



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**
Division of Mental Health, Developmental
Disabilities and Substance Use Services

ROY COOPER • Governor
KODY H. KINSLEY • Secretary
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KELLY CROSBIE • Director

COMMUNICATION BULLETIN

TO: Local Management Entities/Managed Care Organizations (LME/MCOs)

FROM: Saarah Waleed, Assistant Director for Policy and Programs, Division of
Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Use Services

Alice Farrar, Chief of Employment Services and Program Development,
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

SUBJECT: Project Strength, Positivity, Access, Respect and Knowledge Pilot Program (Project
SPARK Pilot)

DATE: December 15, 2023

CONTENT: Implementation Date of **March 1, 2024** for the service definitions for Project Spark Pilot

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Job Retention Services and Community Engagement Options for the Intellectual and
Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) Benefit Plan in the **Vaya, Alliance and Trillium**
catchment areas

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) was awarded \$13,852,567 over a five-year grant period from the US Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration through the Disability Innovation Fund to effectively establish the needed Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) pilot projects that offer the complex services and supports needed to help those with I/DD enter, maintain and enjoy CIE.

Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Use Services (DMHDSUS) and DVRS entered into an Intra-Departmental Memorandum of Agreement to work cooperatively to implement Project SPARK pilot demonstration projects aimed at providing individuals with I/DD the support to pursue CIE in the fields of travel, green energy, and essential worker roles.

This bulletin provides an overview of the service definitions which become effective on the dates listed below. The service definitions can be found at: <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/providers/provider-info/mentalhealth-development-disabilities-and-substance-abuse-services/service-definitions>

Job Retention Services (I/DD)

The service requirements for the Job Retention service are as follows:

- Job Retention is an individualized wraparound support service that enables a recipient 18 years of age and older with a developmental disability as defined in G.S. 122-C-3(12a) who is

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enrolled in Adult Developmental Vocational Program (ADVP), Sheltered Workshop settings or considering enrollment to an ADVP or Sheltered Workshop settings earning sub-minimum wage to achieve competitive integrated employment (CIE).

- Recipients must be enrolled in the NC Subminimum Wage to Competitive Integrated Employment/Strength, Positivity, Access, Respect and Knowledge (NCSWTCIE/SPARK) Pilot.
- The Job Retention service must occur in a CIE setting, providing meaningful full or part-time work at minimum wage or higher, with wages and benefits similar to those without disabilities performing the same work, and fully integrated with coworkers without disabilities.
- This service may not exceed 40 hours per week.
- Transportation is available up to 365 days from the time the participant enrolls in Job Retention Services.

Billing should be completed as follows for the Job Retention service:

- Effective **March 1, 2024**, the NCTracks billing code for individuals enrolling in the Job Retention Service is **YM857**.

Service Rates:

- The service rate is \$12.28/15 minutes - \$49.12/hour. **(Individual)**. LME/MCOs maintain rate setting authority.

Community Engagement Options (I/DD)

- Community Engagement Options is a range of community-based and comprehensive services that enable a recipient 18 years of age and older with a developmental disability as defined in G.S. 122-C-3(12a) who is enrolled in Adult Developmental Vocational Program (ADVP), Sheltered Workshop settings or considering enrollment to an ADVP or Sheltered Workshop settings earning sub-minimum wage to achieve competitive integrated employment (CIE).
- Community Engagement Options may be provided in the home of the recipient and/or in the community.
- Recipients receiving this service may reside in their own home, the home of their family or natural supports, in a licensed Supervised Living facility (i.e., Group Home, licensed Alternative Family Living (AFL) home), unlicensed AFL) and be an active participant of their community.
- Recipients must be enrolled in the NC Subminimum Wage to Competitive Integrated Employment/Strength, Positivity, Access, Respect and Knowledge (NCSWTCIE/SPARK) Pilot.
- This service may not exceed 30 hours per week.
- Transportation is available up to 365 days from the time the participant enrolls in Community Engagement Options.

Billing should be completed as follows for the Community Engagement Options service below:

- Effective **March 1, 2024**, individuals enrolling in the Community Engagement Options service should utilize the applicable NCTracks billing codes noted below.

Service Rates: **Individual** - \$8.23/15 minutes and \$32.92/hour. The procedure code is **YM855**.
Group - \$2.74/15 minutes - \$10.96/hour. The procedure code is **YM856**.

Ethical concerns should be submitted to DMHDDSUS Consumer Rights Team for review. If validated, additional review and action may be taken by the State.

If you have any questions, please contact Stephanie Jones at 984-236-5043 or DMHIDDCONTACT@dhhs.nc.gov.