



Tip Sheet: The OARs of IPS

This document reviews the Individual Placement and Support (IPS) core principles and their associated Oregon Administrative Rules (OARs) to help Oregon IPS sites understand and implement IPS core principles with high fidelity. Each principle is reviewed and includes both the definition per OAR and/national IPS standard, as well as useful fidelity tips to keep in mind for sites' annual fidelity reviews.

Here are the eight core principles of IPS:

Competitive Integrated Employment	Eligibility based on Client Choice	Integration of Rehabilitation and Mental Health Services	Attention to Worker Preferences
Work Incentive Planning	Rapid Job Search	Systematic Job Development	Time-Unlimited and Individualized Support

If you have any questions, please reach out to your assigned TA provider, or contact OSECE at info@osece-psu.org.





Competitive Integrated Employment

OAR 309-019-0275 (3)

Competitive Integrated Employment means full-time or part time work that is:

- (a) At minimum wage or higher rate that is not less than the customary rate paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by other employees;
- (b) Eligible for level of benefits provided to other employees;
- (c) Paid internships that are open to the public;
- (d) An unpaid internship that is directly tied to higher education or trade school, including work-study opportunities with colleges;
- (e) Seasonal employment that is consistent the client's targeted employment industry;
- (f) Self-employment if, an income is reported to the government and taxes are filed should income generated from self-employment meet threshold requirements

Tips for High Fidelity Application:

-  Make sure to ask employers in weekly job development what an anticipated pay range might look like for a new staff member
-  At your fidelity review documentation, make sure to include any information that will show your reviewers how a clients' jobs are competitive based on the criteria listed above (e.g., list the hourly rate of pay, note when a job is directly to higher education or trade school)






Eligibility Based on Client Choice

OAR 309-019-0275(2)(b)


Eligibility based on client choice means that every client interested in work is eligible for services regardless of symptoms, substance use history, treatment decisions, readiness factors, history of violent behavior, cognitive impairments, treatment adherence, and personal presentation.

Eligibility Based on Client Choice is also referred to as "Zero Exclusion," in which IPS Employment Specialists offer employment support to clients, regardless of the reason a previous job ended, or number of previous jobs held. If a site's local Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) partner has screening criteria, the IPS program does not adopt that criteria to exclude anyone. Clients are not screened out formally or informally.

Tips for High Fidelity Application:

-  IPS Specialists offer to help clients find with another job when one has ended, regardless of the reason for the job end
-  Mental health practitioners encourage clients to consider employ
-  Referrals for IPS are solicited by many sources

- 🎯 Eligibility based on client choice applies to the mental health practitioners and Vocational Rehabilitation partners that clients interface with in IPS services. If any IPS partner has screening criteria and/or requires a pre-vocational assessment, the IPS program should not adopt the same criteria.
- 🎯 Encouraging clients to postpone work and focus on treatment is **not** consistent with eligibility based on client choice. In the event a client is unable to work, continue to engage in follow along supports (e.g., resume development, employer contacts) so clients may reduce lead time once they are able to work



Integration of Rehabilitation and Mental Health Services

OAR 309-019-0275 (2)(c)

Integration of Rehabilitation and Mental Health Services means that employment services are integrated with mental health treatment, and mental health services need to be in place prior to clients receiving IPS services.

Tips for High Fidelity Application:

- 🎯 IPS Specialists should be attached to one or two mental health treatment teams(e.g. Adult MH, EASA, Jail Diversion), from which 90-100% of the IPS specialist's caseload is comprised
- 🎯 IPS Specialist attends weekly mental health treatment team meetings
- 🎯 IPS Specialist participates actively in treatment team meetings with shared decision making
- 🎯 Employment services documentation (e.g., vocational assessment/profile, employment plan, progress notes) is integrated into client's mental health treatment record
- 🎯 IPS specialist is in close proximity (e.g., on the same floor within the same building as their assigned mental health treatment teams)
- 🎯 IPS Specialist helps the team think about employment for clients who have not been referred to supported employment services














Attention to Worker Preferences

OAR 309-019-0275(2)(f)

Attention to Worker Preference means that IPS Employment Specialists must honor clients' employment preferences and included in the career profile. IPS Employment Specialists should routinely collect and update information in the Career Profile/Vocational Profile.

The profile is filled out with the goal of problem solving using environmental assessments and consideration of reasonable accommodations. Sources of information include: the client, treatment team, clinical records, and (with the client's permission, family members and previous employers.

