

## Summary of SouthSTAR's Employment Services

### **Milestone also known as competitive employment:**

Milestone uses four stages to help an individual obtain community employment: Assessments, Job Development, Job retention and Follow-up. The Employment Specialist assesses the individual through both observation and written assessments. An individual is assessed for job readiness, previous work skills, coping skills, skill needs to retain employment and personal preferences. The Employment Specialist job develops based on the individual's employment preferences and abilities. They help assist the individual in identifying specific jobs available in the community. Once employment is obtained, job retention services are provided, such as job coaching, training and/or monitoring, to help with specific tasks on the job. These services decrease and discontinue once the individual has become stable at their job. Lastly, follow-up is a time-limited service that can include direct and indirect support to the employer or employee to ensure the job is retained. Supports usually last around 90 days once employed.

### **Supported Employment (SEP):**

SEP is competitive employment with ongoing supports. This program was designed for individuals with severe disabilities. This program provides the same stages as the Milestone program, except it provides longer support services. The program currently allows for job development services and up to 18-months of follow up services from the date of employment. Follow up services include job retention supports, such as job coaching, training and/or mentoring. Once an individual is capable of working independently without supports, the case would close. If an individual is not able to work independently after 18 months, the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor and Employment Specialist would determine if services should be extended or terminated.

### **Individual Placement and Support (IPS):**

IPS is an evidence-based approach that has enabled individuals to find and keep long-term, rewarding jobs based on their strengths and preferences. The Employment Specialist continuously assesses the individual's wants and needs and makes revisions to services based on these. Support is provided for as long as the individual needs it and usually last for approximately one year after finding employment. IPS follows eight specific principles to ensure success. The first principle is that employment is competitive, which means that it is a job in the community, making at least minimum wage and is not a job specifically set aside for individuals with disabilities. The second principle is zero exclusion which means that the individual only needs to want a job in the community. The third principle is that services provided are integrated with the case management team. The fourth principle is that services will be provided based on the individuals preferences. The fifth principle allows for personalized benefit planning services to ensure that everyone is fully informed of how their benefits will be affected once employed. The six principle provides rapid job search so that time is not wasted on timely assessments and training. The seventh principle requires the employment specialist to complete systematic job development to build relationships with employers in the attempts to learn about their needs and match them with an individual's strengths and interests. The eighth principle allows for time unlimited supports. These principles implemented together have been proven to be successful in securing competitive employment.

### **Ticket to Work (TTW):**

The Social Security Administration issues Tickets to beneficiaries with disabilities. These tickets can be used to obtain services and supports from an approved service provider, also known as an Employment Network. The goal is for an individual to obtain employment and work towards financial independence and eventually become less dependent on benefits for financial security. This program is available for individuals with disabilities from the ages of 18 to 64 who are receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Employment services consist of job development, job planning, job retention, and follow along services.