

## Supported Employment State Grants Program for Individuals with the Most Severe Disabilities (CFDA 84.187)

### I. Legislation

Rehabilitation Act of 1973, P.L. 93-112, Title VII, Part C, as amended by P.L. 102-569 and P.L. 103-73, Sections 631-638 (29 U.S.C. 795j-795q) (expires September 30, 1997).

The State Supported Employment Services Program authorizes formula grants (supplementary to grants for vocational rehabilitation services under Title I) to assist states in developing and implementing collaborative programs with appropriate public agencies and private nonprofit organizations to provide supported employment services for individuals with the most severe disabilities who require these services to enter or retain competitive employment.

### II. Funding History

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Appropriation</u>
1987	\$25,000,000
1988	25,935,000
1989	27,227,000
1990	27,630,000
1991	29,150,000
1992	31,065,000
1993	32,273,000
1994 <u>1/</u>	34,536,000
1995 <u>1/</u>	36,536,000
1996 <u>1/</u>	38,152,000

1/ A 1 percent minority outreach set-aside was deducted from the appropriation, 1994-1996.

### III. Analysis of Program Performance

#### A. Goals and Objectives

The State Supported Employment (SE) Services Program, administered through designated state units, provides services to persons with the most severe disabilities. The purpose of the program is to help such persons who may have been considered too disabled to benefit from vocational rehabilitation (VR) services to achieve competitive vocational outcomes.

## **B. Strategies to Achieve the Goals**

### **Services Supported**

Supported employment placements are achieved by augmenting short-term VR services with ongoing support provided by other public agencies, nonprofit organizations, or other appropriate entities. VR state agencies provide services for a period not to exceed 18 months, unless a longer period to achieve job stabilization has been established in the individual written rehabilitation program. Once this period has ended, the state agency must arrange for extended services provided by other appropriate state agencies, private, nonprofit organizations, or other sources including natural supports, for the duration of that employment. Decisions regarding services to be provided are based on an individualized written rehabilitation program developed by the VR counselor and the person to be served.

### **C. Program Performance—Indicators of Impact and Effectiveness**

Data for the Title VI, Part C, program are obtained through the RSA-911 Case Service Report and the RSA-636 Annual Supported Employment Caseload Report. Data from the RSA-911 reflect the summary of information across the life of the case of those persons who are rehabilitated through the Title VI-C program. Annual data from the RSA-636 were first collected in FY 1992. The RSA-636 Annual Supported Employment Caseload Report preliminary data for FY 1996 show that 37,318 persons received funding for supported employment services through the Title VI-C program, a 3 percent increase from FY 1995.

Performance information is also available for FY 1996 from the RSA-636 Report. Of the persons who had supported employment identified as their employment goal and who received supported employment services funded through the Title VI, Part C, program, approximately 70 percent achieved an employment outcome, as defined under the Title I program, at the time of case closure. It should be noted that the high success rate is due in part to the program's selection bias. Specifically, the VR agency must identify the source of extended services (or conclude that there is a reasonable expectation that sources will become available) before sources are initiated. About 81 percent of the individuals who achieved an employment outcome under this program had a supported employment outcome. These persons had maintained supported employment for at least 60 days after making the transition to extended services. A supported employment placement is competitive employment in an integrated setting where the individual receives ongoing support services from a state agency, a private, nonprofit organization, employer, or other appropriate source after the person has made the transition from state VR agency support.

Another 13 percent of these individuals had a competitive employment outcome that was not considered a supported employment outcome (e.g., the person did not receive ongoing support from an extended service provider or the person was not working in a setting that met the regulatory definition of an integrated setting). The remaining persons (6 percent) were working in noncompetitive employment (e.g., in sheltered employment or as a homemaker or an unpaid family worker) at case closure.

## IV. Planned Studies

The National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) continues to fund a Research and Training Center to study supported employment programs to identify the strategies that states have employed in developing a statewide system of supported employment, to further identify long-term financial support available to the program, and to determine the number of persons served, cost of services, and the employment history of those served in supported employment programs funded under state grant and discretionary grant authorities.

In FY 1995, RSA initiated a two-year study to evaluate the effectiveness of extended services in the Supported Employment program and to evaluate the use of natural supports. The purpose of the program is defeated unless effective extended services are available and used. During the past several years, extensive progress has been made in securing sources of funding for extended services, but serious problems exist in establishing or maintaining these funding streams. Also, no substantial data or analyses exist on the effectiveness, stability, extensiveness, or availability of these services. The purposes of this study are to:

- Assess the availability of extended services including natural supports, particularly for unserved and underserved disability groups;
- Assess the stability and length of provision of extended services;
- Assess the availability of natural supports and the effectiveness of these supports;
- Assess the comprehensiveness (i.e., type and number of services provided) and the cost of extended services; and
- Evaluate the effectiveness of extended services in maintaining the individual in competitive employment.

## V. Sources of Information

1. State Plan Supplement for the Supported Employment Services Program.
2. The Annual Report to Congress for Fiscal Year 1994 on Supported Employment Activities. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration).
3. RSA-911 Case Service Report and the RSA 636 Annual Supported Employment Caseload Report.
4. Program files.

## VI. Contacts for Further Information

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