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## Introduction

Customized Employment is being promoted by the US Department of Labor's Office on Disability Employment Policy as an effective set of techniques to create a win-win for job seekers with disabilities and employers, and is considered best practice for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

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## Background, Expertise and Overall Approach

TransCen, Inc., is a 501(c)(3), private non-profit corporation established in 1986 with the mission improve education and employment success for youth and adults with disabilities. Our work is driven by the belief that employment and active community participation are attainable for all individuals, regardless of disability or other perceived barriers. TransCen is unique in that we: (1) provide direct job development and placement services to youth and adults with disabilities and other life barriers; (2) design, develop and evaluate new service models that lead to improved employment outcomes; (3) develop and provide training and TA to employment programs and professionals throughout the country; and (4) conduct associated research in the identification and implementation of evidenced-based practices. Our work has been nationally recognized with consequent national reach. Programs that TransCen has designed, implemented, and replicated have resulted in employment for over 17,000 individuals with disabilities, primarily youth and young adults.

TransCen brings extensive expertise and experience in developing training materials and curriculum for in-person and web-based self-directed instruction. As an innovator in the field, TransCen associates have developed, operated, and/or been key partners in multiple demonstration projects on employment for individuals who range in type and severity of disability. In short, TransCen and its associates have been involved in designing, implementing, and evaluating transition and employment services for the entire range of individuals who may come in contact with state VR systems and their partners, including local school districts. This experience has translated into the development of training and curriculum that has been used for employment and transition professionals around the country. As such, we are uniquely positioned based on our knowledge and understanding of the important changes to VR systems contained in WIOA that provide a greater emphasis on serving in-school and transition age students with disabilities. We have had great success in providing a cutting-edge, proven effective menu of pre-employment services (whether through direct services or through training and TA) and have developed numerous effective resources, materials, and strategies when training and providing TA (as well as direct services) on these critical services.

## TransCen Team

Laura Owens, Ph.D., Dale Verstegen, M.B.A., Amy Dwyre, M.S., CRC, Ruth Allison, M.B.A., and Meredith Gramlich, M.A., will be the key staff on this project. Laura Owens, TransCen's President, has over 30 years of experience in the field. Collectively the proposed staff members have worked with leadership teams from over 50 organizations nation-wide and trained thousands of professionals to improve practice that have led to a significant increase in the number of individuals acquiring individualized, integrated jobs of choice with quality supports in place. These key staff has over 15 years of experience in providing training and technical assistance to organizations and state agencies. All are seasoned associates who are highly skilled in well versed in disability employment systems, policy, and practice.

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## Customized Employment Community of Practice

### Introduction

A Customized Employment Community of Practice will be implemented as a capacity building initiative to improve the methodology and skills of employment staff to assist seekers with more significant barriers obtain employment. This Customized Employment Community of Practice offers an exciting opportunity for employment consultants interested in implementing customized employment practices.

TransCen, Inc. will offer a two-part, three-day training/skill building Community of Practice. The first workshop will be coupled with follow up field-based assignments and online technical assistance. The agenda for these workshops and field assignments is listed below.

Over the last 15 years, TransCen, Inc. has been providing training and field based technical assistance on customized employment-to-employment providers throughout the country. This Customized Employment Community of Practice is intended for the following:

- Employment Consultants (with less than 3 years of experience) and their supervisors
- Employment Consultants without their supervisor with more than 3 years of experience in job development

### Registration Fee: \$350

Training could be offered regionally throughout the state so that trainees would be able to commute. Class size: Minimum 15; Maximum 30 (per site).

## Customized Employment Community of Practice Agenda

### Day 1

9:00am – 12:00pm

- Introduction to Customized Employment
- Role of Employment Consultants and Supervisors in Customized Employment
- Review Positive Personal Profiles for specific Job Seekers

1:00pm – 4:30pm

- Conducting Discovery Activities
- Conducting Assessment Activities
- Determining Key Features and Benefits of Job Seekers

### Day 2

9:00am – 12:00pm

- Approaching Employers
- Surveying Employer Needs
- Matching Job Candidates to Employer needs

1:00pm – 4:30pm

- Developing Employer Proposals
- Negotiating Job Placements
- Defining Employer related Employer Services
- Review Field Based Assignments
- Submit Job Development Field Based Assignments

### Day 3

9:00am – 12:00pm

- Review Field Based Assignments
- Marketing to Employers

1:00pm – 4:30pm

- Discuss Role of Supervisors in Supporting Customized Employment
- Tracking and Assessing Effective Customized Employment Practices
- Maintaining Employer Engagement to Sustain Customized Employment Results