EMPLOYMENT
Companion Guide
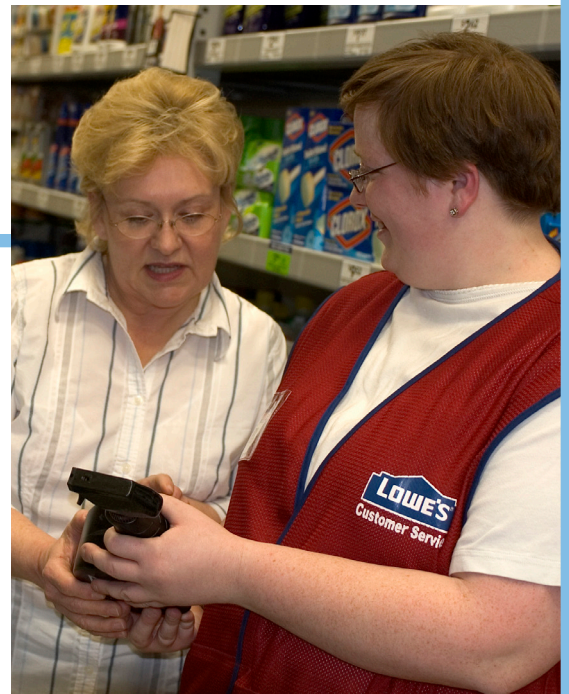
CQL℠ | **The Council on Quality and Leadership**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

CQL | The Council on Quality and Leadership is an international not-for-profit organization that provides training, accreditation, and customized consultation to human service organizations and systems.

MISSION

CQL is dedicated to the definition, measurement, and improvement of personal quality of life.

VISION

A world of dignity, opportunity, and community for all people.

OUR WORK

CQL has demonstrated international leadership for over 45 years in the definition, measurement, and improvement of services and supports.

For almost five decades, CQL has taken the leadership initiative in developing progressive measures and indicators of quality in services and supports, personal quality of life outcome measures, and measures of recovery and social capital. We provide a range of services, products, and tools to enhance the capacity of individuals, organizations, and communities to achieve person-centered excellence.

CQL achieves its mission by working in partnership with public and private organizations.

OUR GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- Develop and implement person-centered quality measures, performance indicators, and evaluation methods
- Conduct an international accreditation program
- Provide training, consultation, and education to build individual and organizational capacity
- Conduct research and disseminate information to enhance policy making
- Provide access to information, innovation, and emerging ideas in quality of life

CQL PHILOSOPHY AROUND WORK

1. People have choice
2. Everyone must be provided the opportunity to seek competitive employment
3. Work, or post-secondary education, should be the first option for people of working age receiving services
4. An individual process is best in supporting people to work, with staff trained sufficiently in the process
5. Collaboration with other agencies, organizations, and businesses is crucial
6. Every person should be paid an equivalent wage (a reasonable prevailing wage/rate).
7. POMs is a great tool to discover the gifts and interests of the person
8. All of the *Basic Assurances*® are relevant, even for an employment agency.

BASIC ASSURANCES® OVERVIEW

CQL's *Basic Assurances®* focus on Health, Safety, Human Security, and Personal Choice. While these are universal concepts, in practice, nuances exist for ensuring them in employment services. This Employment Companion Guide serves as a tool for CQL employees by offering guidance on the application of the *Basic Assurances®* through the lens of employment services.

Through conversations with CQL accredited employment agencies, we know that some organizations struggle to connect each of the *Basic Assurances®* factors and indicators to the services they offer. This companion guide provides CQL staff with ways to make these factors relevant to services provided by employment agencies. It is critical for employment agencies to understand that for a person to be successful at their job, the agency must take a holistic view and become aware of other factors that influence the lives of the people they support. For example, though an agency is not supporting the person when it comes to their health, they must be informed about health-related aspects, advocate for the person to attend medical appointments, and support healthy living. Even though the agency provides only employment services, they still need policies for all factors of the *Basic Assurances®*. The policies can be targeted to support the work of providing employment services.

