

Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Rules CONCEPT FORM

Vendor name	Vocational Improvement Program, Inc. (VIP, Inc.)
Vendor number(s)	HJ0552-954; HJ0553-954; HJ0554-954
Primary regional center	Inland Regional Center
Service type(s)	Work Activity Program (WAP)
Service code(s)	954
Number of consumers currently serving and current staff to consumer ratio.	HJ0552-954=146 (Rancho Cucamonga); HJ0553-954=100 (Hesperia); HJ0554-954=125 (San Bernardino)
Have you or the organization you work with been a past recipient of HCBS Funding?	Yes: first round 2016/17
Please provide a brief description of the service/ setting that includes what a typical day consists of and how services are currently provided; include barriers to compliance with the HCBS rules.	The structure of work activity program (WAP) does not allow for sustained integration opportunities, nor does it allow for staffing to implement a true person-centered approach. If a person desires to explore CIE, it does not allow for job development, discovery, customized employment or traditional job placement.
Identify which HCBS federal requirements this concept addresses that are currently out of compliance.	Transitioning a nonintegrated WAP model of services is likely going to be one of the most challenging transitions to be faced in meeting the HCBS requirements. The current WAP structure does not allow for sustained integration opportunities or individualized training needed for successful transition to competitive employment as currently defined.
Narrative/description of the concept; include justification for the funding request and explain how the concept would achieve proposed outcomes.	<p>VIP's Work Activity Programs are chosen by many clients; however, they provide work in settings that are considered congregate and non-integrated, with limited access to the community. With funding made available in the last HCBS grant cycle, VIP was able to add services under the program name <u>ACE – Achieving Competitive Employment</u> for additional job readiness, training, self-advocacy, person-center planning, and community access. Clients are excited about new skills acquired/opportunities to access exploration and job trials in community employment. Feedback indicates a strong desire to continue/expand upon these services.</p> <p>A. Barriers and Resulting Needs:</p> <p>1. For those persons served that are interested in moving from the WAP model to Competitive Integrated Employment, additional supports are needed.</p>

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2. While some persons served are able to find a job on their own, most that desire to enter competitive integrated employment are in need of comprehensive job development support through working with an employment specialist.

3. Current funding does not cover the cost of the tasks of an employment specialist who will perform services such as discovery, job preparation for interviews, resume development, support for application completion and the actual job search/placement itself.

4. VIP, Inc. currently employs one unfunded employment specialist; additional employment specialists are needed.

- a. The current unfunded employment specialist had a caseload of 36 at any given time. This high caseload results in longer than desired outcomes; in addition, there is no room for growth due to caseload capacity.
- b. VIP specifically needs one employment specialist in the high desert area of Hesperia, and one in the Inland Empire (these positions would be in addition to the 1 unfunded Employment Specialist currently on staff at VIP.)
- c. With the addition of 2 funded employment specialists, VIP can begin promoting CIE in our San Bernardino WAP location and allow us to expand and seek SE vendorization, something that has never been formally offered in this program location.

B. How these barriers will be addressed:
To increase CIE: Additional employment specialists will be hired to perform tasks such as but not limited to:

1. Discovery
2. Job Preparation
3. Interview skills/Resume Development
4. Development of Traditional CIE and Customized Employment job sites
5. Support for Application Completion
6. Performing the actual job search, placement and support for retention
7. Other needed services for success of persons served

C. Method to implement:
To complete the activities outlined above, VIP will hire 2 additional employment specialists whose key focus will be the transition of persons served from WAP to Competitive Integrated Employment. One will be based in the High Desert area of Hesperia and the other will be based in the Inland Empire. The toolkit used will include traditional placement methods as well as Discovery and Customized Employment.

