

ONTARIO DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM - EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS

DIRECTIVE 4.2

JOB RETENTION AND CAREER ADVANCEMENT

SUMMARY OF DIRECTIVE

To describe the goods and services that clients can access to help retain them in competitive employment and to advance in their career.

To identify requirements for ODSP Employment Supports job retention funding.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

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

INTENT OF POLICY

To ensure that clients are provided the workplace supports needed in order to retain a job and advance in their careers.

APPLICATION OF POLICY

After clients have been placed in competitive employment, service providers will receive funding to provide job retention supports to the client and/or the employer. The goal is to ensure the client is retained in the job for as long as possible or moves directly to another job. Where a client is unable to retain the job, the service provider will work with the client to identify a more appropriate work placement.

Job Retention Supports

Most employees require different types, levels and intensity of supports on their job. Businesses often provide supports to their employees during the normal course of business. However, some employers may need additional assistance in creating an inclusive workplace that is supportive of individuals with disabilities and provide the tools employees with disabilities need to perform the job effectively.

Typical, naturally occurring workplace supports may include such things as a co-worker who acts as a mentor to assist a new employee in learning the job, a supervisor who monitors work performance, co-workers who encourage social integration, company

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sponsored training, employee assistance programs, etc.

Workplace supports that are specifically designed to assist an employee with a disability to perform his/her job may include modifications to the work environment (e.g. automatic door openers, signage on walls, telephone amplifiers, etc.); adjustments to employment policies and practices (flex time to accommodate disability needs, reimbursement of employee expenses, etc.); and/or changes in the way certain job functions are performed that allow the employee to complete the tasks successfully (e.g. providing a written list of job duties, team assignments, etc.).

The need for job tools and supports may not be readily apparent when the client first starts working. Work behaviours that may signal the need for providing additional workplace supports include difficulty performing a job duty, inability to meet production standards, forgetting instructions, repeatedly asking for assistance, etc. The client may already know, or have some idea of what he/she needs, but may need help in accessing support resources. Wherever possible, the client should be encouraged to use the existing employer resources that are already available to support other employees within the workplace. The goal is to assist the employer in supporting the individual with a disability as they would other employees, rather than the person relying on specialized outside supports.

Job retention supports funded by ODSP Employment Supports may include the following, as appropriate:

- job monitoring and interventions to assist clients and employers if there are work performance issues;
- assisting the client to negotiate workplace supports;
- assisting employers to identify and develop job accommodations; and
- on-the-job supports (e.g. job coaching, motivational strategies, assisting the client to arrange community supports, etc.).

Job retention supports may be provided on a regular or as needed basis, for up to a maximum of 33 consecutive months after job placement (maximum of 15 consecutive months for clients not in receipt of ODSP Income Support). The support is intended to assist the individual to maintain employment and if necessary, identify when increased support and/or tools to perform the job are required. Job retention supports may involve direct assistance in the workplace, contact with clients over the phone, brief meetings/consultations with the employer and support for work-related activities outside the workplace.

The type of tools or support required will depend on the individual's disability-related needs, personal preferences, job tasks, employer needs, and the availability of existing supports. Effective supports are designed with both the employee and employer input.

Job Coaching

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Job coaching is intended to assist a new employee to perform his/her job effectively and to function independently in competitive employment. Job coaching is also intended to help deal with work performance issues that may arise. This usually involves extensive liaison with both the employee and employer.

Clients may also require a few hours of job coaching when new work tasks are assigned and occasional support to deal with personal issues that may affect work performance.

The role of the job coach should be a facilitator of supports, rather than the primary provider of supports. Co-workers and natural cues/existing employee supports (e.g. job aids, posted/written instructions, etc.) in the work environment should be used to support employees with disabilities. The job coach may provide assistance to workplace personnel to train the new employee (e.g. the most effective means of providing instructions for the client's disability, memory techniques and prompting, communication strategies, etc.).

Service providers should develop a job retention plan with the client that includes the level of job coaching support to be provided, an expected timeframe for job coaching and milestones that will be used to measure progress. The client should demonstrate a diminishing need for support.

Where a high level of support is required and the client is not making appropriate progress to independent competitive employment, the service provider should review the employment plan with the client and discuss alternatives.

Job Accommodations

Employers may be unaware of the various types of workplace tools and supports, or resources that are available in the community to assist with the job accommodation solution (e.g. organizations providing disability supports, technical information such as the Job Accommodation Network, tax measures, etc.) The service provider should be knowledgeable of these resources and provide employers with this information. Employers are often concerned with the perceived cost of accommodations for employees with disabilities. Service providers should reassure employers that research demonstrates the majority of employees with disabilities require no specialized assistance and that half of the accommodations made by employers costs less than \$500 to implement.

The service provider will consider the employer's ability and willingness to provide the necessary accommodations for the individual as required under the Ontario Human Rights Code, prior to providing funding. For details regarding employer obligations to accommodate employees with disabilities and how they apply to the provision of employment supports, refer to [Directive 2.2: Employed Applicants and Applicants with Job Offers](#).

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Career Advancement

Clients may receive career advancement supports under job retention funding for service providers.

Career advancement needs relate to an individual's ability to advance within or between jobs and includes activities such as learning additional duties, pursuing opportunities for promotion, exploring other job opportunities using transferable skills and experience, and job skills upgrading.

Service providers may provide career advancement supports to clients who are already working but who are "under employed" based on their skills, experience and the needs of the local labour market. ODSP Employment Supports are provided to assist the client to increase earning capacity and avoid, eliminate or reduce reliance on social assistance.

RELATED DIRECTIVES

[2.2 Employed Applicants and Applicants with Job Offers](#)

[4.2 Job Placement](#)

[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](#)