

# Overview of Supported Employment

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# Competitive Employment - What is it?

**Competitive Employment** is work that is performed on either a full- or part-time basis in which individuals are compensated for their work in an integrated setting. The compensation paid must be at or above the set minimum wage, but not less than the wages paid to individuals who are not disabled who perform the same or similar work.

There are other types of employment such as sheltered or enclave but individuals working in these arrangements are not able to access the same services as those who work competitively.

# Benefits of working competitively

- Self determination and choice in employment
- Independence through earning of own income
- Increased self worth and higher self esteem
- Opportunities gained from being in the community
- Potential to earn more than SSD/SSDI benefit checks alone can provide while maintaining Medicaid
- Learn new skills, both technical and social
- Potential for personal growth when leaving “comfort zone”
- Gained sense of belonging and being a part of something larger than one’s self

Essentially, an improved...



**Quality of Life!**

# New Jersey is an “Employment First” State

This initiative:

- Presumes that people with disabilities can, and should work
- Creates the expectation the people with disabilities, like everyone else, will need to “opt out” of employment rather than “opt in”
- Guides policy and resources related to the employment of persons who live with disabilities
- Helps to define the primary service that individuals living with disabilities utilize when obtaining and maintaining competitive employment - **Supported Employment**

# Supported Employment - What is it?

While it differs slightly between funding sources, Supported Employment assists individuals in obtaining competitive employment in an integrated setting, or employment in which individuals are working toward competitive employment, consistent with the skills, interests and preferences of the individuals with ongoing support services that include:

**Assessments - Job Development - Job Sampling - Job Coaching - Customized Employment - Long-Term Support**

# Supported Employment Major Services

**Job Development** - Assistance looking for work through application development, resume/cover letter development, interview preparation and contact with employers both with and on behalf of the participant.

**Job Coaching** - Assistance learning tasks and workplace adjustment. Counseling on inherent challenges of work and assistance developing communication between participant and employer.

# Supported Employment - What it is not

Supported Employment is considered to be a vocational/educational service as defined by the funders who pay for it. 100% staff presence is not possible for the long term. It is not the only service that can be provided at a paid job. If you have these needs, a different service than Supported Employment may be appropriate.

- **Community Based Supports** - Assist with interactions, task prompting
- **Behavioral Supports** - Address behaviors *in case* they occur
- **Personal Aide Services** - Safety monitoring, transitioning, medication

