

Reader's Guide to Terms and Governmental Systems Used in this Report

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) - The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 prohibits public and private employers, employment agencies, and labor unions from discriminating against qualified individuals with disabilities. The ADA covers employers with 15 or more employees and includes all employment activities such as hiring, firing, advancement, and compensation. Source: <http://www.ada.gov>

Autism - One of a group of serious developmental problems called autism spectrum disorders that appear in early childhood, usually before age three. Though symptoms and severity vary, autism disorders affect a person's ability to communicate and interact with others. Source: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/autism/DS00348>

Braided Funding - The access and coordination of funding from multiple sources to support a comprehensive employment supports plan for a job seeker with a disability.

Customized Employment - Individualizing the employment relationship between employees and employers in ways that meet the needs of both. It is based on an individualized determination of the strengths, needs, and interests of the person with a disability and is also designed to meet the specific needs of the employer. It may include supported employment, individualized job development, and job carving and restructuring. Source: <http://www.dol.gov/odep/>

Disability Program Navigators - The Disability Program Navigator initiative was developed and funded jointly by the U.S. Department of Labor and the Social Security Administration. The goal was to facilitate comprehensive employment services for job seekers with disabilities through the One-Stop Career Center system. Disability Program Navigator positions were funded at One-Stop Centers in 42 states, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Federal funding for Disability Program Navigators expired in June 2010. Some states have retained Disability Program Navigators using other sources of funding. Source: http://www.doleta.gov/disability/new_dpn_grants.cfm

Employment Supports - Services, benefits, policies, tools, and equipment that allow people to obtain and maintain employment. Supports can vary, but examples include transportation, child care, access to health care, technology, and flexible work schedules. Source: http://www.dol.gov/odep/categories/employment_supports/

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) - Requires public schools to make a free appropriate public education available to all eligible children with disabilities. Public schools must utilize a team of knowledgeable persons to create and follow an Individualized Education Program that meets the needs of each disabled student. Source: <http://www.ada.gov/cguide.htm#anchor65310>

Individualized Education Program (IEP) - Also referred to as an Individualized Education Plan, the IEP is a highly customized plan of action created for each child with a disability that guides the delivery of special education supports and services in order to help the student be involved in, and progress in, the general curriculum. Public schools are required to facilitate the process and include parents, teachers, and appropriate agency representatives throughout. Source: <http://www.ed.gov/parents/needs/speced/iepguide/index.html>

Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities - A diverse group of severe chronic conditions that are manifested by mental or physical impairments. People with intellectual or developmental disabilities have challenges with major life activities such as language, mobility, learning, self-help, and independent living. Developmental disabilities begin anytime during development up to 22 years of age and usually last throughout a person's lifetime. Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/dd/default.htm>

Internship - A work program, paid or unpaid, that allows a student to gain practical knowledge through supervised experience in a particular field.

Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG) - Administered by the Federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), provides money to states to modify their health care and other service delivery systems to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities who want to work. The goal of the program is to support people with disabilities in securing and sustaining competitive employment in an integrated setting.

Medicaid Waiver - The Social Security Act authorizes multiple waiver and demonstration authorities to allow states flexibility in operating Medicaid programs. Waivers can be approved under three major categories: projects that test policy innovations, managed care delivery system implementation, and long-term care service delivery in a community setting as an alternative to an institutional setting. Many community services programs for people with disabilities are funded through Medicaid waivers. CMS administers the waiver and demonstration programs. Source: <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MedicaidStWaivProgDemoPGI/>

NISH - A national nonprofit agency whose mission is to create employment opportunities for people with severe disabilities. Opportunities for employment are created by helping nonprofit agencies secure federal contracts to provide quality goods and services at fair market prices to government agencies. Source: <http://www.nish.org>

Preferred Source Programs - Programs at the federal and state levels refer to preferences given on designated government contracts for goods and services to community agencies that employ skilled individuals with disabilities.

Provider - An organization or agency that provides supports and services to people with disabilities.

Sector Strategy - Workforce initiatives focused on one target industry in a specific geographic region or with several industry sectors. They are designed and implemented by a range of institutions and groups working collaboratively, including community organizations, business and industry groups, Workforce Investment Boards, One-Stop Career Centers, and others. Source: The Aspen Institute, *Sector Strategies in Brief* (Washington, D.C., November 2007).

Special Education - Curriculum and instruction designed to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability. Instruction may be conducted in the classroom or other locations as required and may include traditional instruction as well as speech or other services needed to achieve educational goals. Source: <http://idea.ed.gov/explore/view/p/,root,regs,300,A,300%252E39>

Supported Employment - Assistance such as job coaching, transportation, assistive technology, and specialized job training that enables individuals with significant disabilities to obtain and retain employment. Supported employment facilitates competitive work in integrated work settings for individuals with significant disabilities for whom competitive employment has not traditionally occurred, and who, because of the nature and severity of their disability, need ongoing support services in order to perform their job. Source: <http://www.dol.gov/odep/archives/fact/supportd.htm>

Work Incentives Planning and Assistance Program (WIPA) - Provides supports to Social Security Administration beneficiaries who have disabilities on job placement, benefits planning, and career development. WIPA is staffed with Community Work Incentive Coordinators who provide information on benefits and referrals to an array of services such as work incentives programs and vocational rehabilitation services. Source: <http://www.ssa.gov/work/wipafactsheet.html>

System Summaries

Department of Veteran's Affairs, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) - The VR&E program provides vocational rehabilitation services for veterans who have a service-connected disability. A vocational rehabilitation counselor determines whether a veteran has an employment handicap based on the results of the comprehensive evaluation. Entitlement to services is established if the veteran is within the 12-year period of eligibility and 20% or greater service-connected disability rating and an employment handicap. The outcome of these services lead to suitable employment consistent with aptitudes and interests, or achieving independence in daily living. VR&E provides additional services, including educational and vocational counseling for eligible service members and their dependents. VR&E also developed a Web site (<http://www.VetSuccess.gov>), which creates a vehicle for VR&E partners — organizations with a commitment to hire disabled veterans — to link to disabled veterans seeking employment.

Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Systems - Known in some states as Departments or Divisions of Developmental Disabilities or Mental Retardation, Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities service systems are state agencies that provide services for individuals with disabilities that include intellectual disabilities, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, and traumatic brain injuries occurring in the developmental years. Programs provide a range of residential, day, and employment services and supports. Employment supports are typically offered through contracts with community agencies, often in conjunction with vocational rehabilitation-funded services. State services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are primarily offered through a combination of state and Medicaid funding.

Medicaid - A federal health care program for individuals and families with low incomes, including many people with disabilities. The Federal government, through the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, retains oversight responsibility for Medicaid but each state administers its own program. The cost of Medicaid services to eligible individuals is shared by the Federal government and the states. States may also choose from a list of optional services authorized under Title XIX of the Social Security Act. Medicaid long-term care services through Home and Community-Based Waivers provide supports for eligible people with disabilities to live and work in the community. The federal government and each state share in the cost of furnishing Medicaid services to eligible individuals. Medicaid is an entitlement program, meaning that states must enroll all persons who meet the state's eligibility criteria and provide Medicaid services to every eligible individual who requires them. While each state Medicaid program is different, many programs include provisions to enable people with disabilities, even if they are gainfully employed, to qualify for Medicaid. Source: <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/info/medicare-medicaid/>

Medicare - A federal health insurance program that pays for hospital, medical care, and prescription drugs for people age 65 and older, and people with certain disabilities. Medicare is administered directly by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and funded by payroll taxes through the Federal Insurance Contributions Act. To qualify for Medicare, a person must be eligible for Social Security benefits with at least 10 years of payments contributed into the system. People with disabilities receiving Social Security Disability Insurance benefits are eligible to receive Medicare after receiving benefits for 24 months. Some people with disabilities who are spouses, dependents, or survivors of Social Security recipients are eligible for Medicare. Source: <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/info/medicare-medicaid/>

One-Stop Career Centers - Designed to provide a full range of assistance to job seekers under one roof. Established under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, offer training referrals, career counseling, job listings, and similar employment-related services. Customers can visit a center in person or connect to the center's information through computer or kiosk remote access. The One-Stop system is coordinated by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. Source: <http://www.careeronestop.org>

Social Security Administration - Provides a range of benefits and supports for individuals with disabilities. Social Security Disability Insurance provides cash payments for those who had worked previously and paid Social Security taxes before becoming disabled. Alternately, Supplemental Security Income provides cash benefits to disabled individuals qualified by an asset and income means test. Working-age recipients of both programs are encouraged to access work incentives specifically designed to help recipients gain and maintain employment. Counseling on the use of work incentives and the effect of work on benefits is provided by the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance program. The various incentive programs fall into two major categories: exclusion of income or assets and recovery of employment expenses.

The exclusion of certain income or assets allows the individual to earn wages and accumulate assets over the means-tested allowance while maintaining benefits in order to encourage employment or personal investment in a future business plan. Expense recovery programs offer the individual the ability to make purchases such as equipment, services, or building modifications that support their plan for employment.

Special Education - All public school students with disabilities are entitled to free, appropriate education that prepares them for higher education, employment, and independent living. This mandate was created in 1975 by PL 94-142, Education of All Handicapped Children Act, and is now codified in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). It applies to any student with a doctor-certified disability, either medical or psychological. In addition to special education, transitional services are mandated that support the student's progress toward appropriate post-school activities. The mandated Individualized Education Plan (IEP) documents how each particular combination of instruction and life experiences will translate the individual student's interests, strengths, and goals into achievement of post-school goals. Public schools often contract with community rehabilitation providers to allow student access to experiences required to highlight opportunities available and to provide customized instruction required to support students' educational, vocational, or independent living goals.

State Mental Health Service Systems - Known in some states as Departments or Divisions of Mental Health, offer a diverse range of programs and services to remediate the symptoms of mental illness and to assist people in the recovery by providing targeted rehabilitation in the following areas: supported employment, illness and management recovery, assertive community treatment, integrated dual disorders treatment (chemical health), and family psychoeducation. Eligibility for mental health services varies from state to state, but generally conform to the federal definition of a serious mental illness coupled with a functional need for services. Mental health services are supported by a number of funding streams, including a federal Block Grant program, Medicaid, state appropriations, county or regional taxes and funds, and local provider fundraising. States administer programs for people with mental illness in widely varying ways, including direct care, block grants to regional entities, and direct grants to providers.

State Vocational Rehabilitation Programs - The Rehabilitation Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Education provides Title 1 formula grants to vocational rehabilitation agencies in each state to provide employment-related services to individuals with disabilities. Eligible individuals must: have a physical or mental disability that causes a substantial

barrier to obtaining and retaining employment, and have a reasonable chance of obtaining employment through vocational rehabilitation services. Vocational rehabilitation agencies provide a broad range of supports, including counseling, medical and psychological services, job training, and individualized services. Some vocational rehabilitation services are provided through contracts with community agencies known as Community Rehabilitation Providers.