

# A FOCUS ON THE SCSEP PARTICIPANT

The Assessment Process

Tuesday, June 3, 2003

1:30-3:00

# The Assessment Process

## (OWB 96-1)

A four-step process to help participants clarify and reach their goals:

- Assessments
- Individual employment plans (IEPs)
- Progress steps and reviews/action plans
- Follow-ups

# SCSEP Regulations Require:

- Participants to be assessed to determine the most suitable employment, community service assignment
- Using assessments and reassessments to develop plans

- Assessments and IEPs must meet the minimum standards in Older Worker Bulletin 96-1.
- Service strategies/participant assessments of skills, interests and circumstances provided under WIA should be accepted by SCSEPs and vice versa. They must be negotiated with an MOU.

# Assessment

Assessment is an on-going process that lasts throughout a participant's enrollment in SCSEP.

- A good assessment is crucial to IEP foundation
- An assessment differs from an IEP. It is information gathering, not decision making.

# The Elements of a Good Assessment

Work history

Education and  
training

Skills, interests,  
hobbies

Aptitudes

Training needs

Expectations

Barriers

Preferences

Service needs

Transportation

Placement  
information

Talents

Physical capabilities

Potential for  
transition to  
unsubsidized  
employment

# Types of Assessment Procedures

- Procedures based on interviews, observations and recorded information
- Interviewing tips
- Procedures based on standardized measures

# EXERCISE



A initial assessment provides the information to determine how SCSEP can benefit the participant.

- It changes when the participant completes any training or certification.
- It changes with significant changes in any of the elements in the initial assessment.

# The Individual Employment Plan

The IEP is a process for helping each participant accomplish as much as possible on the program whether or not an unsubsidized job is the end result.

It should clarify the participant's goals and the landmarks that need to be established to accomplish the goals.

# The IEP uses information in the assessment to document:

- Appropriate employment objectives
- Barriers to employment and ways of overcoming the barriers
- Training goals and time frames for the host agency agreement
- Monthly monitoring documentation
- Rotation
- Host agency and participant performance reviews

The IEP could be developed immediately after the assessment, but most SCSEP projects wait until the participant is more acclimated to the program.

- Once written, it must be updated at least once per year.
- Projects that update more frequently have more unsubsidized placements.

Initial IEPs should be prepared by a trained staff member who has:

- Knowledge of IEP procedures and forms
- Knowledge of resource information
- Training in interviewing techniques and counseling skills
- Preparation for discussing personal and delicate subjects.

In preparation for an IEP, staff need to know:

- Project training sites
- Local job market
- Job qualifications
- Adult basic education locations
- Skill training opportunities
- Supportive services information

# The IEP is the Participant's Plan

Participants must make decisions and take responsibility for progress.

- Staff must be supportive, but not make decisions for the participant.
- Questions and answers about goals must be specific enough to provide an insight into specific training and employment goals and determine the training strategy.

# At a Minimum, the IEP Should Contain:

- More than one job objective
- Appropriate community service assignments, training needs, program services requirements
- Action steps with completion dates
- Statements by participants that they agree with the information and agree to cooperate with the program staff.



# Progress Steps & Action Plans

The IEP is a broad plan; each of the barriers and landmark tasks can be broken down into action steps that are specific, achievable and measurable

- Establish deadlines for each step
- Monitor against the deadlines
- Monitor during site visits. Updated IEPs can replace host agency monitoring forms.
- As each step is achieved, the next step is agreed upon and undertaken
- Progress reports are the monitoring reports.

# EXERCISE

# Follow-Up

Follow-up is the process of evaluating whether the action steps are realistic, achievable and leading toward goal achievement.

It determines whether the goals are still achievable.

- It reveals if additional action steps or interventions are required.

# IEP RELATED

## TERMINATIONS(OWB 96-11)

Can only be executed if the DOL has approved the grantee's written policy

- Policy must include specific reasons for terminations
- Policy to be given out at orientation or at participants' meeting.
- Policy must be in a handbook or similar document.

Behaviors leading to terminations must be fully documented in project records.

- Personnel policies and procedures must include reasons for termination and procedures for complaint resolution.
- Staff should make sure participants are informed of procedures.

IEP terminations can only be executed if DOL has approved the grantees written policy

- Local project policies must include specific reasons for terminations
- Policies must be given out at orientation or at a participants meeting
- Policies must be contained in the participant handbook or similar document.

Failure to participate in the assessment process may be cause for corrective action or, as a last resort, termination.

- Repeated refusal by the participant to perform specific actions may result in termination

# EXERCISE



# Examples of action steps that could appear in an IEP

- Attending a job interview
- Accepting an initial or alternative assignment
- Registering at a one-stop center
- Improving personal habits or appearance
- Participating in workshops, training, etc.

# Participants must be given chance to correct offending actions

- A written notice citing the incident(s) must be given to the participant
- Notice should cite the jointly signed agreement provision and provide 30 days to take corrective action.
- Succeeding notices should follow a progressive pattern. Ex. Initial warning, followed by 30-day time to accomplish a specific action, then perhaps a week-long suspension from work, etc.

SCSEP staff should make every effort to find out why participants are not cooperating before considering termination proceedings.

- Meetings should be held with the participant to find a solution to the problem without resorting to termination.

# IEP terminations are not appropriate when:

- Occurrences are not within the control of the participant
- The situation is impacted by the death of a closely related person or partner
- The training or job places undue hardships on the participant that exceed the demands of the community service assignment
- The proposed employment is more costly to the participant than the SCSEP position

Other reasons should be considered on a case-by-case basis

AN IEP TERMINATION  
SHOULD ONLY BE USED  
AS  
A  
LAST RESORT

# IEP Terminations require letters

- Participants must be given a termination letter that states the right to appeal and cites appropriate time frames and the name of the person to whom a appeal may be made
- A copy of the letter becomes a part of the participant's personnel record.

## Levels of review

- At least two levels of review must be built into the grantee/subgrantee review procedures.
- Those with direct responsibility in the termination decision should exclude themselves from the appeal.