



Vocational Rehabilitation Fee Schedule (Draft OAC 3304-2-52 Language) Stakeholder Feedback Summary Comments Received: July 27, 2016 to September 7, 2016

In 2015 Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) contracted with Public Consulting Group (PCG) to recommend cost informed rates for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services.

PCG issued a draft rate proposal on April 25, 2016 and forwarded copies to OOD VR service providers (stakeholders). In addition, PCG held six regional forums in Fremont, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Dayton, Columbus and Athens, between April 26 and May 5, 2016, to collect feedback from over 200 stakeholders that attended. Stakeholders were given the opportunity to ask questions and provide comments on the proposal. In addition, Kevin Miller, OOD's Executive Director, along with several members of OOD's Executive and Senior Staff, met with stakeholder associations to gather additional feedback from the VR provider community.

On May 11, 2016, Director Miller sent a letter to VR providers reiterating that comments and questions could be submitted to OOD through OOD's provider management email box. VR providers were encouraged to provide feedback by May 31, 2016. OOD continued to accept comments received after May 31, 2016 and in total, 32 providers forwarded input around the PCG's draft rate proposal.

Subsequently OOD drafted language for OAC 3304-2-52 Appendix A based upon the review and discussion of VR provider feedback received regarding PCG's final rate recommendations. This language for 3304-2-52 Appendix A was distributed to VR providers on July 27, 2016. OOD followed up with four informational sessions, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, on August 8 and 9 to provide additional information. These informational sessions were attended by 193 stakeholders and OOD staff. VR providers were granted another opportunity to submit additional feedback and questions based on the draft Appendix A document distributed on July 27, the four informational sessions, and additional meetings with stakeholder associations. OOD received comments representing 61 stakeholder organizations between July 27 and September 7, 2016.

OOD organized comments by common themes and has addressed questions and provided answers in this document.

TABLE 1: VR Services

TOPIC AREA	COMMENT/QUESTION	OOD'S RESPONSE
Billing Cycle	<p>Comment: It may be difficult for providers to meet the requirement to submit bills within 15 days and to submit corrections to denied bills within 15 days.</p> <p>Question: Does 15 days mean calendar or business days?</p>	<p>Response: This was included in the requirements of the original Fee Schedule dated October 2012. OOD reviewed authorization data for VR services paid after 10/01/15, a total number of 124,865 authorizations. The median duration between last date of actual service and invoice date was 15 calendar days. The average duration was 21.75 calendar days. OOD has modified the requirement to 21 calendar days from the date of last actual service. OOD intends to work with the provider community to streamline reporting requirements given new simplified fee structures to continue to support decreased billing times.</p>
Billing Cycle	<p>Comment: Can providers submit the invoice first and then submit the report at a later date.</p>	<p>Response: No, OOD must have both to verify services delivered prior to payment.</p>
Bilingual Supplement	<p>Question: How will the bilingual pay supplement be applied to communication with participants, employers, and VR staff?</p>	<p>Response: Providers may charge the bilingual supplement for all contacts by bilingual staff on behalf of participants who require accommodations to ensure effective communication.</p>
Group Rates	<p>Question: Can providers deliver services in groups larger than 4?</p>	<p>Response: Yes, as long as there is 1 staff available to support no more than 4 participants which is a 1:4 staffing ratio. For example, a provider can provide work adjustment to 6 individuals at an employment site as long as there are 2 provider staff providing the service. OOD has revised the Appendix A language to clarify this.</p>
Group Rates	<p>Comment: Group rates for services such as Summer Youth will not cover cost of providers writing reports.</p>	<p>Response: Costs associated with report writing have been incorporated into the recommended rates. OOD has not made adjustments in this area. OOD shares the providers' desire to</p>

