

ONTARIO DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM - EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS

DIRECTIVE 4.1

JOB PLACEMENT

SUMMARY OF DIRECTIVE

To describe the job development and placement services and supports that clients can access to connect them to sustainable jobs in the competitive labour market.

To identify requirements for ODSP Employment Supports job placement funding.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

[Sections 32 \(1\) of the ODSP Act 1997](#)
[Section 4 of the Regulation](#)

INTENT OF POLICY

To ensure that a range of goods and services are available for clients which help to reduce or eliminate disability-related barriers to employment and assist clients to reach their competitive employment goal.

APPLICATION OF POLICY

This directive contains a comprehensive listing of goods and services that eligible clients may access through ODSP Employment Supports in order to help them get a job. Service providers and clients will use this information as they work together to develop a plan to achieve the client's competitive employment goal.

As a general principle, clients are expected to access other available funding (e.g. Ministry of Health's Assistive Devices Program) and no-cost or publicly funded training/employment programs (e.g. Ministry of Training, College and University, Job Connect Program, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada funded programs, etc.) before, or in conjunction with, funding under ODSP Employment Supports. This includes services that the employer is required to provide as an accommodation as per the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Service providers should be aware of all other programs and sources of funding available in their community and assist clients to access these supports. This will allow service providers to maximize their resources and direct ODSP Employment Supports

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job placement funding to supports not covered by other programs.

The service provider will assist the client to secure a job that is appropriate to the client's abilities and skills, taking into account the existing opportunities in the local labour market. Job development/placement services and supports are designed for people with disabilities who are unable to successfully enter the competitive labour market without support because of employment barriers and the impact of disability-related challenges.

People with disabilities will have varying needs for job placement services. Some have the ability to market their skills and find employment with minimal support. Other people may be highly motivated to become employed but have limited confidence and self-marketing skills to alter employers' perception of their disability and ability to do the job.

Job development and placement services help individuals connect with the labour market early in their path to employment through activities such as job trials, volunteer placements, work experiences, on-the-job training and direct employment placements.

Job development and placement services can also be an effective pathway into apprenticeships and other skilled trades. In addition to overall employer outreach, service providers may also want to focus their outreach, communications and marketing to local employers who can provide apprenticeship opportunities for people with disabilities.

Job Placement Approaches

There are several approaches to job placement including:

- Traditional client-centered approach - assess the individual client's strengths (e.g. aptitudes, interests, skills, training and experience) and barriers to employment and then undertake activities to find jobs/resources to match the profile.
- Job development "marketing" model - service provider finds potential jobs through postings and employer contacts and identifies clients who have the basic skills needed for the job (though not necessarily all skill requirements). Negotiations may take place with the employer to "carve out" a modified position in order to accommodate the client's needs.
- Broad-based communication strategy including media advertising to promote the positive aspects of hiring people with disabilities. May also involve collaborative approaches/partnerships, testimonials and best practices by employers, peer mentors and various employer supports (e.g. Internet-based recruitment and placement service).

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- Employment consortiums that bring together consumers, employers, disability organizations, employment placement service providers and government agencies/funders to create employment opportunities.

Service providers will determine which of these approaches or combination of approaches work best in their community, taking into account the type of clients served, local labour market conditions and individual client needs.

Many job placement services have shifted to a “marketing model” which involves positioning the service to assist employers with their human resources needs. The needs of job candidates are met when those candidates get jobs. Service providers who use this approach have higher success rates in filling job requests, and improved success in placing people who have significant employment barriers.

The effectiveness of job placement services is closely linked to the following factors:

- Actively developing employer networks and hiring staff with marketing skills and private sector connections;
- connecting job candidates to the labour market early in the employment planning process and tapping the hidden job market;
- defining job readiness in terms of motivation, availability and medical/behavioural stability, instead of skill sets or educational background;
- marketing of "soft" skills and personality attributes - loyalty, enthusiasm, motivation, courage in re-entering or entering the job market, etc.;
- consulting with employers around the "shaping" of job descriptions so that jobs are barrier-free (e.g. eliminating the requirement for a driver's license if being able to drive is not critical to performing the essential job requirements);
- positioning wage subsidies as a tool that is used as required, rather than a necessity;
- using job trials or training placements as tools for assessment purposes and getting a ‘foot in the door’ with employers; and
- building a management structure into the placement service that ensures that clients with more significant employment barriers get served.

Job Development

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Individuals who have significant employment barriers may need job development and placement support to help bridge the gap between their current situation and the labour market and employer's expectations.

Job developers have a specialized expertise to recognize and effectively use the minimum job requirements and/or hidden needs of the employer. They focus not only on the skills the client has to do the job but also other assets such as the client's personality, motivation, availability, and ability to fit in with other employees in the workplace. By building trusting relationships with employers, job developers help the client access opportunities they would not have been able to secure on their own.

Job developers must also be competent in job analysis, worksite modification and job accommodation including the application of appropriate technology. Job developers must have skills to enable them to work effectively with employers, co-workers and clients; develop or modify a workplace to accommodate the client's needs; identify tools needed by the client to do the job and support a person at work without being intrusive.

