

# Agreement Letter

## OPWDD and ACCES-VR

### *For Pathway to Employment, Employment Training Program (ETP) and Prevocational Services*

This letter establishes an agreement between the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) and the New York State Education Department Office of Adult Career and Continuing Education Services (ACCES-VR), collectively the parties. The parties are in agreement that OPWDD eligible individuals participating in Pathway to Employment, Employment Training Program (ETP) or Prevocational Services are better served by OPWDD, at this time, rather than intensive ACCES-VR supported employment or other vocational rehabilitation services.

The parties understand that there are OPWDD individuals receiving Pathway to Employment, Employment Training Program or Prevocational Services who need extreme levels of support to engage in work activity. Most individuals participating in Pathway to Employment, Employment Training Program or Prevocational Services are OPWDD eligible individuals who have very limited employment and vocational experiences and are in need of exposure to community volunteer or work experiences, extensive career planning services, and work readiness classes. Traditionally, these individuals have been enrolled in other OPWDD programs such as day habilitation which have precluded individuals from participating in employment services.

Based on a review of specific program characteristics and the program needs of the individuals who will be participating in Pathway to Employment, Employment Training Program or Prevocational Services, ACCES-VR has determined, and the parties agree with the use of the following criteria in order to distinguish between individuals to be served by Pathway to Employment, Employment Training Program or Prevocational Services and those who will be served by ACCES-VR:

- Pathway to Employment, Employment Training Program or Prevocational Services will provide services to OPWDD eligible individuals who have expressed an interest in employment but who are limited to working for short periods of time.
- Pathway to Employment, Employment Training Program or Prevocational Services will provide services to individuals who, due to their support needs, will require a highly intensive set of program, behavioral, transportation and/or other supports that exceed what is suitable through ACCES-VR intensive supported employment.
- Pathway to Employment, Employment Training Program or Prevocational Services participants will require a longer period of program, behavioral and/or other supports to develop their work capacity before it can be determined that the individuals are able to achieve employment.

As determined by OPWDD, individuals meeting these descriptions may be considered for enrollment in Pathway to Employment, Employment Training Program or Prevocational Services without first utilizing services provided by ACCES-VR.

The parties agree that OPWDD will work with providers to assure that any individual participating in Pathway to Employment, Employment Training Program or Prevocational Services is encouraged and/or assisted to apply for ACCES-VR services when it is indicated that the individual's circumstances are no longer in alignment with the criteria set forth above. ACCES-VR services may be used to assist the individual achieve an integrated employment outcome.

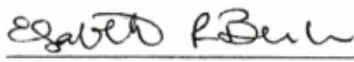
The parties agree that upon enrollment in Pathway to Employment and receipt of 200 hours of pre-employment service, the service provider will complete the appropriate sections of the ACCES-VR Review form and the OPWDD Discovery Report, including a preliminary vocational plan. ACCES-VR designated staff will review the OPWDD Discovery Report, including the preliminary vocational plan, and complete the response section on the ACCES-VR Review form. The completed review form and appropriate feedback will be returned to the provider. Such feedback may include comments on the preliminary vocational plan.

ACCES-VR will work closely with the OPWDD to assure that any individuals who participate in Pathway to Employment, Employment Training Program or Prevocational Services can apply for and participate in vocational rehabilitation services provided through ACCES-VR when it is intended that those vocational rehabilitation services will enable the individual to pursue an integrated employment outcome as defined in Title I of the Rehabilitation Act and by its implementing regulations.

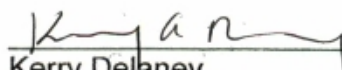
To ensure that individuals with the most significant disabilities are offered supported employment services when appropriate, the parties will review this agreement annually.

This agreement becomes effective immediately upon the signatures of the parties. This agreement does not replace other State agency agreements which are in effect. It simply clarifies and extends collaborative efforts between the agencies in regard to supported employment initiatives.

This agreement is subject to modification at the request of either party. Such modifications will be mutually agreed upon and become effective immediately upon the signatures of the parties.

  
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Elizabeth Berlin  
Executive Deputy Commissioner  
State Education Department

11/26/14  
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Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kerry Delaney  
Acting Commissioner  
Office for People with Developmental Disabilities

12/8/14  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date