



### CALIFORNIA – Partnership Plus: Action Oriented Solutions

**The Challenge:** Ensuring that American Job Centers (AJCs) provide full access to services for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) clients who are also Ticket Holders.

**The Strategy:** Implementing Partnership Plus, the [California's Disability Employment Initiative \(DEI\) grantee](#) entered into a Partnership Plus agreement with VR to better serve Ticket Holders under the Social Security Administration's (SSA's) Ticket to Work program. California recognized that reaching Ticket Holders as early as possible was a crucial strategy to facilitating access to AJC services and, when appropriate, to co-enrolling Ticket Holders in Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I services while they were still receiving VR services.

**The Plan:** California Workforce Employment Network (EN) engaged with Ticket Holders while they are still vocational rehabilitation clients. There are several approaches that California's Workforce EN adopted to facilitate a seamless hand-off to the American Job Center as the Ticket Holder's EN of choice.

- Entering into a Partnership Plus memorandum of agreement with the VR agency was the first step to initiate a mutual coordination effort on Ticket to Work.
- Providing briefings at local VR offices in group settings, or with individual clients, on services available through the AJCs is a great way to begin the Partnership Plus connection at the individual level and implementing an Active Resource Coordination strategic approach.
- Co-enrolling VR clients with WIOA Title I services when appropriate ensures [Integrated Resource Team \(IRT\) strategies](#) are deployed to maximum benefit for the Ticket Holder and include:
  - Aligning Vocational Rehabilitation's Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) with WIOA's Individual Employment Plan (IEP);
  - Ensuring consistency with Employment Network's Individual Work Plan (IWP) (See [NDI developed optional Individual Work Plan approved for use by Workforce ENs](#)) requirements; and
  - Addressing implementation of a Career Pathways Individual Learning Plan (ILP), if appropriate.

**Example of a Partnership Plus Customer Flow:** James, an individual with a significant disability, was determined eligible for VR services. He was interested in developing expertise as a computer programmer and through working with his VR counselor; he began computer certification classes at the local community college to initiate his career planning goals. During the career planning process, the VR counselor connected with Workforce EN staff to establish a meeting with James to share the services and opportunities available through the AJC.

In advance of completing certification in Microsoft programming, the Workforce EN was able to connect James with their Business Relations staff to discuss the potential for doing a work experience with a local employer. This work experience opportunity resulted in James being hired by the employer and allowed the VR agency to close his case following 90 days. At this point, the VR counselor shared a list of available ENs with whom James could assign his Ticket.

Given his experience with the Workforce EN staff, James opted to select them as his EN moving forward. Several months into his employment, James was again able to reach out to the Workforce EN staff with an emerging transportation barrier and was successfully provided needed supportive services that assured continued ability for him to get to work.

**System/Workforce/WIOA Outcomes:** Becoming a Workforce EN and developing a Partnership Plus agreement with Vocational Rehabilitation agencies serves a number of positive and important outcomes:

- Strengthens the relationship between WIOA Title I and Title IV services that ultimately benefit the client or Ticket Holder through enhanced coordination of services and maximizing career and employment outcomes.
- Co-enrollment through Partnership Plus fosters an IRT approach that greatly ensures the provision of comprehensive, wrap-around services for the benefit of the individual client.
- Partnership Plus coordination minimizes confusion experienced by Ticket Holders as they transition out of VR services and instills trust in the Workforce EN, which may assist them to obtain, maintain and continue to build upon their employment outcomes.
- The Ticket Holder may no longer require support via benefits and may now contribute as a taxpayer and consumer to tax revenues in multiple ways, including contributions to Medicare and Medicaid, and increasing their own retirement contributions and/or home-ownership.
- Employment outcome, job retention, and average wage performance measures positively achieved under WIOA Titles I and IV.

**Key Career Pathway Elements:** Cross Agency Partnerships (with Rehabilitation Services and Social Security Administration); Identify Funding Needs and Sources (WIOA Title I, Title IV, and Ticket to Work Resources); and Align Policies and Programs (WIOA Title I, Title IV, and Ticket to Work).

**Additional Resources on this Topic:**

- [California DEI Best Practice -- Partnership Plus Strategies](#) – Strategies for workforce ENs on Partnership Plus and effective relationships with state Vocational Rehabilitation.
- [DEI Workforce EN Community of Practice](#) –WorkforceGPS webpage that shares state-level implementation of Ticket to Work and operating as an Employment Network.
- [Resources for Employment Network Operations in the Workforce System](#) – WorkforceGPS webpage that provides detailed information and resources on becoming an Employment Network under SSA's Ticket to Work Program.
- [Ticket to Work Program](#) Overview.
- [SSA's Ticket to Work webpage](#) explaining Partnership Plus.
- [SSA's Ticket to Work webpage](#) that explains Partnership Plus agreements.
- [Partnership Plus FACT Sheet](#)