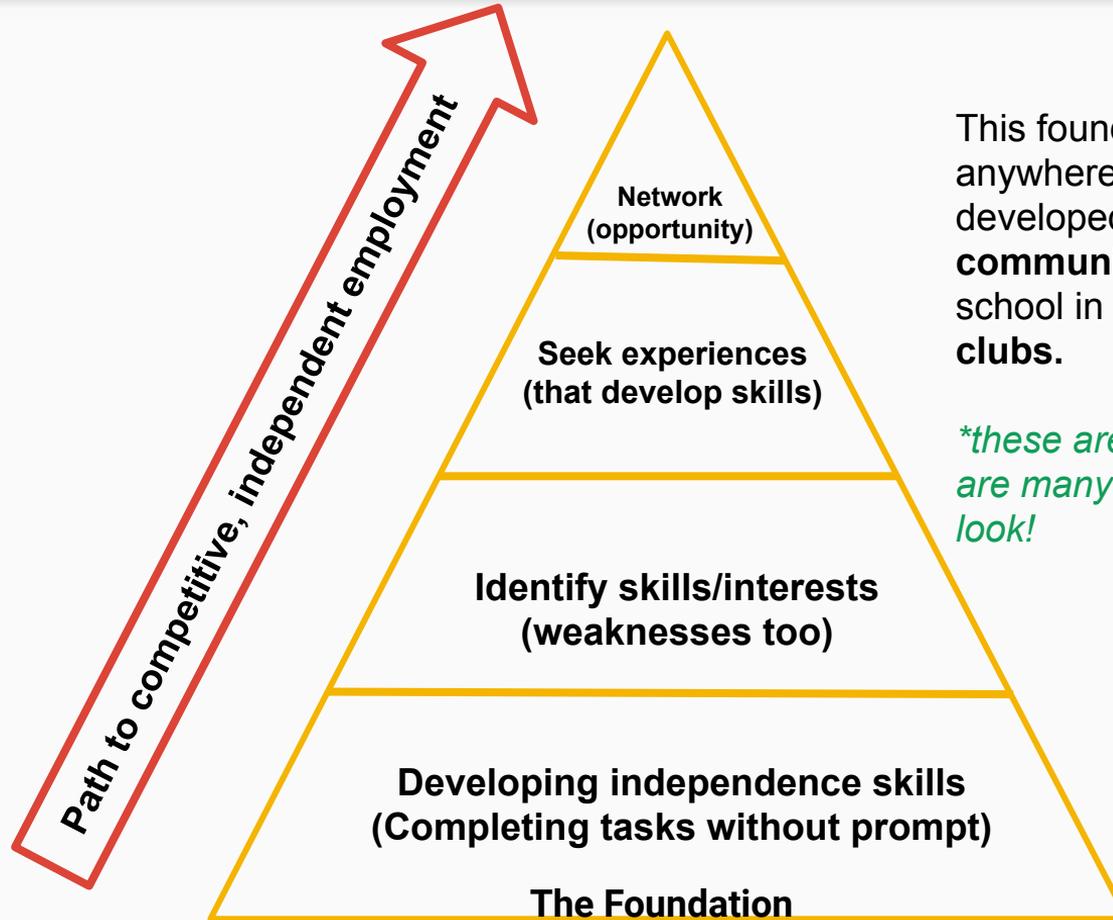
# How to prepare

To get the most out of Supported Employment, there are things you can do to improve the chances of finding a great job that you love and be successful using the supports that are available. Supported Employment is designed to fade away, so moving towards independence is key!

By building a good foundation from which to start looking for work, you will have better luck finding and keeping a job you enjoy.

(Also, remember, your first job is rarely your last, everyone starts somewhere!)

# Where to start? - Building the Foundation Before Looking For Work



This foundation can be worked on anywhere at any time. Skills can be developed at **home**, in the **community** or at **school** and after school in sports **teams and/or clubs**.

*\*these are just a place to start, there are many other opportunities, just look!*

# The Foundation - What to do at home...

**Who?** - You. Participate in household activities independently - without prompt!

**What?** - Setting table, meal prep, trash, sweeping, laundry, dishes or mail, or any other skill

**Where?** - Anywhere, anytime! The key is developing independence

**Why?** - Independence skills, priority management, responsibility and following instructions

# The Foundation - What to do in community...

**Who?** - Persons you know (or are known by) in the community

**What?** - Attending community events and/or volunteering

**Where?** - Recreation department, animal shelter, food bank, fire house, police station, first aid squad, businesses, seasonal activities, and the library

**Why?** - Build network, have relationships, become aware of resources, interact with community and develop choice making skills

# The Foundation - Community, continued...

**Who?** - Teammates, coaches, instructors

**What?** - Sports, lessons, classes, gyms, outdoors

**Where?** - School, recreation departments, fitness centers, neighborhood

**Why?** - Teamwork, listening skills, communication, problem solving, decision making, goal setting, time management

# Remember...

What makes you a good...

**Friend**

**Athlete**

**Community  
Member**

**Teammate**

**Student**

**Volunteer**

Makes you a GREAT employee!

# Who can help? - State Agencies (Funders)

## **Vocational Services Only (Supported Employment)**

- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS)
- Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI)

## **Full Spectrum of Life Services (Including Supported Employment)**

- Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)

# The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS)



A state run agency that provides vocational services for individuals who qualify and possess, "...any physical or mental impairment that is a substantial impediment to employment..." Services are arranged/approved by a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. Services can include:

**Vocational Counseling - Placement Services - On-the-job Training - Supported Employment - Community Based Work Evaluation - Job Seeking Skills - Job Accommodations - Skills Training - College Training - Physical/Emotional Restoration - Mobility Equipment - Driver Training - Vehicle/Home Modification**

# The Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI)

Technically a “sister” agency of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services. Services are similar, but geared to serve individuals who live with visual impairments. Besides the services offered in the last slide, the Commission can provide:

**Assistive Technology Support for school or work - Computer Training - Business Enterprise Programs - Joseph Kohn Training Center**

# The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)



The **Division of Developmental Disabilities** provides public funding for services and supports that assist New Jersey adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities age 21 and older to live as independently as possible. Services and supports are available in the community from independent providers, and in five state-run developmental centers. Participants must qualify for Medicaid and meet **DDD's** eligibility criteria.

