behalf of an individual.

Examples of allowable SEMR services delivered without the individual present include, but are not limited to:

- discussions with families about benefits planning;
- meeting with employers and potential businesses about hiring an individual;
- developing the SEMR Staff Action Plan;
- documenting the delivery of SEMR services; or
- traveling to a job site to provide an allowable SEMR service.



SEMP Services Delivered With and Without the Person Present



SEMP services delivered without the individual present may be delivered and billed for while an individual receives another SEMP service or other OPWDD Waiver service.

This is not considered double billing because the individual is receiving two separate services

Two direct services are not being delivered at the same time.



Managing Services Functions

Roles	May be a billable services if a specific to a person(s)?	Not a billable service
Intake and Recruitment		X- Not Enrolled
Scheduling Staff	X- Planning Services	
Analyzing Program Data		X
Reviewing and Editing Staff Action Plans and Monthly Summaries	X- Documentation or Planning Services	
Trouble Shooting with Staff	X- Managing Services	
Communication with Person and Support Team	X	
Communication with Business	X	
Marketing & Business Relations	X- If Specific to Person or Group	X- If not Specific



STRONG ROOTS

PRODUCE

Clear communication

Clear goals

Support

Focus on team

Strategic Vision

Demonstrate Integrity

Show Recognition

Good Example

Inspire

Provide stimulating work

BEAUTIFUL LEAVES



Management Skills for SEMP Leaders:

This 6 hour class will explore types of data that managers should be collecting to inform programmatic decision-making and manager responsibilities to ensure compliance.

Hiring and Onboarding Skills for SEMP Leaders:

This 3 hour course will examine the hiring and onboarding process, which can seem like a never ending activity during these difficult days.

Supervision Skills for SEMP Leaders:

This 3 hour course will explore strategies that support employees beyond onboarding to mastery of job function.



Innovations – Management Series [Attendees must hold, or be pending, a leadership position to register for classes in this series]

<https://eleversity.org>



PLANNING AND MANAGEING SERVICES

POLL QUESTIONS




Career Specific Vocational Training Updates

Career Specific Vocational Training (CSVTV)

- CSVTV Project design completed in March 2023 and projects commenced in April 2023.
- The combination of CSVTV developed and delivered through the grant and community vocational experiences funded through the HCBS Waiver is intended to:
 - Increase the marketable skills of people enrolled in HCBS Waiver services
 - Provide job-specific skill training
 - Increase the number of people with developmental disabilities in competitive integrated employment



CSV T Candidate Selection Priorities

 Classes are targeted for people who are projected to start job development immediately following completion of the class.

- **Priorities:**

- Already enrolled in SEMP
- Unemployed
- Stated career interest in the specific CSV T program
- Completed Discovery
- Written career and vocational plan
- Enrolled in CBPV or Pathway to Employment

- **Other Candidates:**

- People working in group employment
- Students leaving high school
- Identify people who may live within the region but not near the current class location

Career Specific Vocational Training (CSVV)

- People participate in industry-specific vocational skill training classes for up to 5 months no more than 75 hours. Classes may be offered in various locations over the next 3 years.
- Classes are targeted for people who are projected to start job development immediately following the class completion.
- Referring agencies provide community vocational experiences through CBPV, Pathway to Employment or ETP at the same time people are participating in the classes.
- After class completion, students are fast-tracked to the referring agency's Employment Training Program (ETP) which offers paid internships that lead to jobs.
- Required documentation is streamlined to allow for quick movement through the process.



CSVT Project Overview

Region	Training Topic(s)	Lead Agency	OPWDD Liaison
1	Hospitality	Community Services for Every1	Lynne Thibdeau
2	Janitorial	Access CNY	Kristine Snyder
	Food Service	Upstate Caring Partners (UCP)	
3	Hospitality	Access: Supports for Living	Bryan Bischoff
	Retail	Jawonio	
4	Janitorial	AHRC NYC	Lynne Thibdeau
5	Office Skills Custodial	FREE	Julia Kelly



CSVT Lead Agency Contacts

Lead Agency	Name	Email
Community Services for Every1 www.csevery1.com	Michelle Zangerle Arnecia Delk	Mzangerle@csevery1.com ADelk@csevery1.com
Access CNY www.accesscny.org	Russ Gentile Erin Leahey	Russ.Gentile@accesscny.org Erin.Leahey@accesscny.org
Upstate Caring Partners (UCP) www.upstatecp.org	Dawn Gentile	Dawn.Gentile@upstatecp.org
Access: Supports for Living www.accesssupports.org	Evelyn Cintron Ashleigh Vandermeulen	ECintron@asfl.org avandermeulen@asfl.org
Jawonio www.jawonio.org	Stacey Kantrowitz Courtney Burnham	Stacey.Kantrowitz@jawonio.org Courtney.Burnham@jawonio.org
AHRC NYC www.ahrcnyc.org	Francklin Morose Edie Weber	Francklin.Morose@ahrcnyc.org Edie.Weber@ahrcnyc.org
FREE www.familyres.org	Nicole Wolf John Gallagher	NWolf@familyres.org Jgallagher@familyres.org



Other Employment and Day Services Updates



Changing Business Models that Offer the Full Array of Services to Build Careers

- OPWDD is working with provider agencies to offer the full array of employment and vocational services to everyone interested in obtaining employment.
- People with access to the full array of employment and vocational services may utilize the combination of services needed to help them enter the workforce and advance their careers.
- Training and technical assistance for agencies adding, implementing or redesigning their services to develop models that are sustainable and prepare people for employment and careers.