		reduce reporting requirements to the greatest extent possible. OOD intends to work with the provider community to streamline reporting requirements and decrease billing times.
Transportation	Comment: It was recommended that providers be able to bill for transportation associated with job development and supported employment services.	Response: OOD has moved towards an outcome (performance) based placement model. The outcome payment incorporates all the elements necessary to get a participant a job. The assumption under the current fee schedule definition is that job development services customarily begin when the job developer picks up the participant. Thus it constitutes job development, not transportation services.
Transportation	Comment: It was recommended that providers be able to bill for transportation at the cost of the service being provided to the individual.	Response: OOD has created a Transportation fee to cover necessary vocational appointments. The fee is based on PCG's cost informed rates and creates consistency on how OOD will pay for transportation across all applicable services.
Transportation	Question: What does OOD mean by "vocationally necessary appointments that are not already included as a part of the VR Fee Schedules services"?	Response: These are appointments that are not directly related to provision of a service defined on the VR Fee Schedule, e.g. transportation to a psychological evaluation to determine eligibility, etc. This is determined on a case by case basis and must be authorized by OOD in advance.
Training Stipend	Comment: The 5% adjustment may not cover all of the expenses associated with this requirement. At a minimum the adjustment needs to cover workers compensation and FICA expenses.	Response: OOD has increased to a 15% adjustment to cover costs associated with Workers Compensation, FICA, Medicare, and administrative costs.

Training Stipend	Question: Will OOD have a standardized form to bill the stipend?	Response: Yes, OOD will create a standardized template to invoice the Vocational Training Stipend.
Site Development	Question: Many employers still want to meet potential participants before agreeing to allow a CBA/WA to occur. How will OOD compensate providers for the time involved?	Response: OOD has adjusted the service definition to allow providers to bill Site Development to take participants to interviews for CBA/WA in cases where the provider does not operate an enclave or is not the employer.
Community Based Assessment/Work Adjustment/Job Readiness Training	Comment: It was recommended that OOD consider ranges for the flat rates. A variety of options were suggested from various groups.	Response: It was OOD's intent to have a half day and a full day option for these services. OOD created half and full day rates for school based and non-school based services. OOD staff or VR contractor will need to approve hours that are outside of the half or full time option prior to start of the service.
Community Based Assessment/Work Adjustment/Job Readiness Training	Question: What happens if a participant does not work the full 4 or 7 hour day?	Response: OOD will still pay the full or half day rate to the provider if a participant has to leave earlier than scheduled to work on a given day.
Vocational Evaluation/Consultation	Question: Is OOD going to develop minimum qualifications for these services?	Response: No, OOD will not be implementing minimum qualification requirement for these services as part of these Fee Schedule changes. OOD may consider minimum qualifications or credentialing requirements to provide VR services in the future.
Vocational Consultation	Question: What is included in the 4 hour limit for clerical assessment? Does this 4 hour limit include both the administration of the assessment and the analyzation of the results?	Answer: The fee includes all testing, interpretation, and report of the participant's progress.
Job Readiness Training	Question: Does OOD expect a staffing to occur twice monthly or every other month?	Answer: OOD expects a staffing twice a month for non-school based job readiness training. School based programs should hold a staffing at least once per month.
Summer Youth	Question: Will OOD consider other curriculums other than Skills to Pay the Bills?	Response: Yes, OOD is willing to consider other standardized curriculums and intends to give providers the option to select from a pre-approved list. Providers may

		make suggestions for other curriculums by submitting the information to the provider mailbox at crpvendor@ood.ohio.gov .
Job Development	Question: Will providers have the option of offering Job Development – UOS or Performance Based Job Development?	Response: OOD will be authorizing Job Development using the Performance Based Job Development rate. Job Development – UOS may be used for Temporary Summer Jobs for Youth and rare situations on a case by case basis with OOD staff or VR contractor approval.
Job Development/Supported Employment	Comment: OOD should create clear criteria for case closure for individuals participating in SE for an extended length of time without employment success.	Response: The decision to close a case or end job development should be made on a case by case basis by VR Counselors or VR Contractors after consulting with the participant and the provider. OOD has issued guidance in the Job Related Services procedure to VR Counselors and VR contractors about monitoring the progress of job development.
Job Development	Comment: There was an overall concern expressed that the rates for performance based development would not cover the expenses for providers (see comments regarding mileage, report writing, utilization rate, no shows).	Response: OOD rates for performance based services are comparable to or higher than states that were benchmarked with similar service definitions. The addition of Supported Employment job development rates will address the issue with provision of services to individuals with more complex needs.
Job Development	Question: How will OOD ensure that providers don't rush placements and put people into inappropriate jobs just to collect incentives?	Response: The job placement must be agreeable to the participant, e.g. the desired level of wages and hours identified in the Job Development Plan, and approved by the VR Counselor or VR Contractor after reviewing the job description.
Job Development	Comment: Is there a concern that this will negatively impact Job Development for individuals with the most significantly disabilities?	Response: The majority of OOD's participants, 65.05%, who received job placement services are Most Significant Disability (MSD) based on the latest Scorecards developed in September 2016. This includes data on participants receiving services

