

Employment and Community First (ECF) CHOICES

Employment Services Staff Qualifications

This document identifies the staff qualifications to provide all ECF Employment Services:

- Supported Employment—Individual Employment Support:
 - Exploration
 - Benefits Counseling
 - Discovery
 - Situational Observation and Assessment
 - Job Development Plan or Self-Employment Plan
 - Job Development or Self-Employment Start Up
 - Job Coaching
 - Job Coaching for Individualized, Integrated Employment
 - Job Coaching for Individualized, Integrated Self-Employment
 - Co-Worker Supports
 - Career Advancement
- Supported Employment – Small Group Supports
- Integrated Employment Path Services

There are core qualifications that all staff providing ECF CHOICES Employment Services must meet. These are addressed in first section below. There are additional requirements for training and/or certification depending on whether the staff are serving in the capacity of Job Coach, Job Developer, Certified Benefits Counselor or Supported Employment Supervisor/Manager. These requirements have been specifically defined to best position ECF CHOICES Employment Services providers to support individuals with ID/DD enrolled in the program in achieving their employment goals.

Please note, effective July 1, 2016, staff who meet the ECF CHOICES qualifications are qualified to provide employment services under the DIDD waivers and as such, do not have to complete any other employment-specific trainings normally required under the DIDD waivers.

CORE REQUIREMENTS

There are basic core qualifications for all staff providing ECF CHOICES employment services. Any staff providing any Employment Service under ECF CHOICES must meet the following qualifications:

- 18 years of age or older;
- Effectively read, write and communicate verbally in English and in service recipient's first language if not English and the service recipient is not fluent in English;

- Able to read and understand instructions, perform record-keeping and write reports;
- GED or High School Diploma;
- Pass criminal background check and not listed on TNDOH Abuse Registry or TN Sexual Offender Registry;
- If driving is involved in job duties, valid driver's license and automobile liability insurance. If using own vehicle to transport ECF members is involved in job duties, appropriate insurance coverage for this purpose. *Provider agency may contribute toward cost of appropriate insurance coverage to transport ECF members.*
- Completion of training for all DSPs that is required for ECF CHOICES program.
- Information/Training specific to person(s) being served.

While not required, it is preferred that all staff providing ECF CHOICES employment services have a minimum of six months' experience working with individuals with ID and/or DD, where the work included teaching skills and/or tasks, preferably in an employment setting.

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

There are specific qualifications required for staff to provide ECF CHOICES Employment Services, depending on whether the staff are serving in the capacity of Job Coach, Job Developer, Certified Benefits Counselor or Supported Employment Supervisor/Manager.

For each ECF CHOICES Employment Service, TennCare has established the type of staff that is required to provide the service. See table below, specifically the column titled "Required Job Type." The corresponding qualifications for each type of staff is in column three of the table below.

There will be no grandfathering (waiving of ECF CHOICES qualifications) for staff currently qualified under the DIDD waivers or VR. All staff need to comply with the staff qualifications set forth in this document. However, these staff will have a grace period to obtain any required ECF CHOICES qualifications they may not currently hold.

The below table summarizes what the minimum staff qualifications are for ECF CHOICES Employment Services and the associated trainings and/or certificates required, including the Supported Employment Manager/Supervisor although there isn't a specific service that corresponds with this position.

