Madera - Mariposa County Local Partnership Agreement

# **Intent/Purpose**

The purpose of the Madera- Mariposa County Local Plan Agreement (LPA) is to build collaborative partnerships that promote preparation for and achievement of Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) for youth and young adults with disabilities ages 16 to 22 years including individuals with intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities. The agreement will articulate the actions to be taken to improve and deliver seamless delivery of services, ensure person-centered planning processes and increase employment opportunities by developing and maintaining collaborative practices among the Core Partners concentrating on improving outcomes for students with disabilities.

The role of the LPA will be to identify and collaborate with community agencies that play a critical role in serving individuals with disabilities. The desired results are an increased knowledge of each agency, an understanding of the services provided by each and development of a plan that coordinates and sequences services with minimal duplication.

The Madera-Mariposa Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) will provide Local Education Agencies (LEAs) with valuable information needed to facilitate Person-Centered Planning (PCP), CIE and available services. Individuals with disabilities have the right to be counseled regarding their skills and abilities and their motivation to work. They will be assessed for the type of work they desire. Individuals will learn about the independence that employment provides.

# **Identification of Core Partners**

Participating core partners in the LPA: Department of Rehabilitation San Joaquin Valley District, Central Valley Regional Center, Madera County Superintendent of Schools, Madera-Mariposa Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA)and Local Education Agencies (LEA’s).

**Department of Rehabilitation (DOR)**

San Joaquin Valley District participating branch offices:

Fresno, District Office Fresno/Madera Counties

Merced Branch Office Merced and Mariposa Counties

Modesto Branch Office Stanislaus County/Tuolumne County (Motherlode)

**Central Valley Regional Center (CVRC)**

Fresno, Main Office Fresno County

Merced Branch Office, Merced County

**LEA Core Partners**

Madera County Superintendent of Schools

Madera - Mariposa SELPA

Madera Unified School District

Golden Valley Unified School District

Chawanakee Unified School District

Yosemite Unified School District

Mariposa County Unified School District

Mariposa County Office of Education

Chowchilla Union High School District

Sherman Thomas Charter Schools

Western Sierra Charter Schools

# **Identification of Community Partners**

The LPA core members will collaborate with each other and community partners to share resources, streamline the processes, and provide information to consumers.

**Community partners may include but not limited to:**

CVRC Vendors

Madera Community College Center

Workforce Connection Fresno AJCC

Madera County WORKFORCE Investment Corporation (Local Workforce Development Area)

Mother Lode Job Training (America’s Job Center of California)

# **Roles and Responsibilities: Collaboration through Person-Centered Processes**

Collaboration between partners will occur by streamlining the referral process, data sharing, and regular partner meetings. The core partners agree that all plans will be reached through a Person-Centered approach. Person-Centered planning is an approach to support an individual towards their preferred future.

Duplication will be reduced by honoring documentation of disabilities by each of the partners for the purpose of determining eligibility including assessments for the purpose of reducing duplication of assessments. We will also streamline the referral process established among LEAs, DOR, Regional Center, and other community partner agencies which provide services to individuals with disabilities.

Students in secondary school ages 16-17 will be eligible to receive collaborative Student Services by Department of Rehabilitation in partnership with the local LEA.

Students in secondary school ages 18-21.

These services consist of pre-employment transition services, provided in accordance with the needs and interests of the student, that fall within the following five categories:

* Job exploration counseling
* Work-based learning experiences
* Postsecondary counseling
* Work readiness training
* Self-advocacy training

A. **Referral and Intake Process for Core Partners**

**Department of Rehabilitation, San Joaquin Valley District**

**Referral Process:**

To refer a student between the ages of 16-21 for DOR Student Services from an LEA, a DS1968 Vocational Services referral form and signed DOR Consent may be submitted to the DOR QRP (Qualified Rehabilitation Professional) at a designated monthly meeting with the participating school. Alternatively, the forms can be scanned and submitted electronically to the following DOR Student Services electronic mailbox (in development).

