

Adult Autism Waiver: Delay in Employment Credentials and Certificates

ODP Announcement 20-091

AUDIENCE:

Individuals and Families, Providers of Career Planning, Supported Employment, and Small Group Employment in the Adult Autism Waiver, and other interested parties

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this communication is to inform all impacted parties that there will be a delay in the implementation of the certification and credentialing requirements for employment services in the Adult Autism Waiver.

DISCUSSION:

An amendment to the Adult Autism Waiver (AAW) was approved by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) effective January 1, 2020. One of the requirements in that amendment is that staff working directly with a participant delivering Career Planning, Supported Employment, and Small Group Employment must have one of the following by July 1, 2020 or within 6 months of hire if hired after January 1, 2020:

- Hold a Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP) credential from the Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE); or
- Have been awarded a Basic Employment Services Certificate of Achievement or a Professional Certificate of Achievement in Employment Services from an Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators (ACRE) organizational member that has ACRE-approved training.

The waiver also requires that effective July 1, 2020, newly hired staff who do not have the required certification when hired must work under the supervision of someone who

is certified. This can occur for no longer than 6 months from the date of hire to allow the new hire time to obtain the certification.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Office of Developmental Programs has received approval from CMS to delay the implementation of these requirements. Each of the aforementioned requirements are being delayed by one year. The following timeframes now apply:

Staff **hired prior to January 1, 2021** must have one of the following by **July 1, 2021**:

- A CESP credential;
- A Basic Employment Services Certificate of Achievement from an ACRE organization member that has an ACRE-approved training; or
- A Professional Certificate of Achievement in Employment Services from an ACRE organization member that has an ACRE-approved training.

Staff **hired on or after January 1, 2021** must have one of the above credentials or training within six months of hire.

Beginning July 1, 2021, newly hired staff who do not have the required certification when hired must work under the supervision of someone who is certified. This can occur for no longer than 6 months from the date of hire to allow the new hire time to obtain the certification.

ODP recommends that all impacted providers that have staff who are required to have one of these employment credentials or certificates start the process now if they have not already done so. There will be no further delays granted in implementation of this qualification criteria.

These changes will be reflected in a future amendment to the Adult Autism Waiver.

CONTACT: Questions about this communication should be directed to the appropriate regional office of the Bureau of Supports for Autism and Special Populations.