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April 25, 2018

Re: CHOICES Daily Life and Employment Services

Dear CHOICES Participants, Families and Advocates,

The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) wants you to be aware of some changes to Day, Prevocational, and Supported Employment services that will be effective June 1, 2018. These changes are requirements from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and are included in the DDD's request to renew the CHOICES program.

The DDD believes that work is a fundamental part of adult life for people with and without disabilities. It provides a sense of purpose, shaping who we are and how we fit into our community. Meaningful work has also been associated with positive physical and mental health benefits and is a part of building a healthy lifestyle as a contributing member of society.

The following is a brief description of the changes:

Supported Employment

Supported employment is now two separate services: Individual and Group Supported Employment.

Individual Supported Employment

Individual Supported Employment services are supports for participants to obtain and maintain an individual job in integrated competitive employment, customized employment, or self-employment. Services include job coaching, job support, retention, and follow along. Participants may access Individual Supported Employment regardless of whether Pre-Employment services have been previously accessed.

Using Individual Supported Employment, a participant may go through different phases, Discovery, Job Development, Stabilization and Career Advancement and Long-Term Support and Job Coaching, to help him/her be successful in gaining and maintaining competitive employment.

A participant must be compensated at or above minimum wage, if working, to receive Individual Supported Employment services.

Group Supported Employment

Group Supported Employment services and training activities are provided in regular business, industry and community settings. The outcome of this service is sustained paid work experience to further career development and individual integrated community-based employment.

Participants receiving Group Supported Employment services must have an outcome for competitive, integrated employment included in their person-centered Individualized Service Plan (ISP).

Providers shall ensure all groups working in integrated environments have no more than eight (8) participants per employment setting at a time.

Career Exploration (formerly Prevocational)

Career Exploration focuses on the development of competitive worker traits using trial-work as the primary training method and teaches the understanding of the expectations of a competitive work environment, workplace problem solving skills and strategies, and general workplace safety and mobility training.

Services are designed to assist participants in identifying and developing skills that prepare them for integrated competitive jobs and compensation at or above minimum wage, but not less than customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for similar work performed by employees without disabilities.

Career Exploration must be authorized by the DDD, is time limited and can be extended if recommended by the participant's ISP team and approved by the DDD. This service is not a prerequisite to other integrated employment service options and can be provided in conjunction with other non-residential waiver services.

Day Services

Day Services are intended to assist the person to gain opportunities for meaningful life experiences in coordination with the person's personal goals and supports and agreed upon by the ISP team.

Individuals in this service may not be paid a wage for activities in which they participate as per the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

Informational Sessions

The Division of Developmental Disabilities will hold in-person sessions for CHOICES participants, their families and their advocates on May 15, 2018 in Rapid City at the Best Western Ramkota and May 24, 2018 in Sioux Falls at the Best Western Ramkota. These informational sessions will take place from 6:30pm – 8:00pm, local time.

If you have questions, please contact your case manager or Katie Tostenson, DDD Community Life Engagement and Employment Manager, at Katherine.tostenson@state.sd.us or 605-773-3438.

Sincerely,

Darryl Millner

Darryl Millner, Director
Division of Developmental Disabilities

CC: DHS Executive Management
DHS Director of Special Projects
DDD Staff