**Student Services Eligibility:** Students can participate if they are 16 through 21 years of age, enrolled in a recognized education program (including home school and alternative high school programs), have an IEP, a 504 Plan, or a qualifying disability.

To refer a student for Student Services ages 16-18, the LEA may invite the DOR QRP to the transitional IEP meeting or submit a completed DOR 1968 Student Services referral form. During the transitional IEP the DOR QRP may provide the student and/or legal representative with pertinent information regarding DOR services and will collect necessary contact information for the purpose of coordinating Student Services. The QRP may also receive direct referrals from the LEA through established monthly meetings with the LEA program specialist or designated staff.

To refer students between the ages of 18-21 that require full Vocational Rehabilitation Services to achieve Competitive Integrated Employment the LEA may invite the DOR QRP to the transitional IEP meeting. The DOR QRP may provide the student and/or legal representative with pertinent information regarding DOR VR services and will collect necessary contact information for the purpose of scheduling an intake appointment. Alternatively, when in agreement with the QRP, an LPA referral and signed consent may be scanned and sent electronically directly to the following DOR Student Services electronic mailbox (in development).

To refer individuals not in secondary school and who intend to pursue Competitive Integrated Employment, the partner may staff the potential referral with DOR QRP at established meetings with the Supported Employment QRP and/or invite the QRP to a transitional planning meeting. Alternatively, when in agreement with the QRP, an agreed upon LPA partner referral and signed consent and the partners relevant materials documenting an eligible disability may be scanned and sent electronically directly to the following DOR Supported Employment Services electronic mailbox (In development).

Adult non-Students will be directed to apply for DOR services by submitting a DOR 222, Signed Consent to release information and the partners relevant materials documenting an eligible disability. DOR will apply Expedited Enrollment when collaborating under this LPA.

**Central Valley Regional Center**

**Referral Process:**

Referrals to CVRC may be made by parents, teachers, counselors, relatives, friends or the individual requesting services. Referrals are taken by phone, online, fax, mail, and in person. Referral forms are available online at cvrc.org. Anyone with a known or suspected developmental disability is eligible for an assessment of diagnosis and a determination of eligibility for regional center services. A referral can be made at any age; however, the onset of the disability must have been prior to the age of 18.

**Eligibility Criteria**

The assessment process an individual must go through to qualify for CVRC services is referred to as “intake.” During this process, CVRC will gather social, psychological, and medical information to determine eligibility for CVRC services. The intake process varies slightly depending on the age of the applicant.

Diagnoses that qualify a person for Regional Center services include the following developmental disabilities; Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Intellectual Disability, Epilepsy, and conditions closely related to, and requiring treatment similar to an intellectual disability.

In addition, to qualify for Regional Center services, a person’s developmental disability must originate prior to age 18, be expected to continue indefinitely, and be a substantial disability, meaning the person experiences significant limitations in three or more of the following areas; self-care, language, learning, mobility, self-direction, capacity for independent living, or economic self-sufficiency.

**Local Education Agencies**

A referral for special education evaluation can come from a parent, teacher, or other service provider. If an LEA suspects that the student (aged 3-21) has a disability, it is obligated to conduct an assessment in order to determine eligibility for special education services. If the student is found to be eligible under one of 13 eligibility categories, the team will develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) in order to address goals and services that are designed to meet the student’s academic and behavioral needs.

**Madera County Superintendent of Schools (MCSOS) SELPA WorkAbility 1 (WAI)**

Recruitment and referral is accomplished through ongoing meetings and collaboration with Case Managers to ensure an awareness of the WAI array of services available to students and the roles and methods of delivering those services. This ongoing contact allows for Case Managers and SELPA WAI administrators to discuss activities that promote career exploration, employment readiness skills, and transitioning planning. If students are eligible and interested, they may be placed in a WAI position and receive wages while receiving on site job skills training.

