Maryland DDA Employment Outcome Information System

The Maryland Employment Outcome Information System is designed to help DDA and its community of stakeholders to develop the supports and infrastructure necessary to fulfill the vision and goals of Maryland's Position Statement on Employment Services, and to provide longitudinal data that support Maryland's goals to improve both participation in integrated employment and the quality of employment outcomes. In October 2012, a cross stakeholder working group developed guiding principles and goals for this initiative. The goals that the Working Group agreed on included that:

- More people are employed with better hours and earned income
- Stakeholders know the status and progress of employment and day services in Maryland
- More people leave or reduce reliance on SSI
- Families and individuals are making informed choices*

The data system has been developed and tested with input from DDA staff, advocates, and provider representatives. It will continue to evolve in response to feedback and the needs of Maryland.

*For the full list and description of principle goals, please see Appendix A at the end of this document.

Overview

Providers will report on each person who receives DDA funded employment or day services twice a year using a secure web-based reporting tool. The website will provide an initial list of individuals who receive services based on DDA records. Individuals can be added or deleted based on changes in caseloads that are not reflected in the list.

When. Data will be collected from a specific two week point in time twice each year. We anticipate that data collection will occur once in the Fall (usually October) and once in the Spring (April or May).

What will be collected. The focus is on each person's participation in employment. The focus is on the employment outcome, not on the service the person is receiving. In addition, a simple yes/no question will be asked about participation in non-work activities. The categories are:

- Individual competitive job
- Individual contracted job
- Group integrated job
- Self-employment
- Facility based/Sheltered work
- Community-based non work (yes/no only)
- Facility-based non work (yes/not only)

For each employment category that a person participates in, you will be asked to provide the total hours worked for pay, the gross wages earned, and whether the person received paid time off. For contracted work, an additional question asks if the job was part of a set-aside contract.

For the two non-work categories, you are asked only whether the person participated in that activity during the reporting period and, if the person participated in community-based non work, whether they participated in a volunteer job.

What about self-employment? The questions differ slightly for self-employment to account for the nature of a small business. They ask about the number of hours spent working in the business, and about business income and expenses over a 3 month period to account for the inherent variability in cash flow in a small business.

How are the employment settings defined? Definitions are listed on page 3 of this document, and will be available on the data entry website. While these are intended to be as inclusive as possible, you may encounter situations where it is not clear which employment category to use. Please ask in those cases, and we will build a list of frequently asked questions over time to provide additional guidance.

What time period should I report on? The data collection period is *any consecutive 14 day period within the defined reporting month*. This 14 day period can vary for each individual being reported on, but must be a consecutive 14 day period.

This approach was taken so that if a provider is drawing data from payroll records, they can select a reporting period that matches available records.

Recorded Webinars

Introduction to the data collection system and initiative: 9/13/2013
http://connectpro97884399.adobeconnect.com/p8erd5resw3/

Using the data collection system: 9/19/2013
http://connectpro97884399.adobeconnect.com/p9t3f3qb7vd/

Help and Questions

For technical support and assistance using the data system contact:

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Using the Data Entry Website

Logging into your provider account

Each provider will receive a unique user ID and password. You can enter these at: www.statedata.info/MDDADataUpload

Once you have logged in click on **Use Tool** to access your individual database

Entering individual data

- From the home page, click **Enter Individual Data** to access the list of individuals we have uploaded for your program.
- For an individual who was in your program during the reporting period but is not on the list, click **Add New Individual** to add them.
- For an individual who is on the list but was not in your program during the reporting period, click **Delete** to remove them. When you delete an individual you will be prompted to enter a reason for removing them.
- To update an individual's information (i.e., name, region, area office, etc.) click **Edit Individual**.
  Note: This will not be necessary in most cases.
  Note that an individual's personal information must be complete for you to submit your data. We recommend that you open and verify the information for each individual.
- To enter an individual's employment participation for the reporting period, click **Edit Data**.
- To view a summary of an individual's employment data, click **Summary**.
- To log out of the system, click **Logout**. You will not lose saved data when you log out of the system.

  *Please note that once an individual's data has been completed the status of their data in the list will be highlighted green. An individual's data will not be complete unless all fields in **Edit Individual** and **Edit Data** have been entered.*

Entering/Editing Individual Information

- Once all the fields are updated, click **Update** to save the information and return to the list of individuals.

Entering/Editing Individual Employment Data

- You are required to provide a response for each of the seven employment and non-work activities. If an individual did not participate in an activity during the reporting period, please select the **Did not participate in this activity** option for that activity.

