

## Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) Webinar

### Questions and Answers

#### Section 1 Questions - Why CIE?

- What is LEAP and how do I access it?  
LEAP stands for Limited Examination and Appointment Program. LEAP is a way for a person with a disability who is 18 years or older to get a state job. Most state jobs require a person to take a written test. LEAP gives a person with a disability a choice to either take a written test or do “on-the-job testing” to demonstrate their skills by actually doing the job. This is called the Job Examination Period. Before a person does the Job Examination Period, the person needs to be certified by the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR). Once a person is certified by DOR, the person will enter the LEAP by taking these steps:

1. Take LEAP Readiness Evaluations to obtain list eligibility
2. Apply for job openings
3. Complete a Job Examination Period if selected

People who successfully complete the Job Examination Period are eligible to apply for the state job they tested in. Completing a Job Examination Period does not always mean you will get a state job. A link to more information about LEAP can be found on the CIE Webinar Glossary of Terms page 5.

- Can a LEAP internship be done anywhere or only in Sacramento?  
A LEAP “on-the-job testing” is available state-wide. It is not an internship. However, there is a new LEAP pilot program being tested which includes internships for persons with ID/DD. This LEAP internship pilot program is expected to be available statewide in the near future. Please check with DOR and CalHR for more information.
- Are there any incentives for companies to hire disabled people?  
Besides the ones talked about on the webinar slides there are tax break incentives for employers including the:
  - Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)

- o Disabled Access Credit
- o Barrier Removal Tax Deduction

You can find more information about each of these by visiting the EARN website link which is on the glossary of terms page 4.

Besides tax incentives there are programs that will either share payment of wages or pay full wages for a limited amount of time while a person with a disability becomes skilled enough to do the job. For example:

DOR vocational rehabilitation (VR) on-the-job training program can be set up by VR with an employer for an individual client of VR. VR can pay the employer to provide training on the job for a limited time. The position must be permanent, full-time, and pay above minimum wage.

The Paid Internship Program (PIP) can pay an intern full wages up to \$10,400 a year for an integrated job that pays at least minimum wage. Depending on each person's needs and their age, job coaching may be available from the school transition program, DOR, or the regional center.

- DOR - How are you using this information to educate employers that individuals with disabilities are receiving state support such as job coaching to meet employer expectations?  
DOR is educating employers by meeting with them. DOR Business Specialists, Workforce Development Services staff, and other staff tell the businesses and employer about the Paid Internship Program, On-the-Job Training, Supported Employment etc. When DOR meets with a new business partner DOR learns about the business, what the business needs and how DOR can help.
- How many individuals in CA have gotten into CIE since the blueprint started?  
The number of individuals who get CIE is put together at the end of each fiscal year which means from July 1 of one year to June 30 of the next year. For fiscal year 17/18, 1152 individuals got into CIE. We do not have all the information for the next fiscal year 18/19, but

we do know that more than 1152 have gotten CIE during fiscal year 18/19.

## **Section 2 Questions – How Can a Person Get Ready for CIE?**

- Is there a list of services provided through DOR for students to review ahead of their meeting with DOR?

Yes, the DOR website has information on Student Services for students ages 16 through 21. You can find the link to Student Services on the glossary of terms page 3.

- Upon entering high school Special ed class, can a student with disabilities get DOR services?

An individual may apply for DOR services at any time if they have a disability, want to work, are having trouble getting or keeping a job because of their disability, and need services such as job placement, training, or job preparation to help them get or keep a job or advance in employment.

An individual may also apply for DOR Student Services if they are a student aged 16 through 21 years old enrolled in a recognized education program (including home school and alternative high school programs) and has an IEP, a 504 Plan, or a disability.

- If a person is not connected to a regional center can they still go to DOR for Supported Employment Services?

Yes. They will need to contact their local district DOR office. This information can be found in the glossary of terms page 3.

- Is regional center & DOR supposed to assist with accommodations? Most accommodations can be provided by the employer, depending on how complicated the accommodation is and the cost which may not be affordable for the employer. Also, DOR may be able to help with some accommodations.

The regional center may assist with the payment for necessary accommodations which are not covered by a person's health insurance or other generic resources.

- Is it possible for a high schooler with intellectual disabilities to get after-school work experience with a job coach?