\*Before using **DDD** to pay for Supported Employment, you must reach out to **DVRS** see if you qualify first! **DVRS is the primary funder** for initial supports and **DDD is the secondary funder.**

# Who Provides Services?

The actual Supported Employment service is provided by different agencies around the State and paid for by “**funders.**” The funder approves the agencies and the participant is able to choose which agency is best for them.

**DVRS/CBVI** - Vocational Counselors can approve services for the selected agency and authorize **Vouchers** for specific services

**DDD** - The Support Coordinator writes the participant selected agency into the **Service Plan** and defines the desired outcomes.

# Supported Employment - Primary and Secondary Funders

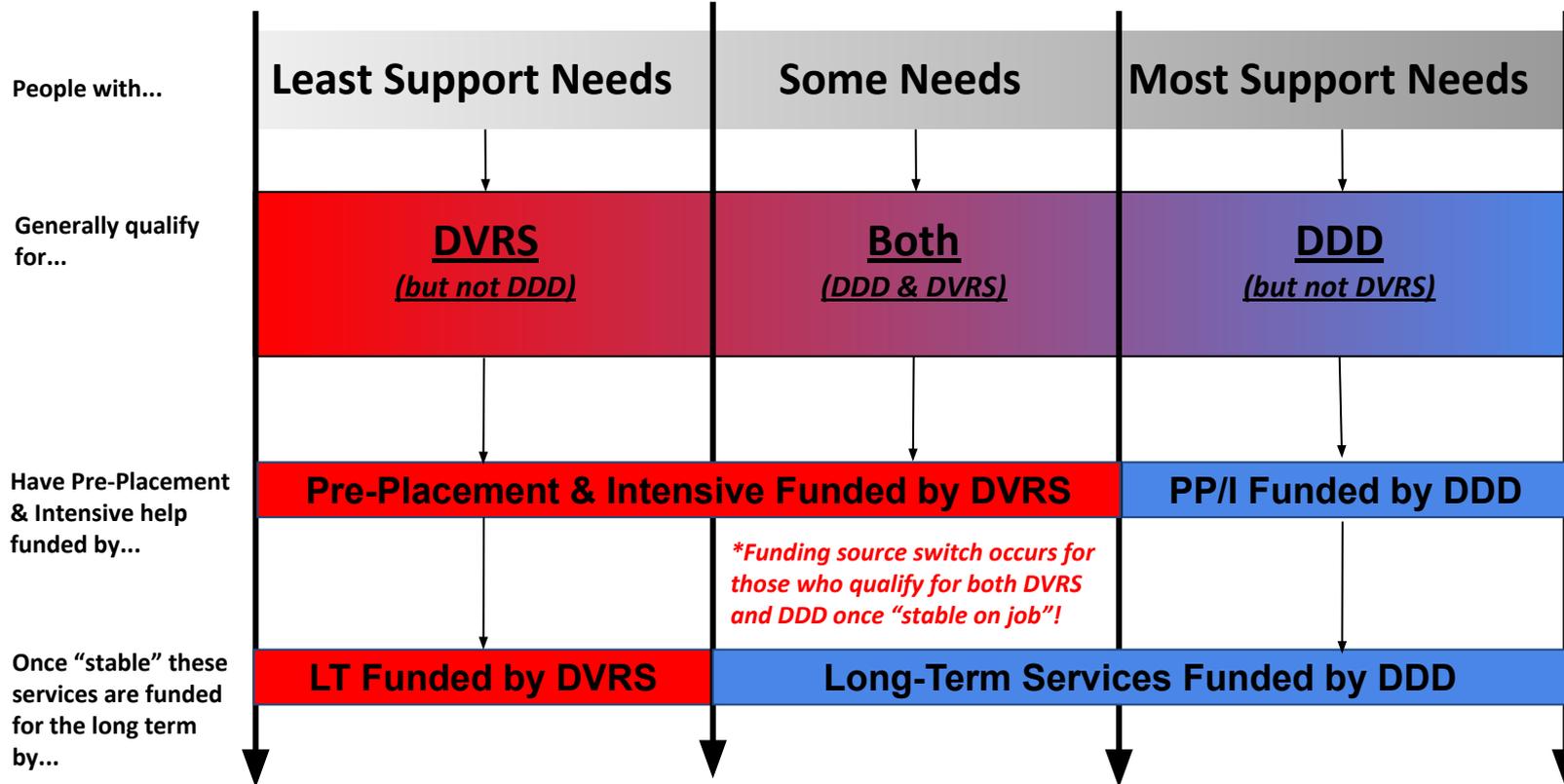
Since both DVRS and DDD provide Supported Employment the agencies have an MOU that states:

The “**primary**” provider of Supported Employment services is the **Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services**. In most cases, this agency funds the initial Supported Employment services such as looking for work and temporary increased support during the first days of hire at a new position.

The “**secondary**” provider is the **Division of Developmental Disabilities** (when applicable) and traditionally covers long term support.

**\*Not everyone who qualifies for DVRS qualifies for DDD (and vice versa) and some people qualify for both!**

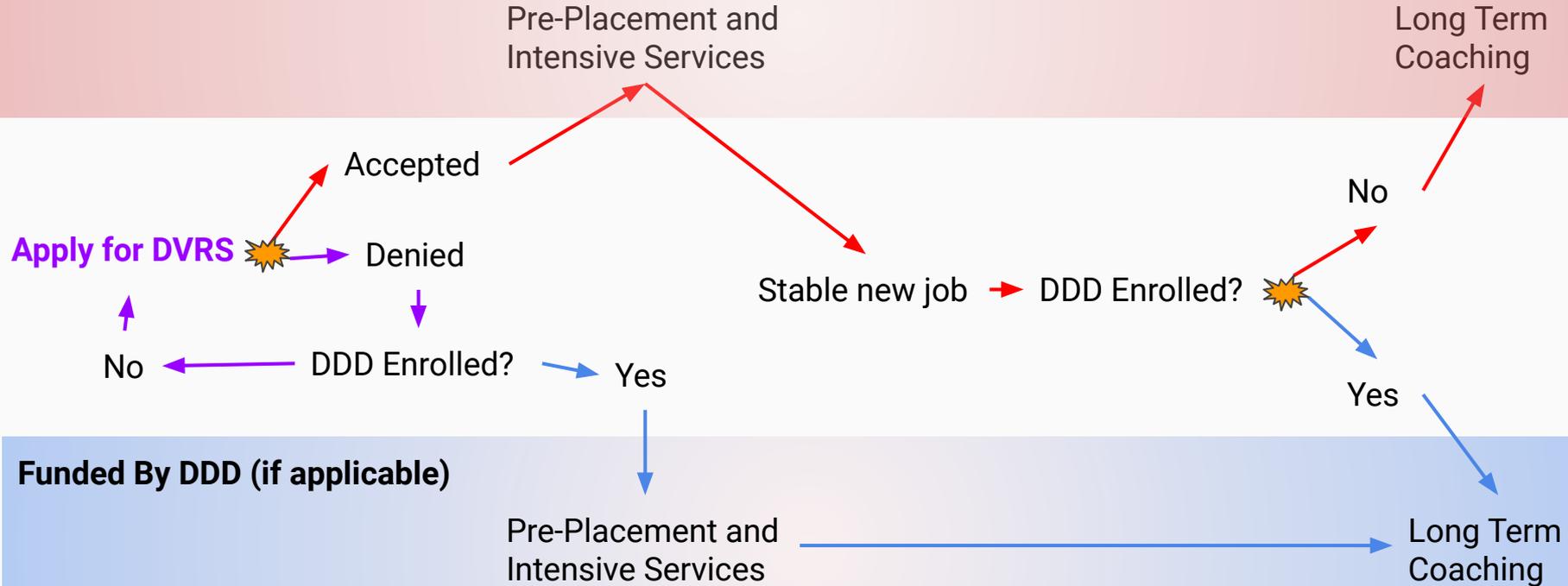
# DVRS and/or DDD Who Funds Services?



