



**TRANSITIONAL
AND
EMPLOYMENT
SERVICES**

I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

A. WAIVERED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

1. **Employment Development Services:** Individualized services that help people discover their interests, strengths, and prepare for job search.
2. **Employment Support Services:** Individualized services and supports that help people to maintain community employment in an individual or group arrangement.

B. VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES(VRS) & STATE SERVICES for the BLIND(SSB):

1. **Employee Development Services:** Provide individualized services that assist an individual seeking competitive integrated employment to develop or re-establish skills, attitudes, personal characteristics, interpersonal skills, work behaviors and functional capacities to achieve an employment outcome. These services are time-limited and are provided directly to an individual seeking competitive integrated employment. The services take place in settings that meet the definition of an integrated community site.
2. **Pre-Employment Transition Services (PRE-ETS):** Services include job exploration counseling, work-based-learning experiences, workplace readiness, instruction in self-advocacy and post-secondary education counseling. This service is available to students, aged 14-21, who are eligible or “potentially eligible” for Vocational Rehabilitation Services.
3. **On the Job Evaluation:** The on-the-job evaluation service provides individuals as well as their team the opportunity to evaluate the suitability of a career or occupational area of interest. The service is typically provided prior to the determination of a specific job goal.
4. **Bridge to the Future:** This summer training program, for those ages 14-24, provides participants with the tools they need for a successful transition from education into the world of work. Each session provides training in job search and retention, as well as soft skills to help build self-confidence and accountability. Each day, through paid work experience, participants are provided hands-on training with area business partners.
5. **Track to Success:** This training course strives to improve communication and interpersonal skills, as well as situational judgment and problem solving for each participant. Each day, through paid work experience, participants will practice and develop the skills they have learned in class and at community employers.

6. **Performance Based Agreement (PBA):** Placement and retention services are intended for individuals who require assistance to prepare for, secure, retain, advance in or regain competitive integrated employment consistent with their unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice.
7. **Customized Employment:** Customized Employment at MRCI serves one person at a time. The goal of customized employment is to tailor jobs and careers to fit the individual's skills, interests, strengths, and support needs. At the same time, it meets the needs of business, or in the case of self-employment, the market for a service or product.
 - The 3 Phases of Customized Employment at MRCI Include:
 - Discovery
 - Job Development
 - Job Support
8. **Job Try-Out:** Short-term work experience which allows an individual the opportunity to demonstrate to an employer their capacity to effectively perform in a job related to a specific employment goal on their employment plan.
9. **Job Shadow:** Facilitate an opportunity for an individual to observe different jobs and ask businesses questions about the skills, knowledge and abilities needed to perform the tasks involved in the job.
10. **Internship:** A time-limited opportunity available to job seekers in situations where an internship will significantly enhance skill development and future opportunity for competitive integrated employment (E.g., individuals who are ready to begin but need relevant work experience related to their educational training, individuals in a training program, recent post-secondary graduates or students currently enrolled in a post-secondary training program).
11. **Drivers Permit/License Preparation and Training as an Accommodation:** To provide accommodations and supports to an individual to increase their success in passing the driver's permit test or the driver's license road test. These services are only for the additional training time or supports required by the individual due to their disability which are beyond the typical preparation and training involved in obtaining a driver's license.
12. **Job Coaching:** Provides training and consultation to the individual or the business to facilitate successful competitive integrated employment. Job coaching can be performed on or off the job site. The definition of job coaching can include any or all of the following: Job destination training; transportation coordination; job site skills training and assistance to perform work duties; training in new duties, including new employee orientation and other responsibilities that assure job retention; training and assistance with work behaviors and interpersonal skills; training to develop

understanding of employment practices and business policies; assistance in changes in the work environment impacting potential for job retention; identifying, utilizing and integrating natural supports in the workplace; and exploring and seeking job advancement