		under the Employment First Initiative.
Job Development	Question: What is the difference between a Placement Plan and a Job Development Plan?	Response: OOD will consistently use the term Job Development Plan.
Job Development	Question: What does “within a week of the 90 th day” mean?	Response: The final contact with the participant and/or employer must take place within one calendar week of the 90 TH day of stabilized employment. This is to ensure that the provider has been in contact with the participant and employer prior to case closure.
Job Development	Comment: Having Job Developers meet with employers face-to-face seems to contradict the current trend of businesses to have people apply online.	Response: While job seekers must apply for some positions online, there is still an expectation that the Job Developers will follow up with employers in person to check on the status of the application and to promote the hiring of the job seeker. There are also still many employers that do not use online applications. Job Developers still need to develop relationship with employers which often requires face-to-face contacts.
Job Development	Question: We have had participants in job development for long periods of time. Is there a point that the provider can say that they cannot continue?	Response: The decision to close a case or end job development should be made on a case by case basis by VR Counselors or VR Contractors after consulting with the participant and the provider. OOD has issued guidance in the Job Related Services procedure to VR Counselors and VR contractors about monitoring the progress of job development.
Job Development	Question: How will OOD determine it is necessary to change to a different provider?	Response: This is a collaborative decision involving the participant, VR staff or VR contractor, and providers. OOD has issued guidance to VR staff and VR contractors about monitoring progress during job development in OOD’s job related services procedure. Providers will be trained on any future revisions of the Job Related Services Procedure.

Incentives	Question: When and how will the retention premiums be paid for Job Development?	Response: OOD has included definitions in the VR Fee Schedule to identify when the retention premiums may be paid. Each retention premium (rapid placement or SGA placement) shall only be paid to the provider once per case.
Supported Employment	Question: How will it be decided that a provider may bill at the enhanced rate?	<p>Response: Providers that operate supported employment programs (i.e., EF providers, IPS providers, etc.) that include the provision of long term supports may offer SE Job Development as long as they meet the requirements of the VR Fee Schedule. SE programs will be approved as a part of the provider agreement process.</p> <p>Specific diagnoses do not mean that a person will be automatically enrolled in SE services. This is determined on a case by case basis upon the needs of the individual by the VR staff or VR contractor.</p>
Supported Employment	Question: Will OOD accept ACRE in addition to the CESP or ISP Model?	Response: No, ACRE certification does not provide the elements of CESP certification. There is not a competency based test, code of conduct, and requirements for continuing education. CESP must be recertified after a specific period of time. Whereas ACRE is one point in time.
Supported Employment	Question: CESP examination is offered once in Ohio until the end of the year. Would OOD consider granting more time to get certification for SE services?	Response: No, providers must have the necessary certifications and/or training in place to offer SE services.

