### Core Principle & Definition

#### Zero Exclusion Policy
All consumers who want to work are eligible for help. No one is excluded for reasons such as:
- Mental health symptoms
- Substance use
- Poor work history
- Grooming difficulties
- Treatment non-adherence

#### Consumer Preferences are Important
Consumer preferences lay the groundwork for the job search. Preferences may include:
- Personal interests or type of work
- Work environment
- Location
- Number of work hours per week
- Preferences for disclosure of disability (or a particular level of disclosure)
- Type of job supports
- Accommodation

#### Rapid Job Search
Consumers set the pace for the job search. Employment specialists help make contact with employers in the community. Research demonstrates that prolonged vocational assessments, work readiness activities, and work adjustment programs do not result in better outcomes. Job development is the process of developing relationships with employers and matching consumer job interests with employer needs.

#### A Competitive Job is the Goal
A competitive job pays at least minimum wage, occurs in the community, and is a job that anyone can apply for, regardless of whether or not they have a mental illness. These jobs are owned by the worker rather than the employment program. They can be part- or full-time jobs.

#### Employment is Integrated with Mental Health Services
Mental health staff and employment specialists have offices in the same location, meet at least weekly to share expertise, and plan services with consumers.

#### Time-Unlimited Support
Follow-along services occur for as long as consumers desire them. These may include:
- Problem solving
- Symptom management
- Social skills training
- Feedback from employers
- Workplace accommodations
- Supporting job changes

#### Personalized Benefits Planning
Benefits planning ensures that consumers have accurate information about the effects of earned income upon their benefits.

### Recommended Interventions for

- **Supported Employment Specialists**
- **Mental Health Professionals**

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<td><strong>Zero Exclusion Policy</strong></td>
<td>All team members talk to all consumers about the possibility of work. Convey a hopeful message about work. Refer consumers to an employment specialist when they express interest in work. Complete referrals to voc rehab as appropriate.</td>
<td><strong>Consumer Preferences are Important</strong></td>
<td>Use creativity and optimism to ensure that consumer preferences drive the employment plan. Review job history and issues related to disability to help clients determine immediate and long-term support needs and strategies. Ask for job accommodations from employers as needed. Respect each consumer’s desire for privacy or disclosure of disability; educate consumers about a variety of ways to talk about disability.</td>
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<td><strong>Rapid Job Search</strong></td>
<td>Employment specialists offer various levels of assistance to ensure that services are highly individualized. When consumers are comfortable with disclosure, employment specialists take an assertive approach to contact employers.</td>
<td><strong>A Competitive Job is the Goal</strong></td>
<td>Express the belief that consumers can work competitively. Help consumers transform low confidence or low expectations into hope and positive action.</td>
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<td><strong>Employment is Integrated with Mental Health Services</strong></td>
<td>Combine employment goals and mental health goals to form one comprehensive recovery plan. Streamline continuity of care with frequent communication.</td>
<td><strong>Time-Unlimited Support</strong></td>
<td>Inform consumers about the advantages of follow-along services and offer the services for as long as they want. With consumer consent, stay in touch with employers. Frequency of interactions may fluctuate according to consumer need. Assist with job transitions and career development.</td>
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<td><strong>Personalized Benefits Planning</strong></td>
<td>Assist consumers with money management, benefits reporting, and long-term financial planning as needed. Help families understand information from benefits planning.</td>
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<td>Utilize benefits planning to enhance each consumer’s informed choice about work.</td>
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### Recommended Interventions for

- **State Voc Rehab Counselors**

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<td><strong>Attempt to engage anyone with a diagnosed disability and an interest in work, including recent or repeat customers.</strong></td>
<td>Collaborate with consumers and mental health professionals to review previous employment interventions and devise a new employment plan based upon lessons learned from the past.</td>
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<td><strong>Utilize the Comprehensive Assessment for a careful consideration of strengths, needs, preferences, and resources to aid consumers in selection of a vocational goal.</strong></td>
<td>Help consumers explore all of their stated job interests, including those that require specific skill development. Encourage informed choice by engaging consumers in dialogue about job coaching and disclosure.</td>
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| **Move clients into job development and placement as quickly as possible.** | Limit short-term community-based work experiences to: 
- Career exploration (upon consumer request)  
- Situations in which the employer expects to hire at the end of the work experience. |
| **Encourage consumers to maximize their potential for work while managing their symptoms and adjusting to the world of work.** | Meet regularly with employment specialists and attend mental health team meetings whenever possible. |
| **Services end after consumers are working successfully. Consumers may reapply for services again in the future.** | |