

PLAN FOR ENGAGING FAMILY (Disclosure and discussions)

Some people receive a lot of support from their families in many different ways. This can include support for employment. Families can challenge and support us as we try different things in life. The people that make up a “family” are defined by the people within them. In IPS, this is not limited to biological or adoptive members- but the person/people in a worker’s life who have the most influence. The reasons that a person might want the employment specialist to talk to family members could include:

- Extra help with a job search. Employment specialists can get ideas about the person’s strengths & interests as well as historical information regarding what has been helpful in the past.
- Natural supports including families can take on roles that assist the worker in success including reminders, transportation, sounding boards, etc.
- Family members can provide job seekers with additional support and encouragement related to working.

Some people do not give employment specialists permission to talk to their families. This is an individual choice and will be respected by the employment specialist.

There are many reasons why family may not be included as part of the worker’s support team. The reasons that some people may not want to include family in their employment plan may include:

- Some people do not feel that this type of help is necessary for success with work.
- The family does not believe that employment is right for the consumer, e.g. work is too stressful.
- The worker is not interested in combining natural supports with professional supports.

Either option is fine. You should pick the strategy that feels most comfortable to you. You can always change your mind during the job search, or after you are hired.

Remember- family is defined by you. It can be birth or adoptive family, close friends, clergy or a person in your faith community, a neighbor, an extended family member like an aunt or cousin... You define who is your best support in your personal life. Ask yourself- if you had some amazing news in your life- WHO WOULD YOU CALL?

For people that are eligible and choose to engage, VR staff are part of the planning process. They provide additional knowledge and access to supports and training and may provide additional funding for the family member’s needs related to employment. They can also assist with other needs not directly related to their mental health but does impact employment. VR and IPS staff plan with your family member where they want to be employed and look at what is needed to get there. This could include training, starting their own business or working towards advancement in their job. Input from family can be critical to their success.

You probably have your own personal feelings about involving your family. Try working on the table below with your employment specialist.

Possible Advantages of involving family	Possible Disadvantages of involving family

When employment specialists talk to family, it is possible for them to keep some things private. For example, some people do not want their employment specialist to share information like diagnosis or medications. Talk this over with your employment specialist and write down the things that you would not want the specialist to share with each family member.

If you might want your employment specialist to speak with your family, you can let the specialist know what information is okay to share, and what he or she should not say. You and your employment specialist should **stop here** and discuss what might be said to family members.

For now, what is your preference about including your family?

- I do not want my employment specialist to talk to my family.
- I am not sure right now and I would like some more time to think about this and receive some more information.
- I do not want my employment specialist to share information about me with my family. However, if things change, I am aware that I can always change my mind.
- It is fine with me if my employment specialist talks to the family members listed below. I understand that I will need to sign a release of information specific for each person listed.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Worker signature: _____

Date: _____

Follow Up: (changes to decision, please include brief reason for change as well as the date of the change).