



IPS Initiative & Assertive Community Treatment Frequently Asked Questions

This document is intended to answer frequently asked questions regarding the Individualized Placement Services (IPS) Initiative and Assertive Community Treatment. The Office of Mental Health (OMH) will revise and reissue this document as needed. Additional questions can be sent to EmploymentServices@omh.ny.gov.

Acronym Key: The below acronyms are commonly used throughout this document.	
ACCES-VR	Adult Career and Continuing Education Services – Vocational Rehabilitation
ACT	Assertive Community Treatment
CORE	Community Oriented Recovery and Empowerment
CPI	Center for Practice Innovations
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
IPS	Individualized Placement and Support
NYESS	New York Employment Services System

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Section 1: Initiative Funding and Eligibility

Issued	#	Question	Answer
6/7/24	1	What ACT teams are eligible to participate in the IPS Initiative?	All voluntary (non-State Operated) agencies with at least one Adult or Young Adult ACT team are required to participate in this initiative. Note State-operated ACT Teams will not receive IPS Initiative funding and are not required to participate; however, State-operated ACT Teams may participate in any training or technical assistance made available through the IPS Initiative.
6/7/24	2	How many IPS Employment Specialists are funded for each provider?	Funding will be provided for one (1) FTE IPS Specialist per ACT Agency within a given county. An agency that operates multiple ACT Teams in multiple counties/boroughs will receive additional funding for each county/borough. For example, if an agency has an ACT team in County A and a second ACT Team in County B, they will receive funding for two IPS Employment Specialists.
6/7/24	3	How much funding is being provided?	For the current fiscal year, each agency will receive \$71,858 per county in upstate and \$77,567 per county in downstate.
6/7/24	4	What is funding used for?	<p>This funding is used to cover program costs and non-Medicaid reimbursable employment-related services and activities, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitive salary and fringe for at least one fulltime, well-qualified IPS Employment Specialist • Staff time and agency resources needed for participation in IPS training and the Center for Practice Innovation's IPS Learning Collaborative • Employment services under the IPS model that are not covered by Medicaid, including job development and short-term job coaching • New York Employment Services System (NYESS) training and implementation. <p>Note: This state aid funding may not be used for any costs unrelated to the provision of supported employment. This includes capital expenditures, program fees, and wages for individuals.</p>
6/7/24	5	Is the IPS specialist expected to be a full time position?	Yes, the position is funded at one FTE.

Issued	#	Question	Answer
6/7/24	6	If an agency has 1 team in one county, and 4 teams in another, would the 2 allotted IPS specialists be split evenly among the 5 teams?	Agencies are permitted to split the IPS Specialists' time between counties based on need. It will be up to the agency to decide how to implement each IPS Specialist within the scope of the guidance document.
6/7/24	7	Will the agency be responsible for recruiting and hiring this position?	Yes, the Agency will be responsible for recruiting and hiring the IPS Employment Specialist(s).

Section 2: IPS Services and Reimbursement

Issued	#	Question	Answer
6/7/24	1	Will the IPS Specialist role be described in the OMH ACT Guidelines?	No. There is separate guidance for the IPS Initiative in ACT, available on the ACT website .
6/7/24	2	What role will ACCES-VR have in the IPS model?	ACCES-VR will not play a direct role in the implementation of this initiative. ACCES-VR will continue to be a resource to adults with disabilities that impact their ability to work, including individuals receiving ACT. OMH will provide training and technical assistance for IPS Employment Specialists to support collaboration with their local ACCES-VR District Office and vendors when appropriate.
6/7/24	3	Please clarify whether the IPS Specialist will work with all ACT Teams in a single county and whether they will also support CORE PSR providers in the county.	The IPS Specialist will work with all ACT teams the agency operates in a given county. If your agency is also a designated CORE PSR provider, the IPS Specialist will also work with your CORE PSR team to implement and support IPS.