Yes, WorkAbility I may offer this service. To find out if your school offers job coaching after school hours you would need to ask the school or the school district if their job programs such as WorkAbility I offer this. You can also contact your DOR district. Contact information is in the glossary of terms page 3. If the student is at least 18 years-old, they may also contact their regional center about participating in the PIP (Paid Internship Program).

- Job Coaching

- o re: DOR - what does job coaching entail exactly?

- A job coach supports a person in learning and doing their job duties. Job coaching can be done individually. If a person receives job coaching support, the coaching can be reduced until the person can do most, if not all, of their job duties without help.

- o What if a student wants to do a paid internship through a regional Center but needs job coaching? Regional centers don't usually provide this coaching for students. Can DOR fund this for students?

DOR may pay for job coaching for a person in a paid internship if the paid internship will lead to a CIE job. Also, regional centers may pay for job coaching if there are no other generic resources that can offer job coaching services. Generic resources include schools, school districts, DOR and America's Job Centers of California.

- o Who assigns the job coach and what are the basic hours the job coach works?

- This is decided on an individual basis in either an IPE or IPP meeting after the supported employment vendor assesses the job skill needs of a person and what the person would like to do.

- o What if someone needs a job coach who has specific skills related to a technical job?

- A person along with their IPE or IPP team can assist the individual by developing a plan to find a job coach with the specific skills related to a technical job.
- I was told DOR was not able to do student services.  
The DOR offers Student Services to students ages 16 through 21 years old that are enrolled in a recognized education program (including home school and alternative high school programs) and have an IEP, a 504 Plan, or a disability.
- DOR - How is this process affected by the new potentially eligible category for current students (age 16-22)?  
Students being served under the Potentially Eligible case type may get these five Student Services: Job exploration counseling, on-the-job learning experiences, counseling for education after high school, training to get ready for work, and learning how to advocate for themselves. When additional services are necessary, the student can apply for services through vocational rehabilitation at DOR.
- Can a private school student access these programs - internships, etc.  
Yes, a student in a private school can access DOR services and if 18 years or older may be able to get a Paid Internship Program through their regional center.
- How does tailored day services help with college? by paying for college?  
Tailored day services does not pay for college. Tailored day services may offer supports such as applying to colleges, advocating for accommodations, and other services a college may not be required to do to help a student with a disability go to college. The exact services would be decided on an individual basis in an IPP team meeting.
- My son participated in WorkAbility I while he was in the Adult Transition Program after High School, but after he completed, we were not given direction on how to continue his employment or what should be done for next steps. What steps can I take now?

Contact the WorkAbility I he was receiving services from and ask them what his choices are for continued work skills training or finding a job. In addition to contacting the WorkAbility I, your choices are:

- o If he needs more job skills training and your son is under 22 years of age you can contact his school for more employment training services or his DOR district. DOR district information is in your glossary of terms page 3.
- o If he is 18 and older, he can contact the regional center and ask about the paid internship program.
- o If your son is 22 years and older, he can contact either his DOR district or the regional center for employment services.
- o Your son can also contact an America's Job Center of California (AJCC) for employment services. AJCC information can be found on the glossary of terms page 1.
- o If your son feels that he has enough skills to work, he can apply for a job and get a job.
- Can you go into detail about Tailored Day Program services? Tailored Day Services can help a person to develop or keep a job, do volunteer activities and go to college. It is a more customized service that focuses on a person's individual needs in the areas of work, volunteer activities and/or college or other adult schools. You can find more information about Tailored Day services on the glossary of terms page 7 and by contacting your regional center.

Will the school pay for internships?

The CDE does not pay for internships and CDE does not work directly with students. However, some school districts offer unpaid internships. We suggest contacting your school district to find out if it has the Academy Model or Work Experience Education (WEE) in which both have unpaid internships. Also, WorkAbility I has pre-employment skills training, employment placement and follow-up for high school students in special education.

How can we get high schools to do a better job of transition planning and letting students know about the options you mentioned today?

It is very important to include and support family in the transition plan. The student's family or the student, if the student is 18 years or older, can ask to

have an IEP meeting in writing, to go over the student's IEP. The IEP has the plan for transitioning from high school. The written request can be sent to the student's case manager or the school district staff.

At the IEP transition planning meeting, the school, the student and their family need to make sure the student is the center of the transition planning team by talking about the student's strengths, interests, skills, and goals which will guide the student's transition to employment, education and training, and independent living.