D. Outcomes: Specific and measurable outcomes will be included in VIP's annual outcomes reporting tool.

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	<p>Measurement will include data such as the number of placements; length of time in Job Development; average hours worked; average wage; employment retention.</p> <p>Conclusion: For years, WAP programs have been inflexible and woefully underfunded, operating with bare bones staff whose main focus is on the work task completion to meet production demands. By enhancing the staff as outlined above, additional supports will be in place to aid persons served transition from WAP to Competitive Integrated Employment if so desired by the person(s) served.</p>
Please describe your person-centered approach ¹ in the concept development process; how did you involve the individuals for whom you provide services?	<p>Feedback was gathered, not only about the currently funded transition services now being provided through funding from the FY16/17 grant cycle (ACE – Achieving Competitive Employment), but also about how they would like to see these services expanded and/or new services added. Solicited client/family feedback included comments indicating they would like to learn more about specific jobs (trade training), trial job placements, resume writing, interviewing, computer class. <u>The person-centered process implemented as part of ACE also provided feedback about the desire on many clients' part to begin the job search process.</u> All expanded/new services will be individualized and go through the person-centered planning process.</p>
Does the concept address unmet service needs or service disparities? If so, how?	<p>Yes. The most recent data on the State Council Developmental Disabilities dashboard reflects that less than 15% of working age people with developmental disabilities are employed. This concept addresses barriers to employment.</p>
Estimated budget and timeline; identify all major costs and benchmarks — attachments are acceptable.	<p>This is a one-year request: Employment Specialist annual base salary plus commission and fringe: \$75,000 TOTAL for 2 Employment Specialists: \$150,000 Vehicle: \$24,000 x 2 = \$48,000; Fuel = \$5,000; Insurance = \$7,200; Maintenance = \$1,200; Operating Costs: Laptop x 2 = \$2,400; Cellphone x 2 = \$1,200</p>
Total requested amount.	\$215,000
What is your plan for sustaining the benefits, value, and success of your project at the conclusion of 2018-19 HCBS Funding?	<p>Growth in other programs (specifically SE) will provide additional revenue streams to help fund ongoing Employment Specialist positions; seeking additional grant money and fundraising options will be considered.</p>

¹ A person-centered approach emphasizes what is important to the individual who receives services and focuses on personal preferences, satisfaction, and choice of supports in accessing the full benefits of community living. For more information regarding person-centered practices, please visit www.nasdds.org/resource-library/person-centered-practices.

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Have you or the organization you work with been a past recipient of HCBS Funding?	Yes: first round FY16/17
Please provide a brief description of the service/ setting that includes what a typical day consists of and how services are currently provided; include barriers to compliance with the HCBS rules.	Structure of work activity program (WAP) does not allow for sustained integration opportunities; WAP design/staffing does not allow for adequate job readiness training; There is family and client resistance to CIE due to impact of benefits, safety issues, etc.; Need for stronger person-centered planning, self-advocacy; Consideration of employers' needs; Employer diversity education. ACE, Achieving Competitive Employment was created to help fill this service gap, but only 41% funded.
Identify which HCBS federal requirements this concept addresses that are currently out of compliance.	Transitioning a nonintegrated WAP model of services is likely going to be one of the most challenging transitions to be faced in meeting the HCBS requirements. The current WAP structure does not allow for sustained integration opportunities or individualized training needed for successful transition to competitive employment as currently defined.
Narrative/description of the concept; include justification for the funding request and explain how the concept would achieve proposed outcomes.	VIP's Work Activity Programs are chosen by many clients; however, they provide work in settings that are considered congregate and non-integrated. With funding made available in the FY16/17 HCBS grant cycle, VIP added services under the program name <u>ACE – Achieving Competitive Employment</u> , for additional job readiness, training, self-advocacy, person-center planning, and community access. Clients currently participating are excited about new skills that they are acquiring, and about opportunities to access job exploration and job trails in community employment. <u>Because the original concept was only 41% funded, the concept had to be scaled back by a considerable amount. Feedback indicates a strong desire to continue/expand these services which will be difficult without additional funding for these critically needed services.</u>

