



Date: January 13, 2025

To: Deaf Blind with Multiple Disabilities (DBMD) Providers  
Financial Management Service Agencies (FMSA)  
Local Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Authorities (LIDDA)  
Home and Community-based Services (HCS) Providers  
Texas Home Living (TxHmL) Providers

Subject: Information Letter No. 2025-01  
Implementation of Employment Services

The purpose of this letter is to provide an overview of employment readiness, a new service available to individuals enrolled in one of the following waiver programs for individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities (IDD):

- Home and Community-based Services (HCS) Program
- Texas Home Living (TxHmL) Program
- Deaf Blind with Multiple Disabilities (DBMD) Program.

This information letter summarizes important details about the new employment readiness service and informs you that certain employment readiness requirements in Title 26, Texas Administrative Code (26 TAC), Chapter 260, that are effective on January 1, 2025, will no longer apply effective the same day.

Providers should refer to the applicable Texas Administrative Code and the HCS and TxHmL Billing Requirements for a complete list of employment readiness requirements.

- DBMD Program rules at [26 TAC Chapter 260](#): §260.5, §260.7, §260.59, §260.203, §260.205, §260.341, and §260.357
- HCS Program rules at [26 TAC Chapter 263](#): §263.3, §263.5, §263.104, §263.301, §263.304, §263.501, §263.601, and §263.901
- TxHmL Program rules at [26 TAC Chapter 262](#): §262.3, §262.5, §262.103, §262.202, §262.301, §262.304, §262.401, and §262.701
- [HCS](#) and [TxHmL](#) Billing Requirements

## **Background**

Beginning on January 1, 2025, the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) implemented employment readiness to comply with House Bill 4169 (88th Legislature, Regular Session, 2023) which requires HHSC to add a new service similar to prevocational services to the HCS, TxHmL, and DBMD waivers.

## **Service Description**

- Employment readiness prepares an individual for employment in the community. A successful outcome or goal of the service is attainment of competitive, integrated employment in the community.
- Employment readiness includes person-centered activities that help an individual develop basic habilitative skills or achieve generalized vocational goals that contribute to employability.
- Employment readiness includes activities for which an individual may be compensated in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

## **Service Limits**

The service limit for employment readiness and individualized skills and socialization combined in the HCS and TxHmL Program is: (1) 1560 hours during an IPC year; (2) six hours per calendar day; and (3) five days per calendar week.

There is no service limit for employment readiness in the DBMD Program.

## **Documentation Requirements**

- The HHSC Employment First Discovery Tool must be completed in accordance with 26 Texas Administrative Code §284.105 (relating to Uniform Process) and support the provision of employment readiness to an individual before employment readiness is added to the individual's IPC. The HHSC Employment First Discovery Tool must be maintained in the individual's record.
- Documentation is maintained in the individual's record that employment readiness is not available to the individual under a program funded under §110 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or under a program funded under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. §1401 et seq.).

## Forms

HHSC has created [form 6506](#) and updated forms [3608](#), [3617](#), [6500](#), [6500-T](#), [6503](#) and [8582](#) related to the implementation of employment readiness.

## Important Reminders

### Employment Readiness Activities

Employment readiness is not job-task oriented and does not include job-task specific activities. Examples of job-task specific activities include cleaning and maintenance activities like sweeping and mopping, groundskeeping activities like mowing or trimming, office support like sorting incoming mails or filing papers, food preparations such as assembling sandwiches, assembling of products, etc. Employment readiness does not include any tasks or activities that teach or involve a specific job skill.

### Employment Readiness Settings

Employment readiness is provided in a setting that complies with the home and community-based settings (HCBS) requirements in accordance with 26 TAC §263.501(d). Like other employment related services, HHSC assesses a setting where employment readiness is provided for compliance with the federal home and community-based settings requirements before employment readiness can be provided in such setting. Employment services settings and on-site individualized skills and socialization settings that have already been assessed for compliance with the HCBS settings requirements do not need to be reassessed if employment readiness services are provided in the same setting. **A setting must be assessed for compliance with the federal home and community-based settings requirements before employment readiness is provided in such setting.** Information about the employment readiness setting assessments will be published soon.

Employment readiness is not provided in the residence of an individual or another person.

## **Employment Readiness Duration**

Employment readiness is intended to develop skills that contribute to employability and support the goal of competitive, integrated employment in the community. It should be provided over a definite period as determined by the service planning team through an ongoing person-centered planning process, to be reviewed not less than annually or more frequently.

## **Important Updates: Changes to Requirements in the DBMD Rules**

26 TAC §260.341(g), which allows a program provider to only provide employment readiness to an individual if the individual's service planning team does not expect the individual to be competitively employed within one year after the date employment readiness begins, is intended to ensure that the service planning team, based on discussion of the individual's needs and preferences, considers whether employment readiness is the appropriate employment service for an individual. The service planning team should consider if an individual requires habilitation skills or non-job-task-specific strengths to enhance their employability in integrated community settings, or if the individual may benefit more from a more integrated employment service. While the time period of one year will not be enforced, the intent of the rule, which is that the most appropriate employment service be delivered to individuals, remains in effect.

Employment readiness requirements in the DBMD Program rules in 26 TAC §260.341(h) which prohibit the provision of employment readiness to an individual who is receiving supported employment or engaged in competitive employment will no longer apply.

## **HCS and TxHmL Rules**

Employment readiness service delivery requirements will be added to Title 26 at the next available opportunity.

## Questions

Email [HCS](#), [TxHmL](#), or [DBMD](#) Policy with questions related to this information letter or employment readiness.

Sincerely,

*[signature on file]*

Katherine Layman  
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Medicaid and CHIP Services