When it comes to employment services, CQL values individualized and personalized processes based upon identification of a person's gifts and interests. The Discovery process is a systematic method for people to learn about different jobs while simultaneously interacting with people and employment related activities. The 3 E's (Education, Experience, and Exposure) are a critically important component of Discovery.

For clarification, a glossary list of terms and definitions is included on page 20 of this Employment Companion Guide.

BASIC ASSURANCES® FACTORS

1. Rights Protection and Promotion

2. Dignity and Respect

3. Natural Support Networks

4. Protection from Abuse, Neglect, Mistreatment, and Exploitation

5. Best Possible Health

6. Safe Environments

7. Staff Resources and Supports

8. Positive Services and Supports

9. Continuity and Personal Security

10. Basic Assurances® System

PERSONAL OUTCOME MEASURES® IMPLEMENTATION

How do we help organizations to learn to use *Personal Outcome Measures®* (POMs)? Barriers reported by employment agencies related to utilizing POMs include:

- Getting paid for the time spent conducting and making decisions about the interviews
- Finding the time to conduct the interviews
- Completing the interview (with a new person initiating services), prior to the staff knowing the person well enough to contribute to or complete the interview
- Understanding how POMs will contribute positively to the person and organization beyond being just a CQL Accreditation requirement.

The information attained through POMs is extraordinarily beneficial to employment agencies and it is CQL's job to convey the importance in a way that they understand and appreciate. They need to be fostered to realize how useful of a tool POMs is toward learning about the person and developing a holistic view. Using POMs in the initial process helps agencies learn what is important to the person and informs the agency about directions for the employment search. The POM indicators *People Choose Where They Work* and *People Choose Personal Goals* are important areas for focus.

As employment agency staff, they may not yet know a new person sufficiently to offer input for the supports portion of the POMs. Remember that learning about a person's desired outcomes can be a form of support if we are at the early stages of providing supports and if a person does not use words to communicate. Referring to the POM manual under *People Choose Personal Goals* in the individualized supports section can also aid in this area. Alternately, the agency could interview someone who has previously worked with the person, a friend, or a family member. This will help staff get to know the person and can be used as part of the Discovery process. Once the person has been using an agency's services for a while, the POM interview could be repeated with both the person and agency staff that supports the person. This way, the agency can complete the interview as part of the ongoing support process.

FACTOR 1 | RIGHTS PROTECTION AND PROMOTION

Some areas to be aware of within Employment Services that may impact a person's rights include:

- A person's right to choose who to disclose personal health and disability-related information to, might be compromised during the job development process. Providers should always get permission from the job seeker to disclose information, especially to potential employers.

- A person's right to be free from discrimination should be considered in multiple areas, including discrimination from employment such as is covered by the EEOC. The other area that is not as prominently enforced, is from discrimination in receiving employment services.

- Does the organization have a policy that states every working age person can work?

- Job seekers have a right to choose where they work just as they should choose where they live and who provides them services. The job seeker should be provided with the opportunity to interview and choose their employment specialist, job developer, and/or job coach.

- In cases where Discovery activities are appropriate (person has no exposure or experience with community integrated non-group employment), staff have been provided training on person-directed discovery methods through recognized best practice instructors such as GHA, MGA, ACRE, APSE, etc. More information is shared in the resources section on the next page.

- Organizations should not participate in assessments that determine if someone they support can participate in work. Organizations should honor an individual's right to work in a job of their choosing and should focus on eliminating barriers to obtaining that job.

- Does the organization utilize supportive employment and customized employment processes? This will be determined based on the needs of the person.

- Many states have programs to support people to learn how much money they can make without it affecting their benefits. Many people state that they want to work, but their families and guardians state that it will affect their benefits, so they are told that they cannot work. Consulting a person that specializes in this can support a person wanting to work.