Eligible Job Placement Goods and Services

The goods and services that are provided will depend on and respond to the individual needs of the client and/or the employer. Service providers will offer appropriate levels of services and supports in response to the client's employment needs. The types of goods and services that may be provided under job placement funding include:

- job development with employers in the community;
- finding and/or developing workplace training (job trials, work experience, on-the-job training) and employment opportunities;
- screening and marketing clients for job opportunities;
- job preparation activities (e.g. work hardening, orientation to the workplace rights and responsibilities, job skills training, etc.);
- assisting participants to conduct job searches in the area of occupational interests (e.g. preparing resumes, covering letters, employment applications, licenses, etc.);
- arranging any necessary job training and/or employment placement supports (e.g. transportation to work, work supplies, clothing, telephone expenses, certification charges, etc.);
- putting in place the tools and supports required by the client to overcome obstacles in doing the job (e.g. special equipment, job coaches, etc.);
- providing supportive follow-up to the employer and the client; and
- negotiating with the employer the provision of employee accommodations.

Service providers may offer these job development and placement services themselves or coordinate these services with other providers in the community. They may also

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purchase specialized supports through other suppliers.

Workplace Training

Job Trials

Job trials with employers can be a critical step in helping a client prepare for employment and secure a job. Job trials are an effective and efficient way to get reliable labour market feedback, overcome employer perception barriers and gain access to employment. In many cases, job trials may lead to direct employment.

Job trials may be used to:

- test out abilities and interests for specific types of jobs;
- provide clients and job developers with valuable feedback on which to build an employment action plan and determine the need for further services;
- provide employer feedback based on performance in an actual work setting;
- give the employer an opportunity to "try out" the employee with little risk; and
- identify the need for workplace training or on-the-job supports.

Job trials should provide adequate supervision and training. It is recommended that there be a written workplace training agreement signed by the employer, client and service provider outlining the goals, terms and conditions for the placement, as well as a process for monitoring and evaluation. Service providers may consider paying a fee to the employer to compensate for lost revenue or time, if significant training or supervision is required.

Work Experience

Work experiences may be appropriate for clients who require exposure to the work environment before they can undertake specific training or employment. Clients have an opportunity to build basic work skills in an actual job setting. These work placements may also be used for clients who have completed training programs but have no prior labour market attachment or references.

As with job trials, a written workplace training agreement is recommended.

On-the-job Training

ODSP Employment Supports funding can support a range of workplace training options for skill development purposes including on-the-job training arrangements and apprenticeships. Workplace training placements occur when the service provider, client and the employer determine that specific on-the-job training is needed to bridge the gap between unemployment and employment. Through the placement, the job developer

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supports the employer's ability to meet his/her business needs and the client's work and skill development needs.

On-the-job training refers to a training situation where there is an "employer-employee relationship" and an expectation of continued employment following the end of the training period. They are designed to encourage employers to retain the client after the placement by committing to specific work-related training and development that prepares the individual to perform the full responsibilities of the job, and by offsetting some of the employer's costs of training the new employee. As a general guideline, decisions must be based on the training needs of the client in relation to the job requirements, the employer's training commitment and the method of training.

Funding may be provided for either:

- A training course or program that relates to the employee's job responsibilities or involves training in adaptive technology required to perform the job duties, or
- A training wage subsidy to assist the employer to cover the costs of training or additional supervision required during the early stages of employment and time required to put in place any tools/supports needed by the employee to perform the job.

In order to ensure accountability of training dollars and improve the employee retention rate, agreements should be signed by the employer, client and service provider outlining the training goals, terms and conditions of on-the-job training.

There should be a commitment from the employer to:

- hire at entry level wage or better (comparable to other employees in similar positions);
- develop a training plan for the employee;
- share in employee training costs;
- keep the client employed after the funding ends; and
- participate in a progress review.

Service providers will negotiate the level of ongoing support they will provide the client and the employer. They should also be available to intervene in a job crisis. Situations may also arise where a client experiences a non-employment related crisis in the workplace. In such cases, service providers should be prepared to direct employers to an outside agency for support.

The amount of job placement and retention funding provided to service providers under ODSP Employment Supports does not support providing on-the-job training subsidies for all eligible clients. Therefore, service providers should develop a rationale for

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subsidized training rather than direct job placement. Service providers will need to manage placement duration and training subsidies to ensure that contracted results are achieved within budget.

Timeframe

The time that is required for a successful job placement will vary per client, based on factors such as the local labour market and the service provider's employer network, as well as the client's disability and work-related barriers.

Where job placement is not successful, the client may return to the employment determination stage to identify more appropriate services and supports or whether alternatives to competitive employment need to be explored.

RELATED DIRECTIVES

[4.2 Job Retention and Career Advancement](#)

[4.3 Exceptional Work-Related Disability Supports](#)

[5.1 Employment Supports Funding](#)

[6.4 Performance Measures and Information Reporting](#)

[6.5 Workplace Accident Insurance Coverage](#)