



# PROCESS OUTLINE ONGOING RESPONSIBILITIES

<b>Process Document Title</b>	Ongoing Responsibilities of MCO Support Coordinators and VR Counselors for the Employment and Community First CHOICES Program
<b>Effective Date</b>	May 1, 2017

**Purpose:** This Process Outline is for use in facilitation of the ongoing responsibilities for persons enrolled in the State’s Employment and Community First (ECF) CHOICES program as described in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Department of Human Services, Division of Rehabilitation Services, Vocational Rehabilitation Program (hereinafter “VR”) and the Health Care Finance and Administration Bureau of TennCare, Division of Long Term Services and Supports (hereinafter “TennCare”). ECF CHOICES and VR are programs related to the Employment First philosophy, which is based upon the premise that all citizens, including individuals with significant disabilities, are capable of full participation in integrated employment and community life. Because both VR and TennCare offer employment supports for people with disabilities through these respective programs, this Process Outline is intended to ensure that each agency provides those services to common customers in coordination with the other to ensure efficient use of resources and effective delivery of services.

**References:**

Applicable MOU references include:

MOU Section V.C.2

MOU Section V.C.3

MOU Section V.D.3

MOU Section VI.B.13

MOU Section VII.B

MOU Section VII.C.9

**Definitions:**

Common Customer – individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities aged 14 and up, who are receiving services through the Employment and Community First (ECF) CHOICES program and who choose to receive vocational rehabilitation pre-employment transition services and/or are determined eligible for VR employment services with the goal of obtaining competitive integrated

employment or self-employment, including customized employment and supported employment.

ECF CHOICES Member – A person who has been enrolled by TennCare into ECF CHOICES.

ECF CHOICES Support Coordinator (also referred to as the “MCO Support Coordinator”) – The individual who has the primary responsibility for case management and support coordination activities for an Employment and Community First CHOICES individual.

Employment – under this Process Outline shall mean “competitive integrated employment,” full or part-time work at minimum wage or higher, with wages and benefits similar to those without disabilities performing the same work, and fully integrated with co-workers without disabilities and has access to the same opportunities for benefits and advancement provided to non-disabled workers.

Employment Needs Assessment (ENA) - a VR assessment that determines and documents the specific employment objective and the nature and scope of VR services to be included in the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). An ENA begins at VR application and must have the full inclusion of the individual in determining the specific employment objective and the services needed to achieve the employment objective.

Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) - the VR plan which documents the individual’s specific employment objective, the services and service providers, terms and conditions, individual and VR responsibilities required to achieve the individual’s employment objective. The VR Counselor and individual (or his or her legal representative) are required to sign the form before services can be provided.

Managed Care Organization (MCO) - a health maintenance organization (“HMO”) that participates in the TennCare program.

Person Centered Support Plan (PCSP) - A written plan developed by the MCO Support Coordinator using a person-centered planning process that accurately documents the individual’s strengths, needs, goals, lifestyle preferences and outlines the services and supports that will be provided to the individual to help them achieve their preferred lifestyle and goals, and to meet their identified unmet needs.

### **Process Outline Summary:**

Pursuant to obligations defined in the MOU between TennCare and VR, and pertaining to the Employment and Community First (ECF) CHOICES Program and Vocational Rehabilitation Program, TennCare MCOs and VR are required to fulfill specific ongoing obligations. This Process Outline details those obligations.

### **Process Outline:**

#### **I. VR Counselor (VRC) Ongoing Responsibilities in supporting ECF CHOICES Members:**

##### **a. Introductory Notes:**

- i. The following process is intended for those ECF CHOICES Members who have expressed an interest in competitive integrated employment, and are eligible to receive VR services.
  - ii. The MCO Support Coordinator and VRC must work together and communicate as indicated below to ensure that ECF CHOICES Members transition between the ECF CHOICES Program and the VR Program seamlessly. The goal is to ensure that the Member does not experience any gaps in service provision.
- b. Development of the Employment Needs Assessment (ENA) and Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) :
  - i. The VRC will complete the ENA to determine the employment services needed by the ECF CHOICES Member. This assessment is used by the VRC to inform the IPE.
  - ii. The IPE should be written as soon as possible, preferably while the ECF CHOICES Member is completing his/her pre-employment service (if applicable) to ensure there is no gap in employment services.
  - iii. VRC shall arrange for a meeting with the individual and/or the individual's legal representative in order to review and sign the IPE.
- c. VR Counselor shall share the signed IPE with all other involved parties:
  - i. MCO Support Coordinator (via email, and only with consent from the individual); and
  - ii. Applicable Provider.
- d. The VRC will provide updates on the status of the IPE using the **ECF CHOICES MOU Tracking Form** to the MCO Support Coordinator:
  - i. During the time the individual is receiving VR employment services, the VRC shall provide progress updates to the individual's MCO Support Coordinator (with consent of the individual) when the following occurs:
    - a. Completion of the IPE
    - b. Member starts new job
    - c. Member changes jobs
    - d. Member reaches Job Stabilization Coaching
    - e. Member's VR case is closed