Supported Employment	Comment: Retention premium payments proposed for Supported Employment are unrealistic.	Response: The retention premium payments are available for all VR participants. Rapid job development services are important to all VR participants, regardless of whether they are receiving traditional or supported employment job development. The SGA premium is based on assisting VR to obtain cost reimbursement for cases and is not based on specific services or disabilities.
Mileage	Comment: OOD should continue to allow providers to bill separately for mileage or bill staff time at a reduced rate for the time they are traveling.	Response: Cost associated with mileage has been incorporated as a component of the recommended rates. OOD has included a new rate in the fee schedule for a Service Area Modifier (SAM) to be utilized in instances where OOD requests that a provider travel beyond their designated counties of service to provide a serve for an individual.
Report Writing	Comment: OOD should continue to allow providers to bill separately for report writing.	Response: Costs associated with report writing have been incorporated into the recommended rates. OOD shares the providers desire to reduce reporting requirements to the greatest extent possible. OOD will continue to make updates to templates based upon feedback from staff and providers.
Utilization Rate	Comment: The utilization rate identified in the methodology of 70.84% is not consistent with the experience of providers. Utilization rates reported by providers ranged from 50% to 75% percent.	Response: The utilization rate recommended by PCG is based on data collected from providers.
Future Adjustments	Comment: There is no mechanism in the rule for automatic adjustments to rates based upon the ECI.	Response: OOD intends to periodically adjust VR Fee Schedule rates to account for changes in provider costs through the rule making process. OOD does not plan to include an automatic adjustment based upon the ECI.
General	Comment: OOD should disclose criminal histories to providers. Providers should have the right to	Response: OOD shares information that is available at the time of referral to the provider that is

	determine if they accept a participant or not.	pertinent to provision of a service. This includes disclosure of any relevant criminal history that could impose a barrier to achieving an employment outcome.
General	Question: How will OOD transition between the “old” and “new” VR Fee Schedule?	Response: UOS or Daily rates will change immediately upon the effective date of the VR Fee Schedule. Individuals receiving Job Development – UOS upon the effective date of the VR Fee Schedule will continue under UOS until case closure. Services authorized after the implementation date will be authorized at as Performance Based. OOD will schedule additional training for providers and VR staff prior to the implementation date that will address the transition to the new fee structure and rates.
Miscellaneous Purchases	Question: How will OOD reimburse for providers purchasing miscellaneous items, e.g. clothes, gas cards, etc.? This is a significant expense for providers.	Response: OOD will continue to provide direct reimbursement for items purchased. If the participant is present, providers may charge for the time to get the items under the billing definitions of the current service that the participant is receiving, e.g. if the participant is in Job Coaching and needs work boots the provider can charge for Job Coaching, while the participant is present, to get the boots for the job. Providers may not charge for time if the participant is not present.
Intake	Comment: OOD needs to ensure that VR staff are sending referral information with Intake authorizations.	Response: OOD continues to reinforce with VR Counselors and/or VR Contractors the importance of ensuring that providers have adequate information to provide services to VR participants. OOD will be issuing guidance to VR staff and VR contractors about making referrals to providers. Any specific areas of concern should be brought to the attention of the local

	Supervisor or Area Manager so that they can be addressed.
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Table 2: Medical, Dental, & Psychological Services

TOPIC AREA:	COMMENT/QUESTION:	OOD RESPONSE:
Psychological Services	<p>Comment: Medicaid fees are lower than the rates in OOD’s current psychological fee schedule. Psychologists may not provide services to OOD participants at these rates.</p> <p>Question: What rates (e.g. CPT) codes will OOD use for services?</p>	<p>Response: OOD intends to align with other state agencies and use Medicaid rates for the psychological services. OOD will closely monitor and address any gaps in provider capacity at these rates and work to ensure the availability of services statewide. OOD will use the appropriate CPT codes that match the service being purchased. OOD intends to provide additional guidance regarding the Medical, Psychological and Dental Fee schedules closer to implementation of the new rates.</p>
Medical Services	<p>Question: Can providers charge participants for “no show” appointments?</p>	<p>Response: No, per OAC 3304-2-53 (C) OOD shall purchase services and goods only from service providers and vendors who agree not to charge or accept any payment from the participant or the participant’s family unless the amount of the charge or payment is previously known and approved by OOD. VR will not pay for services not delivered. Providers doing business with OOD may not charge participants for missed appointments.</p>
Hearing Aids	<p>Comment: OOD will lose providers who do not wish to accept Medicaid rates due to the fact that they can only charge a fitting fee.</p>	<p>Response: OOD has been using the Medicaid rates for hearing aids, vision and dental services for a year. OOD has not experienced a decrease in providers and has enrolled many new hearing aid providers since the implementation.</p>