RESOURCES:

Disability Disclosure in the workplace:
https://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/fact/ydw.htm

Discovery Fidelity Scale:
http://www.griffinhammis.com/images/DFS_October2016_PDF.PDF

Advice for EDs of CRPs:
http://www.leadcenter.org/system/files/resource/downloadable_version/guidance-rehab-program-directors.pdf

Information on customized employment and Discovery:
http://www.leadcenter.org/system/files/resource/downloadable_version/CE-and-Group-Discovery-FAQs.pdf

Work Incentive Planning and Assistance (WIPA) funded by SSA has 93 programs (as of March 8, 2017) nationwide to learn about benefits and how work will affect them. If you go to ssa.gov/work you will find information on the WIPA in your area. The Ticket to Work Helpline, (866)-968-7842, is staffed by people who can answer basic questions about working and benefits, and can refer people to the appropriate WIPA program in their state.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRAINING AND RESOURCES:

Griffin-Hammis Associates, Inc (GHA):
http://www.griffinhammis.com/

Marc Gold and Associates (MGA):
http://www.marcgold.com/

Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators (ACRE):
http://www.acreducators.org/

Association of People Supporting Employment (APSE):
http://apse.org/

Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP):
https://www.dol.gov/odep/

Please note that CQL does not endorse any resource over another. We are just sharing information that might be helpful.

FACTOR 2 | DIGNITY AND RESPECT

Examples of dignity and respect promoting practices to review include:

- Much of 2E focuses on work. This is a great section to spend time on with agencies that are supporting employment. Most of the probes relate directly to work.

- Transportation concerns should be addressed prior to job development activities.

- A red flag in employment supports would be when a provider supports multiple people in one business or in one type of job. True individualized supports will be provided in a manner that supports individuals in the jobs that meet their individual goals, skills, and abilities. At times, this means significant customization of job tasks.

- Job Carving (see definitions on page 20) should be used to support people in finding a job based on their interests and skills. Is the organization also using entrepreneurship and micro-enterprises as options for employment for people?

- Successful employment programs have policies and procedures that support career development rather than just job placement. They support the person to make and obtain career goals including opportunities for increased salary and responsibilities in their current jobs or transferring to a more desirable job.

- Pre-training for a position that normally would not need such support should not be a prerequisite of services. A focus away from traditional interviewing and resumes in the search is important. Many agencies work on this over and over without opportunities to practice those skills.

- There are some agencies that still have subminimum wage contracts. This allows the agency or business to pay a person less than minimum wage for the work that they do. This practice does not promote dignity and respect.

- People receiving supports are sometimes treated differently than other staff in the workplace. Is the agency ensuring that people receiving supports are treated the same as other employees?

- It is important for people to have a voice in their schedule and not only work when it is convenient for the agency. This also includes opportunities to build social capital – for example, having opportunities to interact with co-workers outside of work hours.

- When people receive their pay check, do they have a say in how the money is used and where their money is kept?

RESOURCES:

Career Development:
http://www.worksupport.com/documents/proed_income.pdf

Prevocational requirements have a negative effect on long term wages:
http://www.worksupport.com/documents/prevoc_srvcs_se_wages_jvr.pdf

Paper written by CQL staff on supported employment:
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/299398342_Get_us_real_jobs_Supported_Employment_Services_
for_People_with_Intellectual_and_Developmental_Disabilities_in_Medicaid_Home_and_Community_Based_
Services_Waivers

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FACTOR 3 | NATURAL SUPPORT NETWORKS

Family and friends are important for the success of a person in their job. Areas to be aware of include:

- Employment provider organizations should include natural supports in the discovery, job development, and retention process as directed by the job seeker.

- Organizations who provide Supported Employment should have a policy and procedure that requires staff to identify natural supports on the job, and assists job seekers in making natural support connections which lead to fading of formal staff driven supports.

- Organizations should also capture natural support information in a manner that assists with potential staff turnover so that these connections are not lost if a staff member leaves. This includes identifying changes in personnel at the person's job and planning for a loss of on-the-job natural supports.

- Most people find employment through connections. Do employers identify who is a part of their network that can support this?

- Are friends and people from work incorporated into the person's natural support network? Do they have the opportunity for time together outside of work hours?