ECF Employment Services	Required Job Type	Minimum Staff Qualifications/Training	Timeframe for Meeting Minimum Qualifications/Successfully Completing Training
<p>Exploration; Situational Observation & Assessment; Job Coaching - Individual-Wage Employment; Supported Employment; Integrated Employment Path Services</p>	<p>Job Coach</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training Resource Network, Inc. (TRN) Job Coaching and Consulting: Design, Training and Natural Support on-line web course; AND • Shadowing of existing trained/qualified ECF Job Coach (or a Job Coach trained/qualified under DIDD Waiver/VR if no ECF Job Coach is in place in the local area) for at least four hours in at least three different job coaching situations/work sites. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For existing staff in place at the start of ECF CHOICES who are qualified as a Job Coach under the Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (DIDD) waivers or a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Letter of Agreement (LOA), there is a one-year grace period to obtain the qualifications. • For new hires, the qualifications must be met prior to providing ECF CHOICES services.
<p>Benefits Counseling</p>	<p>Certified Work Incentives Counselor (CWIC) or CWIC Community Partner</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 5 Suitability Clearance; AND • Certified Work Incentives Counseling (CWIC) Certification through Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) or Cornell; AND • On-Going Continuing Education Requirements to maintain CWIC Certification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The qualifications must be met prior to providing the ECF CHOICES Benefits Counseling service.
<p>Discovery; Job Development Plan; Job Development; Career Advancement</p>	<p>Job Developer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Association of People Supporting Employment (APSE) Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP) Certificate received through passing an exam; OR • ACRE Basic Employment Certificate – The Supported Employment Online Certificate Series earned through Virginia Commonwealth University; OR • ACRE Basic Employment Certificate in Community Employment with Emphasis on Customized Employment offered by Griffin-Hammis Associates; OR • ACRE Basic Employment Certificate – College of Employment Services (CES) Plus offered by University of Massachusetts Institute for Community Inclusion; OR • ACRE National Certificate of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For existing staff in place at the start of ECF CHOICES who are qualified as a Job Developer under the Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (DIDD) waivers or a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Letter of Agreement (LOA), there is a one-year grace period to obtain the qualifications. • For new hires, the qualifications must be met prior to providing ECF CHOICES services.

		<p>Achievement in Employment Services earned through University of Tennessee; OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACRE Professional Employment Certificate earned through completion of “Work Works” on-line course offered by University of Georgia Institute on Human Development and Disability. 	
<p>Self-Employment Plan; Self-Employment Start-Up</p>	<p>Job Developer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Association of People Supporting Employment (APSE) Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP) Certificate received through passing an exam; OR • ACRE Basic Employment Certificate – The Supported Employment Online Certificate Series earned through Virginia Commonwealth University; OR • ACRE Basic Employment Certificate in Community Employment with Emphasis on Customized Employment offered by Griffin-Hammis Associates; OR • ACRE Basic Employment Certificate – College of Employment Services (CES) Plus offered by University of Massachusetts Institute for Community Inclusion; OR • ACRE National Certificate of Achievement in Employment Services earned through University of Tennessee; OR • ACRE Professional Employment Certificate earned through completion of “Work Works” on-line course offered by University of Georgia Institute on Human Development and Disability. <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relias ten modules on Customized Self-Employment developed by Griffin-Hammis Associates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For existing staff in place at the start of ECF who are qualified as a Job Developer under the Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (DIDD) waivers or a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Letter of Agreement (LOA), there is a one-year grace period to obtain the qualifications. • For new hires, the qualifications must be met prior to providing ECF services.
<p>Job Coaching Self-Employment</p>	<p>Job Coach</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training Resource Network, Inc. (TRN) Job Coaching and Consulting: Design, Training and Natural Support on-line web course; AND • Shadowing of existing trained/qualified ECF Job Coach (or a Job Coach trained/qualified under DIDD Waiver/VR if no ECF Job Coach is in place in the local area) for at least four hours in at least three different job coaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For existing staff in place at the start of ECF CHOICES who are qualified as a Job Coach under the Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (DIDD) waivers or a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Letter of Agreement (LOA), there is a one-year grace period to obtain the qualifications. • For new hires, the qualifications must be met prior to providing ECF CHOICES services.

		situations/work sites; AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relias ten modules on Customized Self-Employment developed by Griffin-Hammis Associates. 	
	Supported Employment Program Manager / Supervisor of Job Coaches and Job Developers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACRE Professional Employment Certificate earned through completion of “Work Works” on-line course offered by University of Georgia Institute on Human Development and Disability; OR Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC status) and meeting continuing education requirements to maintain the CRC designation. ACRE Professional Employment Certificate (UT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For existing program managers/supervisors in place at the start of ECF CHOICES, there is a one-year grace period to obtain the qualifications. For new hires, the qualifications must be met within six (6) months of hire.