13. **Post-Secondary Support:** Assist a student to enroll or remain enrolled in postsecondary education or training by helping them understand how to successfully transition to a postsecondary education or training program; identify postsecondary education and training options; understand how their career goals line up with education and training options; complete steps for enrolling in a postsecondary education or training program; learn about and apply for postsecondary financial aid options; learn about various supports and assistive technology used by students with disabilities at college, such as where and how to get alternative formats of textbooks; learn about information on course offerings, career options, the types of academic and occupational training needed to succeed in the workplace, and how post-secondary opportunities associated with career fields or pathways would pertain to a student who is currently enrolled to ensure they are on the right pathway; and make decisions about changing majors and/or education or training programs.
14. **Benefits Coaching/Report:** Benefits Services are intended for an individual who requires assistance to understand how their benefits work to help them with their career planning. Benefit Services under two categories. Benefit Coaching and Benefits Planning. MRCI will examine an individual's benefits, such as cash assistance benefits, Social Security and other Federal, State and local benefits, health care benefits such as Medicare and Medical Assistance.
15. **Job Seeking Skills Training:** Provide counseling and/or training to a student regarding the techniques to prepare for, secure, retain, advance in, or regain competitive integrated employment. This includes assisting students in preparing resumes and job applications, developing job interviewing skills, providing training on how to address a business' perceptual barriers and preparing to meet a business' expectations, assisting the students to become knowledgeable about job duties, personnel benefits, rates of pay, employment policies and practices, and the job location prior to job acceptance.
16. **Public Transportation Training:** To arrange and provide opportunities for an individual to explore public transportation options and learn how to access and safely use public transportation. This service may include training on reading schedules, assistance filling out para-transit applications, contacting transportation providers to arrange services, and how to access disability accommodations, and physical skill practice time on public transportation.
17. **Work Experience Services:** A short-term, time-limited work opportunity. Work Experiences are experiential in nature and participants may explore careers, understand the nature of work, and/or build foundational soft and work skills. It serves

as a “stepping-stone” on a person’s career pathway and may or may not be aligned with the final job goal identified on the Employment Plan.

18. Work Experience with Wages: Pay the wages and personnel costs of a short-term work experience intended for the student to understand the nature of work and build soft skills. The community partner is the employer of record and thus the wages are paid by the community partner. Only the student and the business report on how the experience went.

19. Informational Interview: Facilitate an informal conversation for an individual with someone working in a career area/job that interests the individual, who will give them information and advice. It is not a job interview, and the objective is not to find job openings.

C. ADMISSION CRITERIA

To enroll in Transition and Employment Services, individuals must meet MRCI’s general admission and intake requirements and take part in the planning process.

The planning process begins with an intake meeting involving the client, MRCI’s Intake team, a referring agency representative, and any family members or support persons the client chooses. This meeting reviews referral details, explores the client’s interests, strengths, and potential challenges, and outlines initial job targets. By the end of the meeting, the client should understand the service they are entering and have a general idea of program and work areas to explore.

For all services, a vocational goal and plan are developed by the client and their MRCI representative. Reports are shared with the client and their team, summarizing:

- Employment or Job site information
- Employer feedback on performance
- Client’s experiences, strengths, and areas for growth
- Employment outcomes and training needs
- Recommended job options aligned with preferences and abilities
- Required job modifications or technology supports
- Identified employment barriers and services to address them
- Community resources and cultural accommodations; if applicable

D. EXIT CRITERIA

A person exits the Transition and Employment Service when they have completed the program process and have held a planning meeting with their MRCI staff representative and planning team to discuss the results and future plans. A program referral will be completed if the client and his/her team decide that another program through MRCI would be beneficial in assisting the client with their goals. A case note on the client’s program screen in IBV is added to ensure all team members are updated on client’s progress with the program.

II. PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. PURPOSE:

These statements of personnel policies and procedures have been prepared as guidelines to identify your responsibilities and to clarify benefits available to you. They are intended to assure fairness in personnel practices and promote a good working relationship with MRCI and clients.

B. TRANSPORTATION

Transportation arrangements will be made prior to the start of services. Transportation is available through public transportation or contract services. In some instances, MRCI transportation may be available during direct service time between program participant and MRCI Staff Representative. All MRCI vehicles will be inspected and transporting during program activities is provided.

C. RETIREMENT

No individual shall be required to retire because of age.

