

Employment Services FAQs Regarding COVID-19

Provider Questions

1. Are employment service organizations essential during the pandemic?
Employment service organizations (ESOs) provide supports and services to individuals with behavioral health and developmental disabilities and as such fall under behavioral health services. To that end, when appropriate, the provider should deliver service.
2. Is it acceptable to bill non-face to face communications? I.e. video conference?
There are allowable activities under employment services that allow for job development and follow along supports that are non-face to face. An ESO should make sure that the services being delivered fall under these categories and are consistent with the individuals support plan.
3. Will hours be adjusted to increase if the provider is using some of my hours for non-face-to-face?
No, allocated hours for a week are regardless of the delivery method.
4. Is helping a person apply for unemployment an allowable activity under the Medicaid waiver?
During the emergency period, this will be an allowable activity. Please start any progress notes for this period with COVID-19
5. Currently the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) is limiting supports and services to specific, reasonable and necessary services to prevent job loss or for job training. If we have an individual who wants to continue supports and services that fall outside of what DARS is able to support, can we use their waiver?
Yes, if DARS has indicated that support is not currently available and the individual is making an informed choice to participate in employment services and supports, the ESO may submit an authorization for the waiver.

Participant questions

1. Do I have to participate in individual supported employment (ISE) if I do not feel safe during the pandemic?
No one is required to receive a service if they do not feel safe. However, individuals should make informed decisions and recognize that by not going to work, they risk losing their job.
2. Do I have to participate via video conferencing in ISE services for the number of hours in my plan each week during the pandemic?
No, a person does not need to maintain their hours through video conferencing during the pandemic. While there are some services as described above that can continue to be provided it is not expected that people will receive all the hours they are authorized for.
3. If I am participating in face-to-face services with my provider and I contract COVID-19, who is liable for this and the medical care?
If a person does not feel comfortable participating in services, they should not participate, particularly if they do not work at an essential business.
4. If my job had to close, and I applied for unemployment, is it best to continue looking for a new job with my job coach or wait until the pandemic is over?
This is an individual choice. Some job development activities can be completed via phone.