It is very important for a student to understand and develop self-determination skills which include self-advocacy skills. Having strong self-advocacy skills, understanding and fully participating in their IEP and the development of the summary of performance (SOP) helps a student transition more successfully

There are several resources to learn more about successful transitions such as:

- The EDge Newsletter
- Secondary Transition Planning: The Basics
- A Transition Guide to Postsecondary Education and Employment for Student and Youth with Disabilities
- National Gateway to Self-Determination
- Parents/Family and Community
- Center for Parent Information and Resources
- Do you feel that those who participated in a PIP were hired after? I worry that many employers take advantage of this program. Data from fiscal year 2017/2018 showed almost 20% of people in a PIP were hired by the same business where they interned. Another goal for the PIP is to gain work experience and skills for future jobs and would not necessarily lead to employment at the place of internship.
- Have you seen a lot of individuals interested in the PIP? Yes, many people are interested and have done a PIP. In fiscal year 17/18 647 individuals participated in a PIP. We are also seeing an increase in the PIP from year to year.

- Can a student who is receiving WorkAbility during the school year get job coach services from DOR for summer employment?  
This type of situation would have to be handled on a case by case basis. It is best to discuss the need for such services with the rehabilitation counselor at the DOR. Also, if WorkAbility I has staff available for the summer months, WAI can offer job coaching for students who are ready to work.
- Do any of these programs require a diploma or are certificates of completion ok?  
None of the programs in the CIE webinar require a high school diploma.
- Can the job be almost anything or does it have to be currently available?  
The type of job a person wants needs to be decided in a person centered IEP, IPE or IPP meeting.

### **Section 3 Questions – SSI Benefits and Medi-Cal**

- Is the with-holding before or after taxes?
  - The amount of money the SSA takes out of an SSI check is calculated from a person's gross earned income before taxes are taken out. You can find more detailed information on the WORK AND BENEFITS page 1.
- What is the most a person can make before they lose their benefits altogether?
  - The answer depends on which benefits you are talking about such as SSI, SSDI and Medi-Cal and other benefits. It is best to get this information from the Social Security's "Find Help" tool to locate a Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) project near you. The Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) also has Work Incentives Planners (WIPs). More information can be found on the glossary of terms pages 7 and 8.
- Can you get SSI if you work full time but only make \$1200?

- o It is best to talk to a WIPA or WIPs, representative about this to be sure.
- Is the Student Earned Income Exclusion available to home schooled youth?
  - o Yes, you can find more information about this on the SEIE Social Security webpage found on the glossary of terms page 6.
- Will SSA automatically adjust for impairment work related needs or is this something we need to apply for?
  - o This adjustment is not automatic, you need to ask for IRWEs from Social Security (SS). You will need to send SS a wage report, receipts for the cost of the IRWE, and proof of what you earned each month. SS will decide if your expense qualifies for IRWE.
- If a student is participating in WorkAbility as a part of their High School program, does that money earned affect their SSI?
  - o Yes, it can but not always. When you have SSI, all earned and unearned income must be reported to Social Security. It is likely that the Student Earned Income Exclusion (SEIE) can be used, meaning that the SSI check amount would probably stay the same. You can find more information on your glossary of terms page 3 and 6 under SEIE and Disability Benefits 101.
- If you lose your SSI and then are not able to work, will your SSI be reinstated? If so, how soon?
  - o If your SSI check went to zero due to your earnings from work, you are using the 1619(b) work incentive to keep your Medi-Cal and you are unable to work, you would let Social Security know that you are not working and your SSI check can be reinstated.
  - o You may get a job where you are making enough money that you are no longer eligible for SSI benefits, but something happens, and you are unable to work or lose your job. You probably will not have to reapply for SSI benefits if you are eligible for a safety net called Expedited Reinstatement (EXR).

If less than five years have passed since your SSI terminated because of excess earned income (or a combination of earned and unearned income), and you are unable to work, you may be able to have your SSI benefits start again right away through a request for EXR. EXR allows you to get up to six months of temporary cash benefits and Medi-Cal while Social Security does a medical review to decide if you meet the requirements to have your SSI benefits reinstated.