- If an individual did participate in an activity, **each** question for that category must be answered to complete the activity.
- **Click on <u>Edit Data</u> to enter data for that activity.**
  Activities that the person did not participate in are completed by checking **<u>Did not participate in the activity</u>**.
  To enter responses for other activities you can click **<u>Open</u>** at the top of the page to open every category, or click on the header for any individual category.
- Once you have completed entering an individual's data for all employment activities, click **<u>Return to List</u>** to navigate back to the list of individuals and save your entries. You can also save changes as you work by clicking **<u>Save</u>** at the bottom of each category.
- The following is a list of tips for data entry fields within each employment activities:
  - ***Hours:*** enter the total number of hours the individual worked or spent in this activity during the reporting period. (For facility-based work **DO NOT** include non-paid work hours.)
  - ***Gross Wages:*** Please enter the total amount in gross wages (wages before taxes and other deductions) the individual earned in this activity during the reporting period.
  - ***Paid time off:*** Is the person <u>eligible</u> for paid vacation, sick, or holiday time during the reporting period?
  - ***Is this job part of a set-aside contract:*** Answer yes if the person is working on a set-aside contract for any part of their work schedule for these employment categories. Set-aside contracts include work under a NISH, Ability One, NIB, or Maryland Works.
- The following list of definitions for each employment activity is also provided in the website as you enter data:
  - ***Individual Competitive Job:*** Individual has a full or part time job in the typical labor market where the majority of persons employed are not persons with disabilities. The business is located within the community and is not owned or operated by the support organization. The person is on the payroll of the community business.
  - ***Individual Contracted Job.*** Individual has a full or part time job in the typical labor market where the majority of persons employed are not persons with disabilities. The business is located within the community but the person is on the payroll of the human service organization, or the human service organization schedules and supervises the work.
  - ***Group Integrated Job:*** Individual works in a group of 2 to 8 individuals with disabilities in a community setting that includes meaningful interaction with individuals without disabilities. This would typically include work settings described as enclaves or mobile work crews.
  - ***Facility-Based Job/Sheltered Work:*** Individual works in a group of individuals support organization, but may also occur in large groups in other settings such as a large enclave. This category would include any group larger than 8, and smaller

group settings that involve little or no contact with workers without disabilities. Typically the position is located in a facility or business owned or operated by the support organization, but may also occur in large groups in other settings such as a large enclave.

- ***Community-Based Non Work:*** Individual spends unpaid time in an integrated community setting. This is reported as yes or no.
    - ***Volunteer Job***. Individual is engaged in unpaid volunteer work within civic, religious, public service, or humanitarian organizations in the community.
- ***Facility-Based Non-work:*** Individual spends time in unpaid activities in a program setting with disabilities. This is reported as yes or no.

Error Checking

- While entering data, the website will prompt you if you do not complete every question under a category.
- Questions about hours worked and wages also check that values are in a specific expected range (i.e., if the wages appear very low). If the value falls outside of that range, a pop-up window will ask you if the number is correct. You can override this warning if the number is correct.
- An individual's data status (indicated by a gray or green check mark) will not turn to complete (green) until every category has been completed.

Submitting Completed Data

- Once all individuals' data have been entered and all check marks are green, click **Ready to Submit** to return to the home page and then click **Submit Completed Data**. Please note that once you submit completed data you will no longer be able to add individuals or edit data online.
  Note: The **Submit Completed Data** button will not be active until each individual is complete.
- To view a summary of employment data for your program, click **View Program Summary**.
- To download your data into an excel spreadsheet, click **Download Data**.

For technical support and assistance using the data system contact:

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Appendix A
Principles and Goals

Core principles for developing and implementing an employment outcome data collection system in Maryland. Outcome Data Working Group, October, 2012.

- *Data collection is a tool to focus on improving employment outcomes*. The core variables represent work status or position and are not by themselves a statement about the quality of the employment outcome. The emphasis in the discussion on October 23rd was on type of job, hours worked, and income earned. It is recognized that some factors including job satisfaction and job match, are important, but will be addressed in other ways. Additional optional variables to measure quality that were discussed are listed below.

- *Data can be used to inform individual choices*. Consider the ways in which having access to employment outcome data can be a resource to job seekers and families as they select a support provider.

- *Data helps to demonstrate accountability*. The data collected should allow Maryland to answer the core question "Where are we now?" and support the development of goals and work plans to improve employment outcomes.

- *Data collection is an opportunity to support adoption of common definitions/common language across the state*. One anticipated outcome of developing and implementing an employment outcome data collection system is ensuring that common language is used to describe employment outcomes. There was considerable discussion on October 23rd that emphasized that the proposed job categories upon which data will be collected do not represent a value judgment, but rather an opportunity to take stock and understand the full array of employment outcomes in the state. Once Maryland has established a baseline for where people are working, discussion about goals for increasing employment outcomes at the state and local level can begin.

- *Employment outcomes are different than service definitions*. While modifications to service definitions should mirror the development of an employment outcome data collection system,, identifying the service a person gets is not the same as understanding the individual's work setting or employment outcome.

- *Data collection systems should embrace simplicity*. Data elements should be readily understandable, quick to report, and require minimal burden to collect.

- *Data collection should be at the individual level*. Data should be reported at the individual level for each individual who received day or employment services from DDA.