*\*"Stability" is determined by DVRS Vocational Counselor, generally before 90 days of employment*

# Supported Employment Service Overview Flow Chart

## Funded By DVRS



# The Arc of New Jersey's Project HIRE

The Arc of New Jersey is a Medicaid certified and CARF accredited provider of Supported Employment services that works with DVRS, CBVI and DDD to provide:



- Job Development
  - Application Assistance
  - Employment Seeking Skills Development
  - Contacting Local Businesses
  - Resume and Cover Letter Development
- Job Coaching
  - On the job training assistance
  - Development of “natural support”
  - Career coaching
  - Reasonable accommodations

Talk with your DVRS/CBVI Counselor or DDD Support Coordinator regarding your interest in Project HIRE. Referrals can be sent to - **Adam Kubler** - [akubler@projecthire.biz](mailto:akubler@projecthire.biz) - (732) 246-7605

# SSI, Medicaid and other benefits...

**If you are working, you will be able to earn significantly more income than an SSI check can provide!**

New Jersey also has one of the **BEST** Medicaid “buy-in” programs in the country, WorkAbility. Through WorkAbility, Individuals can earn up to **\$60,000 annually** and maintain less than **\$20,000 in assets** (not including a primary residence or vehicle)

**Free SSI/SSDI and Medicaid Benefits Counselors**

**NJWINS.ORG**

# Where do I start?

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services  
Online Referral:

<https://careerconnections.nj.gov/>

Or refer yourself directly at...

[https://careerconnections.nj.gov/careerconnections/plan/foryou/disable/vocational\\_rehabilitation\\_services.shtml](https://careerconnections.nj.gov/careerconnections/plan/foryou/disable/vocational_rehabilitation_services.shtml)

1. Complete online or paper referral
2. You will be contacted by local DVRS office and given instructions on application
3. Apply, and once case is opened...
4. Ask your Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor about **“Supported Employment”**
5. If approved, you may choose an agency and the authorization is sent

# What if I am enrolled in DDD?

Even if you qualify for DDD, you must apply for DVRS services if you are interested in Supported Employment. Once you apply, one of 2 things can occur:

1. Accepted/Receive SE Services
2. Denied/Given “F3 Form”

## **F3 Form**

This form proves you attempted to get services from DVRS but were denied. If your DDD Support Coordinator uploads this form to the DDD system, you will be able to use your own DDD budget for Supported Employment Services.

You may choose an agency with your Support Coordinator

# What about “Long Term” Supports?

## Enrolled in DVRS Only

If you are only eligible for DVRS and not DDD, your Vocational Counselor can approve Long Term Follow-Along (LTFA)

So long as you maintain your current job you could receive **3 hours per month** of Job Coaching Supports from DVRS.

## Enrolled in DDD Only or Both DDD/DVRS

If you are enrolled in DDD, your long term supports, once stable, are funded by your DDD budget. **(You will leave DVRS if enrolled, exact monthly hours vary by needs/budget availability)**

*\*If using DVRS for pre-placement/intensive services, It is advisable to choose an agency that is both DVRS and DDD approved to provide Supported Employment to ensure consistency.*



# Resources

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Website</b>
The Arc of New Jersey	<a href="http://arcnj.org">arcnj.org</a>
The Arc Family Institute	<a href="http://thearcfamilyinstitute.org">thearcfamilyinstitute.org</a>
Division of Developmental Disabilities	<a href="http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ddd/home/index.html">http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ddd/home/index.html</a>
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services	<a href="http://careerconnections.nj.gov/careerconnections/plan/foryou/disable/vocational_rehabilitation_services.shtml">http://careerconnections.nj.gov/careerconnections/plan/foryou/disable/vocational_rehabilitation_services.shtml</a>
Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired	<a href="http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/cbvi/home/index.html">http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/cbvi/home/index.html</a>
NJ Work Incentives Network Support	<a href="http://njwins.org">njwins.org</a>
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network, Inc.	<a href="http://spanadvocacy.org">spanadvocacy.org</a>