## II. MCO Support Coordinator Ongoing Responsibilities:

- a. Assisting with development of the IPE:
  - i. The MCO Support Coordinator shall assist the VRC as needed by doing the following:
    - 1. Answering questions;
    - 2. Provide additional documentation as needed;
    - 3. Assist with Member contacts, if needed; and

4. Encourage Member to participate fully in the IPE process.

b. Authorization of Additional Employment Services:

- i. While the member is receiving VR services, if there is a need for additional, different ECF CHOICES employment-related services that are not available through VR, the Support Coordinator shall authorize such services after completing each of the following:
  1. Amending the Person Centered Support Plan (PCSP) to reflect that the employment service is needed and not otherwise provided by VR; and
  2. Update the **ECF CHOICES MOU Tracking Form**
- ii. Additional services may include supports for medical or behavioral needs while training on the job or working.

c. Address Immediately Needed Employment Services:

- i. If the ECF CHOICES Member needs employment services immediately, the MCO Support Coordinator shall ensure such needs are addressed in the PCSP. These needs can include:
  1. Services provided through ECF CHOICES that the MCO Support Coordinator will authorize;
  2. Services available outside of ECF CHOICES, including benefits counseling from Benefits to Work program, assistance from American Job Centers, etc.
- ii. If VR Program eligibility determination exceeds 60 days, or if the development of the IPE exceeds 90 days, and the Member has a need for immediate employment services, the MCO Support Coordinator shall authorize the needed ECF CHOICES employment services after completing the following:
  1. Amending the PCSP to reflect why the ECF CHOICES employment services are needed and not otherwise available immediately through the VR Program; and
  2. Update the **ECF CHOICES MOU Tracking Form** to ensure there is no duplication of services once VR services are initiated.

III. Winding Down of Vocational Rehabilitation Services:

a. Sharing Employment Needs Assessment (ENA):

- i. At least four (4) weeks prior to the end of VR Stabilization Job Coaching, VR Counselor shall arrange for a meeting with the individual and/or the individual's legal representative in order to review and sign the ENA.
- ii. At least four (4) weeks prior to the end of VR Stabilization Job Coaching, VR Counselor shall share the ENA with the Support Coordinator and update the **ECF CHOICES MOU Tracking Form**
- iii. ENA shall specify whether there is a need for extended supports and identify any sources for those supports
- iv. Upon receipt of ENA, the Support Coordinator shall authorize needed ECF CHOICES employment services.

1. Effective date for extension of services shall be set to ensure there are no gaps in VR employment services between the end of VR Stabilization Job Coaching and initiation of ECF CHOICES employment supports.

IV. Closure of Vocational Rehabilitation Services:

a. Sending the Closure Letter:

i. If individual completes Job Stabilization Coaching:

1. Within five (5) business days of their VR case being close, the VR Counselor shall send the closure letter to:

- a. The individual or individual's guardian/legal representative (must contact according to the preferred method of contact, as evidenced on the **VR Referral Form**); and
- b. Update the **ECF CHOICES MOU Tracking Form**.

ii. If the individual's case is being closed for any reason other than the end of Job Stabilization Coaching:

1. At least two (2) weeks before the end of VR job services, VR Counselor shall send a copy of the closure letter to:

- a. The individual or individual's guardian/legal representative (must contact according to the preferred method of contact, as evidenced on the **VR Referral Form**); and
- b. Update the ECF CHOICES MOU Tracking Form.

b. Sending Confirmation of Extended Supports:

i. At least ten (10) days prior to the end of VR Stabilization Job Coaching, Support Coordinator shall update the **ECF CHOICES MOU Tracking Form**

1. This notification shall indicate that the MCO will coordinate extended supports and be the source of funding for individuals who need on-going supports).