Although there is eligibility criteria specific to placement opportunities, any student 16-22 years of age with an active IEP has access to the many opportunities provided through the WAI Program for career exploration and college awareness activities delivered in the classroom or by another means. These activities may include student participation in self-awareness activities, self-advocacy training, career exploration, job readiness and workplace social skills delivered in the classroom setting. A collection of the student work samples and student input determine areas of strengths and challenges, which are used to develop Individual Transition Plans (ITPs). This information is shared at IEP/ITP meetings.

The WorkAbility I Program Handbook, Quick Facts, and Applications are provided to Case Managers to provide to students, parents and job skills training sites. Included in the application is a WAI Agreement, which is reviewed and signed by the student, parent(s), WAI Coordinators/Case manager(s) and Worksites.

Students with IEPs who are 16 years of age and older are referred by their teachers to participate in the placement (paid) opportunity of the grant. Documents, including those requiring parent consent are sent home to parents of referred students. Completed applications are reviewed by the SELPA WAI Administrator to check for accuracy and for a connection to the expressed career preference of the student.

Informing students, parents, local businesses and the community of WAI is accomplished through a variety of means: brochures are available at school sites, shared at IEP meetings, provided to potential work sites and a WAI link is included on the SELPA link within the MCSOS website. Presentations are provided to the Community Advisory Committee (CAC), board meetings, superintendent meetings, local employers and school staff who work with potential WAI participants.

**B. Coordinating Person-Centered Planning**

**Person-Centered Plan (PCP)** is an ongoing process used to assist individuals with disabilities plan for their future. Groups of interested people focus on an individual and the vision they express for what they would like to do in the future. The “person-centered” team meets to identify opportunities that assist in the development of personal relationships, participation in community/ies, increased independence, securing and retaining CIE, and development of the skills and abilities that are needed to achieve this vision. PCP depends on the commitment of a team of individuals who know and care about the individuals. These team members assist to ensure that the strategies discussed in planning meetings are implemented.

**Department of Rehabilitation**

The DOR Student Services Plan 205 and the IPE will be developed in collaboration with the consumer, the DOR Rehabilitation Counselor, and others as requested.

The Student Services Plan (DR205) is a universal plan for students offered by DOR. The goal is for the student to participate in services that help them explore and prepare for employment to assist them in achieving workplace success after completing their education.

The Student Services Plan includes five services. Each of the five DOR Student Services may include a variety of activities that allow students to explore career options, gain work experience, and develop other foundational skills that will support them being successful at work and in life.

The specific activities they participate in will depend on their needs, interests, and the choices available in the local area. As the students continue to participate, their needs and interests may change. Students need to stay in communication with the DOR team. The students can add or change your expected activities to any within the five services in the Student Services plan.

The student is responsible for providing information requested by DOR, notifying DOR if they change schools or no longer enrolled in school and fully participate in Student Services meeting and activities.

**Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)** – A term used by the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) to refer to the contract between the client and the DOR. The IPE contains important information on the client’s employment goal, and what services and supports the DOR has agreed provide to assist the client in meeting that goal.

* The IPE is a written plan listing consumer job objective and DOR services the individual will receive to reach their employment goal. The consumer and DOR counselor will discuss the individual’s unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice. The IPE should be developed prior to consumer transitioning from Secondary Education, Alternative Schools, or Post-Secondary Education. The IPE will be developed within 90 days of eligibility determination in collaboration with the consumer, DOR counselor and other stakeholders if interested.
* Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)is developed in collaboration with the consumer, the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) Counselor, and other stakeholders, if interested.

**Central Valley Regional Center = Individual Program Plan Process**

The goal of Central Valley Regional Center (CVRC) is to assist individuals to whom supports and services are provided, in order to have the most meaningful and independent lives possible. In order to achieve this objective, the Individual Program Plan (IPP) is created during a meeting with the person served by CVRC and their CVRC Service Coordinator (SC). CVRC participants are encouraged to invite anyone they wish to attend the IPP meeting. Depending on the individual’s support needs and preferences, the IPP team can include parents, family members, caregivers, Child Welfare Services (CWS), community mental health, teachers, or other service providers. It is important for all members of the team to remember that the individual’s choices and goals guide the IPP meeting, which is the defining aspect of Person-Centered Planning.