D. WAGES

MRCI complies with all provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

If you are in a program that MRCI pays the wages, payroll checks will be issued every two weeks. Effective January 1st, 2024, MRCI is required to provide safe and sick leave to all employees. You will accrue a minimum of one hour or earned safe and sick time for every 30 hours worked, to a maximum of 48 hours in a year.

MRCI contracts an outside vendor, **ADP Services**, for their payroll. MRCI uses two methods for payroll reimbursement. Direct deposit or the A-line card. Additional paperwork is required to sign up for either of these payroll options. Please talk to your MRCI Staff Representative for assistance. All payroll information can be acquired through the ADP website.

Instructions for registering with ADP Services are as follows:

- www.workforcenow.adp.com -Click "Register Here"
- Registration Code: MYMRCI-01
- Enter the following information:
 - First Name
 - Last Name
 - Last 4 Numbers of your Social Security number.
 - Birth Month and Day
- Confirm
- A message should appear; "Hello (Your Name). If this is you, register now.
- Click "Register Now"

- On new page, Enter in the following information:
 - Personal e-mail address
 - Username
 - Password
 - 3 security questions and answers
- Click “Register Now”

At this point, setup is complete. Go to www.workforcenow.adp.com and login to access pay statements.

Payroll Deductions: If it is required by law the following will be deducted from your paycheck:

- Federal Income Tax
- State Income Tax
- Social Security Tax
- Medicare
- Other payroll deductions for which you give your written consent

MRCI highly recommends all employees to use the paperless option within the ADP website. Instructions for this are as follows:

- Login to ADP by going to www.workforce.adp.com
- Enter your username and password
- Go to: **Myself > Pay > Pay Statements**
 - On the “Pay Statements” page, click “**Go Paperless**”
 - Select “**Access my pay statements online only**” and click “**Next**”
 - Read the information, click “**I Agree**”. Then click “**Next**”
 - Enter the confirmation number and click “**Next**”
 - Verify your e-mail address and click “**Done**”

E. BENEFITS

All staff and program participants at MRCI are covered by general liability, auto liability, excess liability, workers’ compensation, and employer’s liability.

F. SICK and SAFE LEAVE

Effective January 1, 2024, any individual paid by MRCI will receive 1 hour of Sick and Safe Leave for every 30 hours they are paid by MRCI. The State of Minnesota Sick and Safe law states sick and safe time is capped at 48 hours for first year of employment and 80 hours cap for every year after. Sick and Safe Leave must be submitted and recorded in increments of one-quarter hour or more. The Sick and Safe Leave balance will remain active up to 180 days after leaving a MRCI paid program and must be used during the paid program time. An individual can request Safe and Sick leave by contacting their MRCI Staff Representative and completing the necessary document.

The use of Sick and Safe Leave can be used for the following reasons:

- Mental or physical illness, treatment, or preventive care.
- A family member's mental or physical illness, treatment, or preventive care.
- Absence due to domestic abuse, sexual assault or stalking of the individual or a family member.
- When determined by a health authority or health care professional that the individual or a family member is at risk of infecting others with a communicable disease.
- Closure of the individual's workplace due to weather or public emergency or closure of a family member's school or care facility due to weather or public emergency.

Individuals may use Sick and Safe Leave for the following family members:

- Their child, including foster child, adult child, legal ward, child for whom the employee is legal guardian or child to whom the employee stands or stood in loco parentis (in place of a parent).
- Their spouse or registered domestic partner.
- Their sibling(s), stepsibling(s), or foster sibling(s).
- Their biological, adoptive, or foster parent, stepparent or person who stood in loco parentis (in place of a parent) when the employee was a minor child.
- Their grandchild, foster grandchild, or step-grandchild.
- Their grandparent or step-grandparent.
- The child of a sibling of the individual.
- A sibling of the parents of the individual.
- A child-in-law or sibling-in-law.
- Any of the family members (1 through 9 above) of an individual's spouse or registered domestic partner.
- Any other individual related by blood or whose close association with the individual is the equivalent of a family relationship.
- Up to one individual annually designated by the individual.

G. WORKERS COMPENSATION

All MRCI paid individuals are covered by Workers' Compensation Insurance as required by Minnesota Law. The cost of this insurance is paid by MRCI.