- o If you have been ineligible for SSI and/or Medi-Cal for any reason other than work or medical recovery, you may be able to restart your SSI cash payment and/or Medi-Cal coverage within 12 months without a new application. There is an SSA Expedited Reinstatement program. You can find more information about this on the glossary of terms page 4 under EXR (Expedited Reinstatement).
- What do you think is the best way to motivate someone to move away from SSI and toward employment when they are used to depending on SSI?  
This is a difficult question as what motivates one person may not motivate another person. We can only make suggestions such as:
  - o Encouraging the individual to watch the video links found in the CIE Webinar Fact Sheets.
  - o Talk to them about their life dreams and interests.
  - o Help them learn about different careers. A good way to do this is by going to the California Career Zone website at [CareerZone.org](http://CareerZone.org). You can find more information about the California Career Zone on glossary of terms page 1.
  - o Go to the Disability Benefits 101 website calculator and to help them understand how working would affect their SSI benefits. You can try out part time versus full time employment.
  - o Help the person learn the reasons people choose to work versus not working and then let them decide whether this is something they would like to learn more about.
- ABLE and PASS questions
  - o Where do you set up an ABLE account?

You can open an ABLE account online. California's ABLE account program is CalABLE. Many other states offer ABLE programs, and each state's program options are different so it's a good idea to compare the programs to determine which ABLE Account will work best for you. You can compare the programs on the ABLE National Resource Center (NRC) website. ABLE information including a link to set up a CalABLE account and a link to ABLE National Resource Center is in the glossary of terms page 1.

- o What is the difference between PASS and CalABLE?  
PASS is a savings account that can only be used for services or supports that a person needs to work. CalABLE is a savings account that can only be used for a "qualified disability expense" meaning any expense a person with disabilities needs to live their life. You can find more information on the glossary of terms page 1 and 6 about each.
- o Can you take advantage of both?  
This is a question to ask social security or CalABLE. You can find information and links to both on the glossary of terms page 1 and 6
- o Are there any tax benefits for family members that deposit money in person's able account?  
The Cal-ABLE does not address whether there are any tax benefits for family members that deposit money in a person's ABLE account. Other state ABLE accounts may offer a tax benefit for donating to an ABLE account. This is a question to ask your financial or tax advisor. There is some more information on the WORK AND BENEFITS page 6.

#### **Section 4 and 5 Questions - Safety and Transportation / Other Resources**

- Is Project Search funded by Regional Centers? If so, do all 21 Regional Centers have Project Search?

Project Search is an independent internship program which some regional centers work with. To find out more information about Project Search in California please refer to the glossary of terms page 6.

- How can a for-profit share interest in supporting the PIP and can a program receiving partial funding support/ take advantage of the PIP? Please talk to your regional center about PIP. PIP should be at a business doing a job that the individual is interested in.
- How can I be a part of the employer task force?  
I have a wealth of resources and am currently leading a committee in long beach on this matter. I am a Lead Career Counselor for the College Internship Program. We are not sure what you mean by employer task force. If you are talking about the reason for this webinar which is to create more chances and to make it easier to get CIE, we can give you information about the Local Partnership Agreements (LPA). These agreements are made by local school districts, Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) Districts, and regional centers to work together to make their services to get CIE better. LPAs also, invite other people in their community to join their LPA. These other people are any other person or company that wants to help people with ID/DD get CIE. Contact your local regional center to ask about their LPA or LPAs as they may have more than one. You can find more information about LPAs on the California Health and Human Services CIE webpage. You can find a link to this page in the glossary of terms page 2.
- Can you speak more about this inter-department collaboration?  
The Department of Rehabilitation, the Department of Education, and the Department of Developmental Services made an agreement to make CIE their highest priority. You can find more information about this agreement on the California Health and Human Services CIE webpage. The link to this webpage is in the glossary of terms page 2.

- Comment from attendee:

As a person with a significant disability from the age of five, I had a hard time accepting my disability. This had caused me to choose very difficult lines of work when I was of age which in turn has caused many broken bones and injuries. Once I became thirty years old, my body was too broken which changed my perspective on possible jobs I could perform. I then went to college and received an accounting certificate before I finally looked into the option of working for the State of California and was employed as a volunteer. This allowed me to research on how to pass a state exam and become permanently employed. If I had only known and accepted help from any disability employment programs at the time, perhaps my job goals would have been more refined to meet my disability needs. It is encouraging that so many programs are available for people with disabilities and I would encourage those who qualify to take advantage and use the services available.