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## School or Training Program offering No Financial Aid (Non-FAO) Updated: June 2015

### Purpose

To communicate to DVR staff about the process and what considerations are necessary to guide consumers when a training **program** does not offer financial aid. This information is not intended to cover situations where the **student** themselves is ineligible for financial aid.

### Rationale/Why

There has been confusion about how to assist consumers when a non-FAO program is selected. There has not been guidance and best-practice established to help provide information about how to determine timeframes and progress measures when a non-FAO program is part of an IPE.

Occasionally a DVR consumer may choose to attend a school or program that does not offer financial aid. These programs can include Career Pathways programs, stackable credential programs or certification programs offered by a public or private entity. It is important to make some distinctions when DVR is agreeing to provide support and funding for such a program.

There may be a variety of approaches to consider. For example: would an MS Excel class from the library on a Saturday, a Technical college course, or a \$125 four-hour intensive course offered by a private company meet this particular consumer's IPE related need?

Best practice suggestions are similar to traditional programs that offer financial aid:

- Consumers should select a program that will lead to an employment outcome.
- The program should provide industry recognized preparation or credentials.
- The program should have similar cost to other programs and staff should work with consumers to find a lowest cost option that meets the need of the consumer and their IPE goal.
- The program under consideration may not be ineligible for financial aids due to loss of official accreditation.
- Only courses included in an IPE and identified as vocational skill or credential programs will be funded at experiential college programs. (Think College etc.) Programs of this type require direct consultation with the DVR Supervisor prior to inclusion in an IPE.
- The DVR exception process must be followed if the costs exceed \$5,000 in an academic year.

### In-State Preference

WDVR has established a preference for training programs offered at in-state public schools for all post-secondary training to include programs that offer financial aids and those that do not offer financial aids.

### Administrative Review Requirement

If a consumer selects a program and wishes to have DVR funding, at a private or out of state school, that does not offer financial aid, then administrative review and approval is required.

## Short Term Training

If a consumer wishes to attend a training programs offered by a local agency or business such as a child care certificate, short term computer class/certificate, food service; those types of courses can be paid using the process described below.

It is important that the consumer establish a clear timeframe for completion of the coursework. Students should be encouraged to complete programs as quickly as possible. The timeframes should be reflected in the Individual Plan for Employment along with responsibilities and progress measures to assist a consumer in staying on track with program completion. Attendance should be part of an overall plan and should not consist of unrelated courses that would not lead to an industry-recognized credential.

Counseling and guidance should be provided to consumers who are having difficulty meeting the timeframe for completion of their program. There may be disability or other barriers affecting their success that need to be addressed and would likely affect employment in that same occupation.

## Lowest Cost Option

DVR will support the lowest cost option up to \$5,000 annually (within 12 months) to meet consumers' IPE needs. Exploration of options should be done prior to identification of a specific option in the IPE. If there is a need for costs exceeding this annual amount, the DVR exception process would need to be followed. Costs to include in the annual estimate: course or tuition costs, fees, books and required supplies. If other support costs (travel, housing, tutoring, etc.) are extensive, consultation with Supervision is suggested.

## Procedural Checklist for DVR Staff:

*Note: Important Reminder:* [Administrative Approval](#) must occur for private schools and out of state schools if consumer wishes all necessary costs funded by DVR.

- Obtain course/tuition, book/supply cost estimate, and fee costs. (A copy of the bill or other formalized representation of actual costs should be used.)
- Determine need and cost of support services.
- Have consumer sign and date [Consumer Fiscal Responsibilities Agreement](#) if not done already.
- Discuss with consumers how they will document successful training progress and completion of the training (e.g., grades, certificate of completion, etc.).
- Discuss with consumers the consequences of not providing successful progress documentation, and completion documentation.
- Identify if the school will accept a DVR Purchase Order for services.
- If the school will not accept a Purchase Order, follow the instructions via [Direct Payment](#) steps.
- Document in an authorization case note an itemized list of all program costs (tuition, books, fees, other costs and support services). If total cost is over \$5,000 delegated spending authority, supervisory approval is required.
- Authorize for course cost/tuition, fees, books and required supplies. Follow typical invoicing and receiving procedure. Indicate that the purchase order is for a Non-FAO training program.
- Fund support services such as transportation\*, child care, tutoring, disability related, equipment, personal attendants, and other needed services using purchase orders (preferred) and ERL's. \*Determine the lowest cost option based on [DVR's Transportation guidance piece](#).
- Obtain and complete appropriate verification for all support services provided.
- Obtain documentation of successful completion and attach in IRIS.