

**To: Employment First stakeholders**

**From: Acacia McGuire Anderson, Interim Employment First Coordinator**

**Re: Employment First: 20 hour standard and policy guidance**

The Lane v. Brown settlement, which was approved by a federal court in December 2015, calls for a number of policy changes. One of those requirements is that the Department of Human Services will issue guidance to VR counselors, ODDS staff, Community Developmental Disability Programs (CDDPs), and brokerages stating that the recommended standard for planning and implementing supported employment services will be the opportunity to work at least 20 hours per week, recognizing that based on individual choice, preferences and circumstances, some people may choose to work at that level while others may not.

ODDS and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) will issue policy guidance by June 2016 around this standard of 20 hours per week. There have been stakeholder meetings to gather feedback on this policy. ODDS and VR will share a draft with stakeholders through the normal process before it goes into effect. We also will have multiple communications around this topic, including a Frequently Asked Questions document, a Fact Sheet, and more.

For service coordinators and personal agents, the discussion around hours should happen when the Career Development Plan (CDP) is completed as part of the annual Individual Support Plan, or sooner – whenever the individual chooses to have the discussion. We recognize that often these conversations are already occurring during the annual planning meeting. Further guidance on when to have the discussion and how to document this discussion around hours worked will be issued with the policy transmittal from ODDS.

For VR counselors, the individual's goal of hours worked (that may be a range) is recorded in the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). Reaching the hours worked goal in the IPE (or revised IPE) is one of the criteria for job stabilization. VR will also issue policy guidance to VR staff on this.

Some people may choose to work more than one job to reach their employment goal. Others may choose to increase their working hours over time.

The primary purpose of this guidance is to make sure that service coordinators, personal agents and VR counselors are talking to individuals about how to get the right job with the maximum hours, based on the person's preferences and circumstances. Please look forward to additional communication and guidance around this topic.

If you have comments or other questions, please email them to [employment.first@state.or.us](mailto:employment.first@state.or.us).