IPP meetings are typically held annually in the individual’s birth month; however, an IPP meeting can be requested at any time. During the IPP meeting, the team will discuss various aspects of the person’s life, including their living situation, school or work, ability to complete self-care, behavioral health, as well as their medical conditions/needs. These discussions are the foundation of the Desired Outcomes listed in the IPP, which define the individual’s goals for the year. A complete and detailed IPP helps explain and justify the services and supports that the person served will receive.

**LEAs = IEP (Individual Education Plan)/ITP (Individual Transition Plan) Process**

A student’s IEP is reviewed and developed annually in collaboration with the IEP team, which includes the student, the parent/guardian, general education teacher, LEA administration, special education teacher, and others who are providing services to the student. The student is involved in their own IEP planning and presentation when appropriate and must be invited to participate when transition planning is being discussed.

A transition plan must be developed as part of the IEP process no later than age 16 and may begin at an earlier age. The transition plan is based upon data collected from formal and informal assessments and summarizes what the student indicates they would like to do in regard to post-secondary education, employment and independent living once exiting high school. In addition, annual goals and services that will assist the student to achieve their desired outcomes are included in the ITP. Input from the student, parent/guardians, as well as agencies that assist the student with post-secondary goals is crucial to the success of the transition planning process.

The Adult Transition Program (ATP) - Ages 18-22 years, is for students who have received a Certificate of Completion from high school and have significant needs for support as they transition to adulthood. Students participate in the components of the program which assist them in moving toward their desired post-school outcomes, considering each student’s preferences, needs and skills. The ATP program may also prepare students for involvement in adult community programs and as appropriate employment.

Central Valley Regional Center Service Coordinators will be invited to all IEP meetings and may assist in the development of transition plans.

**Madera County Superintendent of Schools**

The Madera County Superintendent of Schools (MCSOS) serves student with moderate to severe disabilities for Madera County. Students are referred to MCSOS programs from their district of special education accountability. IEP meetings are held annually, and triennial assessments are held every three years. Each student has a primary case manager and Program Director who serves as the main points of contact for the student, parents, auxiliary service providers and other IEP team members. Annually, present levels are updated, and goals and services are reviewed, revised and developed by the team to ensure educational benefit for student. Students are involved in their own IEP process as appropriate, especially as transition planning is addressed.

A transition plan starts to be developed once a student enters high school and is finalized by the IEP team prior to the student’s 16th birthday. The transition plan articulates what the student plans to do once they complete high school, setting goals and noting services needed to achieve those goals. The information contained in the transition plan is gathered by both formal and informal means. The team also discusses whether the student will earn a high school diploma or a certificate of completion. The transition plan is a fluid document that can change year to year based on student’s wants and interests. MCSOS also runs Adult Transition Programs for students between the ages of 18 and 22, which is another step to transition the students from an academic focused education to more training of vocational and independent living skills.

The Madera - Mariposa SELPA manages the WorkAbility grant for the respective counties and students ages 16-21 are eligible to participate. MCSOS has personnel designated to work with students and families with regard to services and placements. Community connections play a vital role in student placement and successful job placement experiences. The ultimate goal is for the job placement to turn into gainful employment in the student’s future. As part of the MCSOS programs we work on job preparation skills, such as, following directions, appropriate workplace relationships, task completion, filling out applications, mock interviews, and ultimately budgeting.

**C. Information Sharing and Documentation Processes**

**Department of Rehabilitation:**

Whenever possible DOR will apply Expedited Enrollment for the purpose of determining eligibility. This means that DOR will use partners IEP, IPP signed by a qualifying professional as verification of eligibility for the purpose of this partnership thereby streamlining the DOR enrollment process. Additionally, DOR will accept verification of Social Security disability benefits as verification of disability.