Further details about the different job types who provide ECF CHOICES Employment Services and the associated trainings and/or certificates required for them can be found below. While we recognize that there will be some cost to providers associated with these training requirements, the rates of reimbursement for employment services in ECF CHOICES are higher than in the existing HCBS waiver programs. These higher rates are reflective of the expectations for these services in the new program: we expect well qualified staff that can deliver on employment outcomes for individuals with ID/DD who are participating in the program.

Job Developer:

One of the following is required to fulfill the required qualifications for Job Developer. The Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators (ACRE) certificate options include those currently acceptable to VR plus two additional options. Existing staff that are qualified under the DIDD waiver or the VR Supported Employment LOA have one year to complete one of the options identified below. For new hires, one of the following must be completed prior to providing services.

To meet qualifications for Job Developer, staff must obtain one of the following:

- Association of People Supporting Employment (APSE) Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP) Certificate received through passing an exam. Information can be found at <http://apse.org/certified-employment-support-professional/>. The exam costs \$159; or
- ACRE Basic Employment Certificate – The Supported Employment Online Certificate Series earned through Virginia Commonwealth University. The certificate program is 40 hours long over 12 weeks and consists of 6 lessons which includes required reading, practical assignments and on-line discussion. The cost is \$325 per person or \$260 per person for 5 or more individuals. The course is only offered twice a year. Information can be found at: <http://www.worksupport.com/training/courses.cfm>; or

- ACRE Basic Employment Certificate in Community Employment with Emphasis on Customized Employment offered by Griffin-Hammis Associates. The training is a 40 hour web-based course over 12 weeks which consists of 7 classes with a quiz after each, 6 webinars, and required reading and homework assignments. The cost is \$400/person and each course limited to 40 people. Information can be found at: <http://www.griffinhammis.com/acrecertificatetraining.html>.
- ACRE Basic Employment Certificate – College of Employment Services (CES) Plus offered by University of Massachusetts Institute for Community Inclusion. The training consists of 11 courses with 4-6 lessons in each course and 3 webinars and field assignments and takes approximately 50 hours to complete. To take the course, there is a minimum requirement of 12 enrollees with a six weeks' notice required to offer the course. The cost is \$275 per person for 25-100 enrollees; \$268 per person for 101 + enrollees and for under 25 enrollees, the price is higher. Information can be found at: <http://www.acreducators.org/training-providers/university-massachusetts-boston-institute-community-inclusion-0>; or
- ACRE National Certificate of Achievement in Employment Services earned through University of Tennessee. The course is 40 hours plus an exam. *Note this Certificate program is no longer offered but some individuals in Tennessee may hold this certificate.*
- ACRE Professional Employment Certificate earned through completion of “Work Works” on-line course offered by University of Georgia Institute on Human Development and Disability. Information can be found at: <http://www.fcs.uga.edu/ihdd/employment-workworks>. The course consists of 9 units; 35 assignments + final exam – must pass all to get certified; its self-paced, typically completed over 20-25 weeks and takes on average 160 hours to complete (80 hours minimum); the cost is normally \$1,000 per person; but Tennessee registrants may qualify for a 50% reduction. Please contact the Work Works coordinator at UGA to confirm.

If the Job Developer is providing the Self-Employment Plan or Start-Up service, there is an additional training requirement to the specific requirements. This service requires the Job Developers to also complete the Relias ten modules on Customized Self-Employment developed by Griffin-Hammis Associates which takes an estimated 20.75 hours to complete.

Job Coach:

The following training and shadowing is required to fulfill the required qualifications for Job Coach.

