

1 The SE work group identified four major constraints in the SE benchmark system, as follows.

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3 First, the SEA is only available for customers who have been referred for SE services. Since the
4 SEA is part of the SE process, it excludes other customers who might benefit from an assessment
5 of work skills, interests, and preferences but otherwise do not require a referral to SE services.
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7 Second, there is a lack of flexibility around employment conditions on the SE plan. The SE plan
8 requires two nonnegotiable employment conditions (the hours worked per week and the hours
9 worked per shift), along with a series of employment conditions that may be negotiable at the
10 customer's discretion. Once the customer is placed in a job, the provider must document each
11 hour the customer works, and if the hours do not adhere to the nonnegotiable conditions on the
12 SE plan, the process stops until the customer either meets the nonnegotiable conditions or the SE
13 plan is amended to match the customer's situation. This requirement delays the SE process,
14 complicates paperwork, and often requires an additional meeting to amend the SE plan and/or
15 reestablish job stability. While providers participate in the SE plan meeting and the job stability
16 meeting, they are only compensated for attending the initial SE plan meeting.
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18 Third, the timeline to achieve the job stability benchmark does not accommodate customers who
19 need additional support from the SE provider beyond eight weeks. The customer does not
20 proceed to the job stability benchmark until the completion of at least eight weeks of competitive
21 integrated employment consistent with the SE plan. It should be noted that some SE customers
22 adjust to their new jobs before eight weeks, while other customers require more than eight weeks
23 of ongoing supports from the provider. At times, customers experience difficulties at work and
24 must move out of the job stability benchmark to receive additional ongoing supports from the
25 provider. For customers who require ongoing supports beyond eight weeks, the provider must
26 provide these supports to stabilize the customer; however, this entails more paperwork and no
27 compensation for the additional time and effort.
28

29 Finally, providers that receive disability-related premiums (such as autism, deaf, and brain
30 injury) receive a smaller compensation at the beginning of the SE process and a larger
31 compensation at SE closure. This is a disincentive for providers who spend time throughout the
32 SE process providing the necessary disability supports (for example, interpreting to customers
33 who are deaf). If the customer loses employment toward the end of the process, the provider is
34 not compensated for the work that went into providing the additional support.
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36 **Decision Points**

37 Staff seeks direction on amending the current policy for SE services, as follows:

- 38 • Allowing the counselor to authorize a Pre-Employment Assessment for any customer
- 39 • Allowing all employment conditions on the SE plan to be negotiable or nonnegotiable based
40 on the customer's informed choice
- 41 • Paying for the provider's attendance at each SE plan meeting and job stability meeting
- 42 • Allowing a customer to reach the job stability benchmark after 28 days of employment and
43 paying for job retention benchmarks (28-day periods) multiple times; requiring meetings
44 with the VR counselor, the customer, and the provider for more than two job retention

- 1 benchmarks and a consultation between the VR counselor and VR supervisor to authorize
2 more than five job retention periods
- 3 • Restructuring disability-related premiums (such as autism, deaf, and brain injury) to be paid
4 throughout the SE process, upon completion of the:
 - 5 ➤ Pre-Employment Assessment;
 - 6 ➤ Supported Job Development and Placement Benchmark;
 - 7 ➤ Job Retention Benchmark (every 28-day period); and
 - 8 ➤ SE Closure Benchmark.

9 **The Rehabilitation Council of Texas**

10 The Rehabilitation Council of Texas (RCT) has reviewed the proposed changes to SE services,
11 and modifications were made where appropriate based on feedback received.