Issued	#	Question	Answer
6/7/24	4	Can the IPS specialist perform a Medicaid billable service for ACT?	<p>No. Activities performed by the IPS Specialist will not be billed to Medicaid, as these activities are funded directly by the IPS Initiative. Billable IPS interventions should be provided directly by the ACT Team.</p> <p>The ACT Team will provide Medicaid reimbursable interventions, while the IPS Employment specialist will provide non-billable services and activities, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job development (meeting with employers) • Educating employers - working directly with the business community to learn their needs and provide education on the value of hiring individuals with disabilities (e.g., work incentives) • Working with employers to problem-solve issues in the workplace • Negotiating reasonable accommodations • Job coaching • Career counseling and vocational assessment • Resume writing • Benefits counseling and navigating work incentives
6/7/24	5	Do contacts made by the IPS Employment Specialist count toward ACT 6 monthly visits?	No, the IPS Specialist is not a formal member of the ACT team and they do not provide ACT services. Only services provided by ACT Team staff will count toward the minimum 6 monthly contacts for ACT billing.
6/7/24	6	Does IPS specialist count towards ACT ratio?	<p>No, the IPS Employment Specialist is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not a member of the ACT Team (does not count toward the ACT staffing ratio) and • Does not replace the ACT Vocational Specialist

Section 3: Documentation and Reporting

Issued	#	Question	Answer
6/7/24	1	When is the IPS Fidelity Scale self-assessment due?	<i>Participating organizations must conduct annual (once per year) self-assessments using the IPS Fidelity Scale. This tool can be used to support continuous quality improvement. CPI will provide agencies with guidance and support in administering the self-assessment; this is typically done at the end of the calendar year in November and December. Results of the IPS Fidelity Scale should be made available to OMH upon request.</i>
6/7/24	2	How do I submit the Employment Specialist Vacancy Report each month?	The Employment Specialist Vacancy Report is submitted monthly via Microsoft Forms by the last business day of the month. Only one report needs to be submitted per agency.

6/7/24	3	How will the IPS Employment Specialist document their work?	The IPS Employment Specialist will create NYESS case records for each individual on their caseload and will log all activities or services in NYESS. The Employment Specialist will also work closely with the ACT Team to ensure that their work is aligned with each individual's service plan and that critical information is included in the individual's ACT case record.
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Section 4: Training

Issued	#	Question	Answer
6/7/24	1	What are the education requirements or other qualifications of the IPS Employment Specialist?	Employment Specialists must meet the following minimum qualifications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be at least 18 years of age and have a high school diploma or equivalent (e.g., GED or TASC) • 6 months of personal or professional experience in human services • An ability to travel independently, or with reasonable accommodations, throughout the community and outreach with local employers.
6/7/24	2	Who will supervise the IPS Employment Specialist?	Agencies have discretion in assigning a supervisor to the IPS Employment Specialist. Ideally, this would be a director or supervisor of the agency's employment services and/or community services.
6/7/24	3	Would the agency's IPS Employment Specialist be required to take ACT Institute trainings (required of ACT staff)?	The IPS Employment Specialist should be well versed in ACT services, which could be learned through formal training, observation, reviewing guidance, etc. Because the IPS Employment Specialist is not a member of the ACT Team and does not replace the Vocational Specialist, they are <i>not required</i> to take the ACT Institute trainings at this time. It is recommended that agencies ensure the IPS Employment Specialist receive training on the ACT program model and the vocational supports provided by the ACT team (e.g., ACT Core curriculum, ACT Vocational Specialist Role curriculum).

Issued	#	Question	Answer
6/7/24	4	What trainings are required?	<p>All ACT Team members must complete the below training through the CPI Learning Community, an online learning management system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IPS: Introduction to the Individual Placement and Support (IPS) Model of Supported Employment ©2012 (csod.com) – 45 minutes <p>IPS Employment Specialists are required to complete the below trainings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IPS: Introduction to the Individual Placement and Support (IPS) Model of Supported Employment ©2012 (csod.com) – 45 minutes • IPS: Job Development ©2013 – 30 minutes • IPS: Using the Employment Resource Book ©2015 – 60 minutes
6/7/24	5	What is the deadline to complete training requirements?	<p>Current staff must complete this training by 03/31/2024. Any staff hired after 03/31/2024 must complete this training within 3 months of hire.</p>
6/7/24	6	Who do I contact for assistance?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For questions related to the overall initiative and guidance, please contact the OMH Rehabilitation Services Unit at EmploymentServices@omh.ny.gov • For questions regarding NYESS or to connect with an OMH Employment Liaison, please contact their mailbox at NYESS@omh.ny.gov • For questions related to the IPS Learning Collaborative, please contact the CPI Helpdesk at cpihelp@nyspi.columbia.edu