- It is important for agencies to have their own natural support network (board members, community partners, family members, etc.), to reach out to to help make connections with jobs. It should not just be the employment specialist working on this.

RESOURCES:

A review of the concept of natural supports:
http://worksupport.com/Main/downloads/article15.pdf

Using natural supports to lower the cost of supported employment:
http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.2511/rpsd.32.3.184

Please note that CQL does not endorse any resource over another. We are just sharing information that might be helpful.

FACTOR 4 | PROTECTION FROM ABUSE, NEGLECT, MISTREATMENT, AND EXPLOITATION

Agencies should be aware of the impact of abuse, neglect, mistreatment, and exploitation on people they support. This could come from the workplace or previous situations that may affect a person's work. There is also trauma that can be caused from people wanting to work but spending years in training programs or being told that they cannot work. Areas to be aware of include:

- People receiving employment supports should receive information and support around how to protect themselves from abuse, neglect, mistreatment, and exploitation while on the job. They should also have information and support about how to report such instances not only to the human services agencies, but also to workplace entities such as HR and law enforcement officials.

- Employment service organizations should obtain (with the person's permission) information about past abuse and neglect if that information would be beneficial to supporting this person.

- Is there a process for investigating issues that arise at work?

- Trauma can arise for people who want to work, but for years were told that they were unable to work, or who spent time in "training" programs that never lead to employment. Awareness of this is important in supporting people.

- It is important to be aware of situations where workplace harassment could arise.

- Is there something in place to ensure the absence of workplace exploitation? An example could be the person not receiving a raise in 5 years while others have received a raise.

RESOURCES:

http://www.ncwd-youth.info/information-brief-29

https://www.eeoc.gov/facts/performance-conduct.html

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FACTOR 5 | BEST POSSIBLE HEALTH

Supporting good health is an important aspect in supporting a person in a job setting.

- Employment support providers should obtain knowledge, with the permission of the person supported, on all pertinent health information necessary to ensure that proper workplace supports are in place. This information should be obtained during the intake and discovery processes to help with job matching.

- In addition to supports needed through a residential setting, employment support providers should ensure that all therapeutic and adaptive equipment needed to complete their jobs are available to them. As appropriate, people should be supported to have assistive technology assessments to identify additional resources. This also includes having a service animal.

- Ensure people are in proper physical health for the job tasks for their specific job. This does not mean that health should limit a person, but an awareness is important.

- If a person obtains a job with some risks to health such as possible contact with communicable diseases, there should be a plan in place to address this.

RESOURCES:

http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/199544/1/9789241509619_eng.pdf

Please note that CQL does not endorse any resource over another. We are just sharing information that might be helpful.

FACTOR 6 | SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

It is important to ensure that the workplace and other environments are supportive for the person's success.

- Prior to the start of the job, employment staff, with assistance from the person supported, should complete a job site assessment. This assessment includes a walkthrough and identification of possible safety concerns. A specific and individualized safety plan should be developed when support is needed.

- Emergency drills outside of normal business activities should not be required unless specified under state or local regulations.

- **3b4 - Should be current, and specific to worksite supports as needed.** Individuals should receive specific and individualized support and training on what to do when they experience a health-related emergency.

- There are laws in place to support people with reasonable accommodations to ensure supportive environments and people's safety.

RESOURCES:

Information on reasonable accommodations:
https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/disability-employment/reasonable-accommodations/

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FACTOR 7 | STAFF RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS

Staff support can have an important impact on the success of the job search and job coaching once the job is secured.

- Forecasting revenue, referrals, and service needs is a vital part of managing a supported employment program. Lack of good forecasting leads to ineffective staff utilization and could be detrimental to the health of the organization and lead to delays in supports for people the organization supports. Unlike residential supports, employment support funding is mostly outcome-based and can be very fluid and extremely variable.

- People are informed in advance of staffing changes, provided support to deal with, and have decision-making authority of choosing next staff.