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	<p>A. Barriers and Resulting Needs:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For successful transition to CIE, clients need training in job readiness components such as work rules and attitudes, learning styles, motivation, identification of job interests/discovery, job exploration, social skills, safety, job seeking, resume building, interviewing, hygiene, dressing for success, sexual/other illegal harassment, upward mobility, others 2. To increase empowerment, clients and staff need ongoing training to refine and expand the person-centered planning process, which also includes rights, self-advocacy, discovery. 3. There is a need for: ongoing needs assessment outreach for potential and current employers; ongoing education of employers about the employment capabilities of persons with IDD; diversity training for employers and potential employers. <p>B. How these barriers will be addressed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To increase CIE: Continuation of job readiness training; 2. To increase CIE: Hold series of Community Employment Nights –trainings for clients/family members/circles of support; may include impact of benefits on work, advocacy, community safety issues, other topics identified by stakeholders; 3. To increase opportunities for community integration: Training about work and nonwork access of the community; opportunities for trial job placement, job exploration, volunteering, other desired community participation; to include small group community integration activities; 4. To increase empowerment of persons served: Ongoing training for staff members in person-centered planning, self-advocacy, informed choice and rights of persons served; 5. To increase empowerment of persons served: Expanded person-centered planning, training for persons served in self-advocacy, informed choice and rights, expressing individual needs and preferences; 6. To increase potential employer pool: Outreach to employers through needs assessments; 7. To retain existing and increase potential employer pool: Employer education about persons with disabilities in the workforce; Diversity Training for employers. <p>C. Method to implement B.1.-B.7. Above: VIP anticipates retaining current ACE staff (Manager plus 2 program specialists) and expanding ACE by hiring 1 Discovery Specialist/Job Developer who will work as part of the current ACE team to further develop and implement job exploration and discovery. Persons served in WAP, who are accustomed to making a paycheck, will have the opportunity to continue to work, and will also have the opportunity to access their local community, participate in trial work placements, volunteer, do</p>
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	<p>job exploration, etc. The lack of and limitations of public transportation will require two vehicles for community access.</p> <p>D. Outcomes: Refinement of soft skills curriculum; outreach to and education of employers, family members, stakeholders; person-centered approach, facilitation of community access, including discovery, for clients who would not otherwise have this option in the current WAP model. Specific/measurable outcomes included in VIP's annual outcomes reporting tool.</p> <p>Conclusion: WAP programs are inflexible and underfunded. ACE offers flexibility for increased integration and choice. While these activities do not meet all the challenges of transitioning WAP services, it moves WAP services closer to expectations of the HCBS requirements.</p>
Please describe your person-centered approach ¹ in the concept development process; how did you involve the individuals for whom you provide services?	<p>Solicited client/family feedback included comments such as: <i>class is helping with my communication skills and is helping me understand my rights as a person with a disability; this program is helping me get one step closer to getting a job; I like the size of the job readiness class and enjoy being in a big group, I enjoyed learning about circle of support and enjoyed participating in the mock person-centered planning meeting conducted in class because of the praise received from my peers.</i> Also, they would like to learn more about specific jobs (trade training), trial job placements, resume writing, interviewing, computer class. All expanded/new services will be individualized and person-centered.</p>
Does the concept address unmet service needs or service disparities? If so, how?	<p>Yes. The most recent data on the State Council Developmental Disabilities dashboard reflects that less than 15% of working age people with developmental disabilities are employed. This concept addresses barriers to employment.</p>
Estimated budget and timeline; identify all major costs and benchmarks — attachments are acceptable.	<p>This is intended to be a one-year project. Salaries with fringe: Manager-\$76,000; 2 Program Specialists (\$44,500)=\$89,000; 1 Discovery Specialist/Job Developer-75,000; Vehicle: \$24,000 x 2 = \$48,000; Fuel-\$5,000; Insurance-\$7,200; Maintenance-\$1,200; 1 Laptop-\$1,200</p>
Total requested amount.	\$302,600
What is your plan for sustaining the benefits, value, and success of your project at the conclusion of 2018-19 HCBS Funding?	<p>Growth in other programs and growth in business development will provide additional revenue streams to help fund ongoing trade training positions; seeking additional grant money and fundraising options will be considered.</p>

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