Tips for High Fidelity Application:

-  Conduct initial vocational assessment over 2 or 3 sessions
-  Per OAR 309-019-0270(2), the Career Profile/Vocational Profile must include:
 -  Name of individual
 -  Address
 -  Contact information, including email and cell phone number
 -  Names of treatment teams point of contact if the individual is participating in any outpatient therapy
 -  Preference of type of work
 -  Any relevant information about current diagnosis and potential limitations in work environments
 -  Strengths and skills
 -  Historical work experiences
 -  Any career path goals



Work Incentives Planning

OAR 309-019-0275(2)(d)

Work Incentives Planning means that every client has access to work incentive planning by a certified benefits planner to obtain comprehensive, individualized work incentives planning before starting a new job and assistance about changes in work hours and pay. Work incentives planning includes SSA benefits, medical benefits, medication subsidies, housing subsidies, food stamps, spouse and dependent children benefits, past job retirement benefits, and any other source of income. Additionally, clients are provided information and assistance about reporting earnings to SSA, housing programs, VA programs, etc., depending on the client's benefits.

IPS programs may access resources such as the [Social Security Administration Red Book](#), or refer clients to agencies such as [Disability Rights Oregon \(DRO\)](#) or the [Oregon Department of Human Services \(ODHS\) Work Incentives](#) to assist with benefits planning provision.

Every benefits planner should be able to:

- ✔ Provide information about a client's total income based on part-time or full-time work
- ✔ Provide information about different sources of income such as food stamps, housing subsidies, disability benefits, and veterans benefits
- ✔ Provide information about the effect of work on a spouse's or dependent child's benefits
- ✔ Help people develop plans to exit the benefit system, if preferred
- ✔ Help people make use of the Social Security Administration's work incentives including Plans for Achieving Self Sufficiency (PASS plans) and Impairment Related Work Expenses (IRWEs)
- ✔ Provide people with individualized scenarios of how their benefits (and total income) would be affected by different levels of earnings
- ✔ Are available to help on more than one occasion (e.g., if a person has additional questions or needs to make decisions about a job)

Tips for High Fidelity Application:

- ✔ Clients are offered comprehensive, individualized benefits planning by a certified benefits planner prior to a client starting a job
- ✔ Clients are offered benefits planning when clients need to make decisions about how changes in work hours and pay may impact access to benefits
- ✔ Clients are provided information and assistance about reporting earnings to agencies such as SSA, housing programs, etc., depending on their benefits



Rapid Job Search

OAR 309-019-0275(2)(e)

Rapid job search means that initial employment assessment and first face-to-face employer contact by the client or the employment specialist about a competitive job occurs within the first 30 days after a client's enrollment in IPS services. "Face to Face" means that a personal interaction where communication between at least two person(s) can be had. This will include any interaction through telehealth services where there is secured Health Insurance Portability and Accountability (HIPAA) approved live streaming audio and video (OAR 309-019-0270(5)).

Tips for High Fidelity Application:

- ✔ There are no work readiness assessments or prevocational training required for the job search to begin
- ✔ Rapid job search is different from rapid job find: IPS Employment Specialists are not required to **find** employment for their clients within the first 30 days of program participation, only begin the **search** for a competitive job that fits clients' preferences via employer contacts.



Systematic Job Development

OAR 309-019-0270(13)

Systematic job development means that the IPS program creates an employer network based on participants' interests and develops relationships and partnerships with local employers.




IPS specialists should systematically contact employers to learn about their business needs and hiring preferences to build a robust network of potential employers. During the job search, IPS specialists may draw on their networks to reach out to specific employers based on client preferences. Outreach attempts must be regularly documented to be properly evaluated during fidelity reviews.

Key information to document during employer contacts:

- ✔ Date of contact
- ✔ Employer contact name
- ✔ Company name
- ✔ Clients considered for the job (or if contact was a general job development)
- ✔ If the employer contacted has hiring authority
- ✔ Who the contact was made by (e.g., IPS specialist alone, client alone, specialist and client together). *Note: the IPS specialist must be present for an employer contact to count under fidelity. Employer contacts made by clients alone are not included in calculating the number of employer contacts in fidelity assessment, but may be documented regardless.*

Tips for High Fidelity Application:

- ✔ Ensure that all of the information in the table above is collected and documented on a tracking form
- ✔ During the employer contact, make sure to:
 - ✔ Learn about the employer and their hiring needs
 - ✔ Explain the IPS program

-  Talk about the candidate(s) (if applicable)
-  Establish an ongoing relationship by discussing informal follow-up visits
-  Review employer contacts with the IPS supervisor on a weekly basis in supervision.
Note: review includes receiving a signature from the IPS supervisor on your tracking sheet







Time-Unlimited and Individualized Support




OAR 309-019-0275(3)(h)

Time-unlimited follow-along supports means that IPS job supports are individualized and continue for as long as each worker needs the support.

In the context of IPS Fidelity, time-unlimited follow-along supports requires Employment Specialists to make regular, face-to-face contact with clients at the following intervals:

-  Within one week before starting a job;
-  Within three days of starting a job;
-  Weekly for the first month of employment; and
-  At least monthly for a year or more after a client is working steadily

Tips for High Fidelity Application:

-  Routinely check-in with clients and discuss why regular follow-along supports are an important component of job attainment, retention, and client support
-  Regularly assess how Employment Specialists are providing follow along supports to ensure that ongoing supports are pertinent and supportive to client needs
-  Document all client outreach efforts