Every accident, however minor, must be reported to your MRCI Staff Representative immediately so that we can file a report with the insurance company, if necessary.

H. SAFETY

Any safety concerns you may have should be given to your MRCI Staff Representative.

MRCI reserves the right to take actions that it deems appropriate to provide a safe and reasonable work environment. MRCI has expectations of program participant behavior during program hours including appropriate response to supervision and direction,

cooperation with supervisors and peers and following MRCI policies and procedures. Participants will conduct themselves according to the standards set forth in this program participant handbook. Misconduct, such as possession of a weapon, being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, fighting, theft, abusive language, inappropriate sexual behavior, etc. will result in disciplinary action including immediate suspension. MRCI reserves the right to call upon law enforcement authorities, if necessary. Participants working on specific jobs may have additional protocols pertaining to those jobs. Those protocols will be reviewed with each individual prior to working on that job.

III. CLIENT ASSISTANCE PROJECT

A. About the Project

Federal legislation requires that each State receiving funds under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 designate a Client Assistance Project to ensure the clients and potential clients of State and Local rehabilitation programs receive the services and benefits available to them under the Act. The Mid Minnesota Legal Aid is the designated Client Assistance Project for Southern and Central Minnesota. Information regarding this can be found at: <https://mn.gov/disability-MN>.

**Client Assistance Project
Mid Minnesota Legal Aid
111 N. 5th St
Ste 100
Minneapolis, MN 55403
Telephone: (612) 332-1441 – Metro or (800) 292-4150 – Statewide**

IV. EXTENDED EMPLOYMENT ADDENDUM:

A. A PLAN TO HELP YOU

You succeed in your job and career goals by planning your supports. Supports are services from MRCI or others that help you keep your job, help you find another job, or help your employer keep you working. At least once each year, you and your MRCI Representative will write a plan that includes your choices of job goals and work setting, and what MRCI will do to help you reach your goals. This is your Support Plan. You can request a meeting at any time when you want changes made to your Support Plan. The purpose of the meeting is to find out if you want a different job goal, or if you need different support services.

Family members, friends or others may help you to reach your goals. You can have them at your Support Plan meeting. You or your MRCI Representative might also invite a social worker, supervisor, or anyone who could be helpful in making your plan. Notices about your

meeting, talk during the meeting and your written Support Plan will need to be in the primary language read or spoken by you or the person who can legally speak for you. If you need Braille, large print, or another language to understand your Support Plan, your MRCI representative will provide this for you.

A Support Goal or Objective Should Say:

- What you want or need to do
- What supports are necessary to do it
- How it will get done
- Who is responsible for doing it
- When, or by when
- How you will know that it is done

Some examples of support services might be:

- Coaching on how to do your work well and learn new skills on the job.
- Keeping in touch with you to know how you are doing and what you need.
- Helping you to do your work safely.
- Changing your workplace so you can do or improve your work better, like changes in the height or position of your chair, or changes in work schedule or rest breaks, or changes to your computer.
- Helping you to learn how to speak up for yourself and say what you need at your job.
- Training for other people at your workplace so they can help you learn your job and carry it out.
- Arranging for services that you might need, but you are not provided at MRCI.
- Help with learning skills you need to be successful worker, such as grooming, handling money, or using the bus.
- Making sure that the people who helped you write your Support Plan stay in touch with you and MRCI.
- Helping you to learn how to search for work, and to get and keep a job.
- Finding a job that fits your skills, interests, and support needs and choosing the work settings you like best.
- Other similar services that are in your Support Plan and are needed for you to keep your job, improve your performance, or find new or better employment.

Be sure to include all supports needed in your Support Plan. If MRCI cannot give you the support services that you need to reach your job goal, your plan should say how and when you will get it, and what MRCI will do to help you to get that service.

B. WHAT WORK DO YOU WANT TO DO?

The most important parts of your Plan are your job and career goals. Rehabilitation Services—Extended Employment (a part of the State of Minnesota) and other agencies pay MRCI for the supports they provide in the following types of work. You should be able to

choose different kinds of jobs in these work settings or work in more than one work setting. Include your choice of job and work setting in your Support Plan.