- Initial orientation and ongoing training should focus on skills needed to provide successful job supports. Training should be specific to these skills and not mirror training given to direct support staff who provide residential supports. While some training might overlap, training specific to how to support someone to get and keep a job should be provided prior to staff providing employment supports. Industry standards would require some form of credentialing including, ACRE, CESP, etc. At a minimum, training should be provided in the following areas listed in the resources called "staff competencies."

- Does the organization provide continued training on ways to support people to find employment?

- Staff have the opportunity to use their connections in supporting people to find employment. Are staff utilizing their networks to help people?

RESOURCES:

Staff competencies:
http://www.apse.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/APSE-Supported-Employment-Competencies11.pdf

In the section dedicated to Factor 1, there's additional information in the resource area on trainings for staff. Please note that CQL does not endorse any resource over another. We are just sharing information that might be helpful.

FACTOR 8 | POSITIVE SERVICES AND SUPPORTS

- Finding the right environment based on the person's goals can be a challenge. Is the agency and staff trained in job carving techniques that support the person to find a job based on their goals?

- Is supported decision-making present to assist a job seeker to make choices surrounding the conditions of employment (location, pay, hours, job tasks, etc.)?

- Employment staff should seek the person's input on how to arrange job coaching meetings and model ways to support. They should help introduce what respect looks like in work setting.

RESOURCES:

Customized Employment Competency Model:
https://www.dol.gov/odep/pdf/2011cecm.pdf

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FACTOR 9 | CONTINUITY AND PERSONAL SECURITY

- Once a person gets a job, they will likely need ongoing support in order to be successful. Finding a consistent person to provide support is usually an essential part of the process.

- With people who have barriers to employment, has assistive technology been explored?

- Have benefits been explored including retirement plans, health benefit options, and all other wage-related options? Have these decisions been made by the person?

RESOURCES:

https://www.ssa.gov/redbook/eng/resources-supports.htm

There is an organization in Georgia that helps with assistive technology. Other states have similar programs: http://www.gatfl.org/

Please note that CQL does not endorse any resource over another. We are just sharing information that might be helpful.

FACTOR 10 | BASIC ASSURANCES® SYSTEM

- Data collection in the following areas:
  - Employer contacts
  - Placements
  - Retention
  - Productivity of staff (more best practice, not necessarily a requirement)
  - Staff turnover in employment positions
  - Job pay
  - Types of interactions with co-workers
  - Number of hours worked by people supported
  - Percentage of people that begin the process and then get a job
  - Time from beginning of the process until the person gets a job
  - Social roles supported

- Tasks analysis are completed as needed and on-the-job support tools are individualized.

- Agencies should utilize customized and competitive job techniques as appropriate.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Supported Employment is based on the principle that people with disabilities have the right to be employed by community businesses where they can earn comparable wages, work side-by-side with co-workers, and experience all the same benefits as other employees of the company with support from trained staff.

Customized Employment is a type of supported employment where a flexible process is designed to personalize the employment relationship between a job candidate and an employer in a way that meets the needs of both. It is based on an individualized match between the strengths, conditions, and interests of a job candidate and the identified business needs of an employer. Customized Employment utilizes an individualized approach to employment planning and job development — one person at a time, one employer at a time.

Job Carving is the act of analyzing work duties performed in a given job and identifying specific tasks that might be assigned to an employee.

Discovery Method guides job seekers through a customized hands-on process of finding out who they are, what they want to do, what they enjoy doing, and what they have to offer.

Learning Journeys is done during the Discovery process where job seekers visit possible jobs where they talk with people currently doing that job and having a hands-on experience with that job.

EEOC- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is responsible for enforcing federal laws that make it illegal to discriminate against a job applicant or an employee because of the person's race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, gender identity, and sexual orientation), national origin, age (40 or older), disability, or genetic information.

ADA- Americans with Disabilities Act is in place to ensure that people with disabilities are not discriminated against in many settings including employment.

"People want jobs not to just sit around **ALL DAY** and be bored."

- Chelsea, TN Advocate