Information pertaining to eligibility, DOR Student Services Agreement, IPE, and progress reports may be shared with a signed Consent to Release and Obtain Information form (DR260). With consent forms signed, DOR may share documentation with core partners that may assist in helping offer resources or services to help the individual achieve CIE. DOR does not share third party medical records and ask that LPA partners request that information directly from medical providers.

DOR will accept partners Consents to release information for the purpose of information sharing when available and when commensurate with DOR confidentiality requirements.

**Central Valley Regional Center:**

**Consent:** LPA partners may share information to be used in obtaining the goals written in an individual’s IPP, IPE, and IEP in order to prepare for and achieve CIE. Before any information can be shared, the proper consent forms, signed by the individuals served, must be obtained. Person-centered processes would include ensuring that the individual understands what they are signing and why they signing it. CVRC must have fully informed consent from the individual or their legal representative. CVRC utilizes the DDS DS1968 Vocational Services Referral Form and the CVRC Authorization to Use and/or Disclose Information Form.

**Assessment:** CVRC will share assessment documentation including the IPP, CDER, and CVRC’s psychological evaluations. CVRC does not share third party medical records and ask that LPA partners request that information directly from medical providers.

**PIP (Paid Internship Program) and CIE data:** CVRC’s Employment Specialist will track data to assess the outcomes of the PIP and the Competitive Integrated Employment Incentive Program utilizing the spreadsheets and information provided by the Department of Developmental Services (DDS). CVRC will share this information to assist in assessment, planning and developing policies and procedures.

**Employment Documents and Portfolio:** With proper consent, CVRC will share documents related to employment such as resumes, cover letters, transcripts, diplomas, letters of recommendation and other items that would be part of an employment portfolio. CVRC would like to obtain these documents from the LPA partners as necessary in order to assist an individual in obtaining CIE.

**LEAs**

LEA documentation related to student eligibility and planning which may include:

* IEP, including Individualized Transition Plan
* Psycho-educational assessment report(s)
* Transition-related assessment and surveys
* WorkAbility I records
* Transcripts
* Health Records

Require a Release of Information signed/consented by the adult student or parent/guardian prior to being shared with any other agencies.

**D. Resources**

**Department of Rehabilitation Resources:**

* MOU agreements with local American Job Centers for student services, work experience, training and job placement
* STEPS grants for work experience when appropriate and available
* FCCC work experiences
* Assistance and preparation for State Service Employment via LEAP
* College to Career Cooperative Contract
* Independent Living Center
* DOR Work Incentives Planners (WIPs) to provide intensive, individualized one-on-one WIP Services to help consumers understand how their social security benefits will be affected if they return to work

**Madera Workforce (AJCC)**

The Madera County Workforce Assistance Center provides access to education, training, work-based learning opportunities, employment and other services to eligible persons with disabilities. We have a wide variety of resources specifically for the disability community and make every effort to connect persons with disabilities to the services that best fit their needs. Our office assists persons with disabilities in navigating the federal, state and local agencies administering benefits for persons with disabilities. We provide advocacy and outreach to the disability community while promoting and facilitating access to needed services.

**Central Valley Regional Center**

**Paid Internship Program:** CVRC can fund internships through its service providers or a financial management service that will reimburse employers for 100% of wages and payroll costs when providing an internship. The purpose of the internships is to acquire experience and skills that will result in competitive integrated employment. CVRC can improve efficiency by working with school districts through Workability I programs to provide these internships. Workability I staff would develop the internship and provide job preparation and job coaching. DOR would fund the job coaching and CVRC would fund the reimbursement for wages.

**CIE Incentive Program:** Service Providers are paid incentive payments for placing individuals in CIE after 30 days, 6 months and one year of employment. These payments are in addition to DOR’s fee for service.

**Work Incentive Planning Program**: CVRC will continue to refer individuals who are concerned about how working may affect their SSI benefits to DOR’sWork Incentive Planning Program.