SEMP Employment Tracking System (ETS) Updates

- Late 2023
 - UARs were due December 15, 2023. These have been submitted to ITS and bulk uploading is complete.
- 2024
 - UARs will be submitted independently by providers moving forward.
 - Begin entering and updating data.
 - A formal training will be made available.
 - System will launch.
- Reminder...
 - Continue to submit Excel reports and update your data until new system launches.
 - October-December 2023 Excel report was due January 15, 2024.



Benefits of Community Based Prevocational Services

Community Based Prevocational (CBPV) services can help build interpersonal skills, teach workplace policies, and increase work experiences needed to be successful in employment and build careers. CBPV programs can prepare people for employment and provide auxiliary supports for people working to retain their job and build a career.

CBPV are designed to:

Develop job-related skills and experiences for people new to employment

Bridge day services to employment

Enhance job-related skills such customer service, time management, stress management, etc.

Build a career ladder by developing a career plan, learning new skills, and participating in new vocational experiences that lead to a person's preferred career goal

Address targeted job-related skills and experiences for people struggling with job retention



Day Habilitation Initiatives

- Transition from site-based to without walls programs
- Staff training (OPWDD curriculum in development)
- Designing programs in collaboration with the Regional Field Office that support an array of services
 - Movement and in support of employment
 - Supporting retirement (New: In-Residence CH-R)
- Expanding or redesigning services
- Contact: day.community.services@opwdd.ny.gov



Increasing Engagement with NYS Businesses



OPWDD is expanding upon the initiatives of the Employment First Commission, which consisted of several state agencies and stakeholder representatives to make competitive, integrated employment the first option when considering supports and services for people with disabilities.



The EmployAbility Toolkit and EmployAbility Pledge created by the Employment First Commission are both located on OPWDD's website, in addition to information and resources designed to make it easier for employers to expand their workforce and effectively incorporate diversity, equity and inclusion into their policies and hiring practices.



To date, over 150 businesses and organizations have pledged to embrace a philosophy of inclusivity by declaring:

“We support the employment of qualified individuals with disabilities and seek to provide customers and patrons of our business/organization with an environment that meets their needs for accessibility in structure, communication and interaction with our staff. We encourage other businesses and organizations to join us in taking this pledge and are proud to join NY State in creating communities that seek to include individuals with all abilities.”

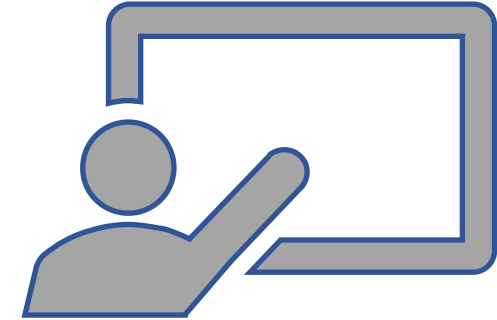
The EmployAbility

Pledge



EmployAbility Trainings

- Assembly Member Chris Burdick and Senator John Mannion proposed legislation that Governor Hochul signed the legislation into law in 2022 for OPWDD and partners to establish a training for businesses about the benefits of hiring people with disabilities.
- OPWDD partnered with Adult Career & Continuing Education Services – Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR) and New York State Industries for the Disabled, Inc. (NYSID) to develop and deliver these trainings.



September/October 2023 –
145 employers have attended live,
virtual trainings that addressed:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Benefits of hiring people with disabilities• Strategies to hire and support employees with disabilities• Reasonable accommodations | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Website accessibility• Workplace Inclusion• Disability sensitivity• Supply Chain Diversity |
|--|---|



EmployAbility Next Steps

OPWDD and its partners are developing a self-directed training and a 2024 marketing plan for expanding the reach of the new training.



Employers can find information on resources on OPWDD's website, here:
www.opwdd.ny.gov/community-involvement/about-employability

EmployAbility
Toolkit

EmployAbility
Pledge and
Honor Roll

Top 5 Reasons
to Employ
Ability

The Business
Case for
Inclusive
Hiring

Financial
Incentive and
Tax Credits

Improve your
Inclusivity

How to Find
Qualified
Workers

EmployAbility
Handbook

EmployAbility
Success
Stories



National Expansion of Employment Opportunities Network (NEON)

- March 2023 - OPWDD announced it is participating in a new cross-agency technical assistance opportunity support of competitive integrated employment for people with disabilities.
- The multi-agency group has drafted a set of Employment First principles intended to prioritize employment services for people with disabilities and increase employment rates statewide.
- Future work will include developing a cross systems resource/service matrix and updates to OPWDD's Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with state agency partners.



Innovations Updates



Questions

Web:

- www.opwdd.ny.gov

Sign up to receive updates and information from OPWDD:

- www.opwdd.ny.gov/form/email-sign-up

Technical Assistance Emails:

- EmployAbility@opwdd.ny.gov (for businesses)
- employment.vocational.services@opwdd.ny.gov
- day.community.services@opwdd.ny.gov



Contacts

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Kristine Snyder, LMSW

Statewide Employment and Vocational Services Coordinator

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PLEASE SIGN OUT

THANK
YOU!



info@Eleversity.org



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www.Eleversity.org

