



NC DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES**

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## Memorandum

Date: January 20, 2022

To: Individuals and Families Accessing State Funded Services

From: Dave Richard, Deputy Secretary for Medicaid  
Chris Egan, Senior Director for Employment and Community Inclusion  
Deepa Avula, Director, DMH/DD/SAS  
Kathie Trotter, Director, DVRS

Subject: Promoting and Expanding Competitive Integrated Employment Opportunities for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is launching the *Strategic Plan for Promoting and Expanding Competitive Integrated Employment Opportunities for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*. DHHS believes that everyone, including people with the most significant disabilities, has the right to Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE). CIE means:

- Working in the community alongside other employees without disabilities
- Earning at least minimum wage
- Getting the same workplace benefits as others in the same workplace
- Having the same opportunities for advancement as others in the same workplace.

CIE is for everyone. It can be full-time or part-time work, as well as self-employment and small business ownership.

This CIE I/DD Plan is a result of a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with two disability advocacy organizations – Disability Rights North Carolina (DRNC) and the Center for Public Representation (CPR). This MOU was created in response to a demand letter from DRNC and CPR alleging that the State of North Carolina violated the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Supreme Court's decision in *Olmstead* by failing to serve

individuals with I/DD in integrated employment settings appropriate to their needs by June 2020.

DHHS has worked hard over the past decade to create a system that supports people with disabilities as fully included members of their communities. Unfortunately, people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) are less likely to work in CIE than those without disabilities.

Adult Developmental Vocational Programs (ADVPs) have been used to support people with I/DD for many years. These services are often provided in segregated settings, with people earning less than minimum wage. ADVPs have been an important part of our service system; however, they do not fully support CIE. Therefore, as part of our Strategic Plan to fully adopt CIE, there will be no new admissions to ADVP services starting July 1, 2022.

A detailed explanation of our phased approach and the steps we will take over the next five years are outlined in the CIE I/DD Plan. The plan centers on the use of informed choice to empower individuals to make their own decisions about CIE.

Key components of the CIE I/DD Plan include:

- Clear pathways to CIE for people with I/DD
- Information, resources, opportunities, and reasonable accommodations for people to make informed choices about CIE and/or other meaningful day options.
- Ending admissions to services in ADVP settings after June 30, 2022.
- Employment assessments and career development for individuals who have received ADVP since January 1, 2020 by July 1, 2023.
- Ensure individualized Supported Employment (SE) and related support services are provided, focusing initially on individuals who have received ADVP since January 1, 2020.
- Support ADVP providers with transformation of program and business models to support CIE service delivery and increase capacity within existing CIE services.
- Establish nationally recognized core competencies and training requirements for job developers, job coaches, discovery leaders, and case managers responsible for the provision of services that facilitate transition to and work in CIE.
- End funding for ADVP by July 1, 2026.

Plan implementation is subject to availability of funding. DHHS is committed to a service array that supports individuals at various phases of their life. Individuals who are currently in ADVPs can continue to receive those services until July 1, 2026.

Other services in the State-funded service array include Community Living and Support, which is an individualized service that aims to increase independent living skills, and Day Supports, which is a group service that aims to increase independence. The Medicaid service array includes Supported Employment and other services.

All individuals in ADVP will be offered employment assessments and career development plans will be developed to support their informed decision-making around exploring, preparing

for, seeking, obtaining, or maintaining CIE. Additionally, individuals in ADVP will be referred to a benefits counselor, who can explain how work may impact their benefits. For those interested in CIE, staff from the NC Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, the LME/MCO, and/or provider can help an individual establish unique goals for and a path to employment, whether that is part-time, full-time or self-employment.

DHHS is committed to ongoing communication, training and technical assistance for individuals and families in support of CIE for I/DD Plan. In addition to online resources available to all individuals and families, DHHS also will create formal and informal stakeholder advisory groups for individuals, families and providers to serve as an ongoing platform for education, stakeholder feedback and input, and sharing of perspectives as the plan is implemented. Individuals will continue to have access to supported employment services through their respective LME/MCO or future BH I/DD Tailored Plan.

For information about vocational rehabilitation (VR) services or to apply for VR, submit an info request using our [online request form](#) or contact your local VR office directly ([VR office listing](#)).

cc: Tara K. Myers, Employment, Inclusion and Economic Stability  
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