**Post-Secondary Opportunities:** College to Career, TILE program, and Wayfinders are post-secondary programs at Fresno City College and California State University Fresno with employment goals as part of their curriculum. These programs require participants to be consumers of both CVRC and DOR.

**Other Resources from Community Partners:**

# **Communication**

1. Informational

* DOR will establish monthly meetings with designated partners for staffing potential referrals, progress or resolving issues.
* Core partners will share information with individuals and their families via in-person meetings (IPE, IPP and IPE meetings) websites and informational events. Information may also be shared with stakeholders at other meetings, such as Community Advisory Committee, Program Administrator meetings, and local WorkAbility Advisory meetings.

1. Functional
   * The LPA partners will meet biannually for the purpose of sharing resources, training opportunities, and best practices.
   * The LPA will serve as the functional collaborative that will promote cross-agency service delivery efforts, including addressing systems issues and problem solving for CIE programming.

* Updating the LPA documents will be an ongoing process. Additional communication will occur via email and phone calls.

**Central Valley Regional Center**

Once an individual is determined to be eligible for CVRC services, then they will be assigned a Service Coordinator. The Service Coordinator is the main source of contact for the individual when contacting CVRC. If the Service Coordinator is out, then the individual may contact the counselor of the day by calling the front desk and asking for them. CVRC’s Employment Specialist is the person responsible for orienting individuals to pathways available through collaboration with the LPAs.

**Madera County Superintendent of School (MCSOS) SELPA WorkAbility 1 (WAI)**

The MCSOS SELPA WorkAbility program will facilitate collaboration and communication between core partners, community partners and LEAs in order to provide ongoing education regarding competitive integrated employment and other related services provided by partnering agencies. Topics may include soft skills training, person-centered planning, job coaching, self-advocacy, and benefit planning.

3.System Measures

Madera-Mariposa LPA core partners will collect data specific to their respective programs. The partners will share data and will continue to develop practices for data collection and sharing of the data in order to benefit students.

4.Contact Information

**Department of Rehabilitation:**

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**Central Valley Regional Center:**

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**Local Education Agencies:**

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**Community Partners:**

Madera County Workforce Investment Corporation

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Mother Lode Job Training

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# **Optional Attachments/Appendices**

*Attachment A: Community Partners*

**Madera County Workforce Assistance Center**

The Madera Workforce Assistance Center provides access to education, training, work-based learning opportunities, employment and other services to eligible persons with disabilities. We have resources specifically for the disability community and make every effort to connect persons with disabilities to the services that best fit their needs. We assist them to navigate federal, state and local agencies administering benefits for person with disabilities. We also provide advocacy and outreach to the disability community while promoting and facilitating access to the needed services.

The Madera Workforce Assistance Center houses two Community Partner Work Incentive Counselors (CPWIC) to assist social security beneficiaries’ transition back to work under the Ticket to Work Program. Ticket to Work is a Social Security Administration program designed to assist beneficiaries return to work through the assistance of Employment Networks (EN). There is an assigned Disability Resource Coordinator, who is also a CPWIC, at the Center who will guide the individual through the MWAC process and assist with any accommodations needed. Assistive technology is also available for individuals who may require it to complete job-related activities.

All individuals can access services by visiting the Madera Workforce Assistance Center Monday through Friday from 8 to 4pm and ask to speak with the Specialist of the Day. The Specialist of the Day will review the immediate needs of the individual and refer them to the appropriate agency.

Services available are:

* Youth Services age 18 - 24
* One-on-one counseling
* Career exploration
* Self-assessments
* Job Search
* Supportive Services
* Vocational Training
* Work-Based Learning (On-the-Job Training, Transitional Job Training, and Work Experience)
* Workshops (Resume Preparation, Job Retention, Financial Literacy)
* Job Fairs and Resource Events

Eligibility requirements will vary by agency. Additional information can be obtained at the Madera County Workforce Assistance Center.