

Memorandum

To: Individual Placement and Support (IPS) Supported Employment Programs

From: Angella James Evidence-Based Practice Coordinator

Date: Dec 16, 2024

Subject: Clarification & Technical Assistance Updates (Fidelity and Policy) as it relates to Vocational Rehab (VR).

Dear IPS Providers;

It has come to the attention of Oregon Health Authority (OHA) that there may be some confusion and we would like to provide some clarity to ensure consistency in policy guidance.

Fidelity Clarification: The IPS fidelity scale item #3 titled “*Collaboration between Employment Specialists and Vocational Rehabilitation counselors*”¹ is intended to capture the frequency of collaborative meetings between the two local level programs². Within the Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR’s) 309-019-0275 thru 0295, for IPS Service Delivery; there is no reference that alludes to a need for IPS Programs to obtain a supplementary private contract to suffice this line item. If, at the local level, a Behavior Health licensed agency chooses to exert their autonomy and obtain a private contract; it is voluntary.

Technical Assistance Update: Upholding the integrity of the IPS model is a critical task that encompasses the fidelity model & OHA Policy decisions. This is why all IPS required trainings & expectations of implementation of the service is outlined within the IPS OAR’s; as that is the policy guidance for IPS service delivery. To promote the mindfulness of boundaries between State agencies, the training titled “*Collaboration with VR*”, delivered by Oregon Supported Employment Center of Excellence (OSECE) will no longer be offered due to the objective of VR contract compliance and it is not a policy requirement. This is to circumvent misrepresentation of a contract outside of OHA governance. OSECE-IPS does not have any oversight or training responsibilities for IPS private contracts or deliverables within their Statement of Work.

Policy Admission Clarification: OHA’s governance is designed for health care; which IPS is considered by model. It is not intended to be a standalone service and requires the Supported Employment service to be integrated into an active mental health (MH) treatment plan. This health benefit is evaluated in the “*Organization*” section of the fidelity scale¹; line item #1 & #2 titled “*Integration of rehabilitation with mental health treatment thru team assignment*” & “*Integration of Rehabilitation with Mental health Treatment thru Frequent Team Member Contact*”. Employment Specialists are not intended to set up MH treatment services as this should be in place prior to admission. Please evaluate the IPS admission process within your agency to confirm the prioritization of individuals with an active MH treatment plan.

OHA values & supports Vocational Rehabilitation’s mission and will continue to foster our solidarity as State agency regulatory offices per our duty to all Oregonians! OHA is looking forward to future collaborations and inviting Vocational Rehab Policy Unit to IPS focused platforms as guest speakers to continue fostering community networks & resources. This communication is intended for clarity purposes only! OHA has a duty to ensure we are not directly or indirectly imposing on program deliverables that are outside of our governance. For any questions or clarifications, please reach out to Angella James-Evidence Based Practice Coordinator at angella.pulkownik2@oha.oregon.gov or 503-367-6414.

¹ IPS Fidelity Scale

² IPS Fidelity Manual-Fourth Edition