1. Training Resource Network, Inc. (TRN) Job Coaching and Consulting: Design, Training and Natural Support on-line web course. Information can be found at: <http://trn-store.com/catalog/web-courses-0>. There is special on-demand access for Tennessee (upon registration, course access is opened, lasts for 2 weeks and is open 24 hours a day). The average time to complete the course is 16 hours and ranges between 12 and 20 hours. The cost is \$146 per person, \$145 per person for registering a group of 3-5, or \$135 per person for a group of 6 or more. ***Note: One organization can register a group of staff to receive the group discount, even if all of the individual staff do not work for that organization.***

AND

2. Shadowing of existing trained/qualified ECF Job Coach (or a Job Coach trained/qualified under DIDD Waiver/VR if no ECF Job Coach is in place in the local area) for at least four hours in at least three different job coaching situations/work sites.

If the Job Coach is providing the Self-Employment Job Coaching service, there is an additional training requirement to the specific requirements. This service requires the Job Coach to also complete the Relias ten modules on Customized Self-Employment developed by Griffin-Hammis Associates which takes an estimated 20.75 hours to complete.

SE Program Manager/Supervisor:

The following training OR certification is required to fulfill the required qualifications for a SE Program Manager/Supervisor. Existing SE Supervisors/Managers in place at start of ECF CHOICES will have one year to complete the course or gain the certification and new hires will have six months to complete the course or gain the certification.

- ACRE Professional Employment Certificate earned through completion of “Work Works” on-line course offered by University of Georgia Institute on Human Development and Disability. Information can be found at: <http://www.fcs.uga.edu/ihdd/employment-workworks>. The course consists of 9 units; 35 assignments + final exam – must pass all to get certified; its self-paced, typically completed over 20-25 weeks and takes on average 160 hours to complete (80 hours minimum); the cost is \$1,000 per person although Tennessee is negotiating for a rate of \$500 for ECF staff.

OR

- Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC status) and meeting continuing education requirements to maintain the CRC designation. Information can be found at: <https://www.crccertification.com/about-crc-certification>.

OR

ACRE National Certificate of Achievement in Employment Services earned through University of Tennessee. The course is 40 hours plus an exam. *Note this Certificate program is no longer offered but some individuals in Tennessee may hold this certificate.*

Benefits Counseling:

The following are required for a staff member to be able to provide Benefits Counseling. The following qualifications must be met prior to being authorized to provide Benefits Counseling.

- Level 5 Suitability Clearance (Security clearance required for Social Security representatives who work with beneficiaries and handle sensitive identity/financial information); and

- Certified Work Incentives Counseling (CWIC) Certification through Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) or Cornell. Information can be found at: <http://www.vcu-ntc.org/certification/> or <https://www.edionline.org/>; and
- On-Going Continuing Education Requirements:
 - 18 continuing certification courses (CCCs) are required per year. These are divided into 3 categories:
 - 12 hours of VCU training (available online)
 - 3 hours from state and local entities about their benefits (this is flexible; can be anything as long as it relates to benefits)
 - 3 hours preparing and submitting a “BSNA” (a full report and benefits analysis on a real beneficiary) to VCU for review

SUMMARY OF TOTAL TRAINING TIME REQUIREMENTS:

PERSON TRAINED AND PAID AS JOB COACH (Except Self-Employment): 18 hours training plus 12 hours shadowing. This is in addition to core DSP trainings required.

PERSON TRAINED AS JOB DEVELOPER (Except Self-Employment): 40 hours minimum training (range 40-160 depending on certificate the person chooses to get). This is in addition to core DSP trainings required.

PERSON TRAINED TO PROVIDE SELF-EMPLOYMENT PLAN/START-UP SERVICES: 60.75 hours minimum training. This is in addition to core DSP trainings required.

PERSON TRAINED TO PROVIDE SELF-EMPLOYMENT JOB COACHING SERVICES: 38.75 hours training plus 12 hours shadowing. This is in addition to core DSP trainings required.

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM MANAGER/DSP SUPERVISOR: 80 hours minimum (typically 160 hours) to complete required certificate.