In Supported Employment, your job is in the community with supports from your employer and from MRCI. Your pay, benefits, and work conditions are the same as workers without disabilities who are doing the same kind of work. Someone from MRCI will meet with you at least twice a month to provide supports, learn how you are doing, or find out how you like your job. The kind of job you do depends on your skills, interests, abilities, which employers are cooperative, and what jobs are available. MRCI needs documentation of employer paid wages monthly through the submission of your paystubs.

***MRCI DOES NOT SUBMIT EMPLOYER PAID WAGE INFORMATION TO SOCIAL SECURITY OR OTHER AGENCIES EXCEPT THE EXTENDED EMPLOYMENT GRANT. IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO SEND YOUR EMPLOYER PAID PAY STUBS TO THE AGENCIES NEEDING THIS INFORMATION.**

C. WHAT IF I DON'T AGREE?

Signing your Support Plan means you agree with your job and support goals, that you understand and agree with the supports you will be getting, and that you will do what is needed to reach your goals. You may take your Plan home for a few days to think about what it says. Unless you want to make changes, sign your Plan and return it to your MRCI Representative.

You have a right to disagree with your Support Plan and you may want to make changes. You can discuss any changes to your plan at any time with your MRCI representative. Your plan will be discussed with you annually. Your MRCI representative is here to help you understand what supports you need to succeed. If you aren't satisfied with the plan that you and your representative have created, you should discuss changes with your MRCI representative. After discussing changes to your plan and you still do not agree with your plan, or the supports needed, or goal created you have the right to proceed with a complaint or grievance in the policy outlined in this handbook. There are several steps and time limits for making a complaint. You can have a friend or advocate to help you to follow the policy, and they can attend any meetings with you. You have the right to see your records at any time.

If you have followed MRCI's policy for making a grievance—except for binding arbitration—and still are not satisfied, you can appeal in writing to:

**Minnesota Department of Economic Development Rehabilitation Services
Vocational Rehabilitation Services – Ext Employment
First National Bank Building
332 Minnesota Street E200
St. Paul, MN 55101
Telephone: (651) 259-7376
TTY: (651) 296-3900**

D. SUPPORT PLAN CHECKLIST

Be sure your Support Plan answers the following questions and that the answers are true for you. You are the most important person in deciding what should be in the Support Plan.

- What do you enjoy doing or not doing? In what places do you like or not like to be? With what kinds of people do you work best? What do you do well in any area of your life?
- What kind of work would you like to do?
- How many hours a week do you want to work? How much do you want to be paid? Do you need your job to help pay your medical bills? Will getting paid over a certain amount affect other benefits you get?
- Do you want to work as part of a group of people with disabilities or as an individual? If your goals say you want some of each of these, does your Plan say how many hours a week of each you want?
- Does your Support Plan have the reasons that a work crew or individually is the best choice? The reasons must be yours, not MRCI's.
- When do you want to reach your different goals? Your Support Plan can include dates for job goals you have right now and dates for job goals you have in the future.
- What will your job, pay, benefits and support services be like when you reach your goals on this plan?
- What supports will MRCI give you to get and keep work? You and your family, friends, current or past teachers, your boss or co-workers can share their ideas about kinds of support that are helpful to you. Would you like MRCI to involve your boss and co-workers in helping you learn your work as soon as you start a new job? If you do, it should be included in your Support Plan.
- Would a special piece of equipment help you find a job or improve your work? Does your Support Plan say who will help you with each of the kinds of help you need? When will the help start? How long will the help last?
- If MRCI is unable to give you the help you need to reach your job goals, does your Support Plan say how MRCI will get you the help or equipment you need and how long that will take?
- Does your Plan have the names of the people that met with you and MRCI to help write your Support Plan and how they know you? Ask MRCI for information about different kinds of work they support including how much you would earn, worker benefits, the kinds of jobs you would be doing and how this compares with other workers in similar jobs and people you can contact to get more information.
- Does your Plan include your signature or that of the person who is your legal representative? You may take your Plan home for a few days to think about what it says. If you do not want to make any changes, sign your Plan and return it to MRCI. If you want to make some changes, meet with MRCI again.