



Tip Sheet: Community-Based Services

Introduction

This tip sheet has been developed to help Oregon Individual Placement and Support (IPS) programs understand and implement IPS fidelity scale number **3.13 Community-Based Services**.

Community-based services are a key component of Individual Placement and Support (IPS) service provision. IPS research has demonstrated that IPS specialists who carry out job responsibilities away from their offices lead to better employment outcomes. Providing community-based services create opportunities for IPS Employment Specialists to:

- Work directly with clients in comfortable, natural community settings, and
- Develop key employer relationships with local employers across diverse industries and settings across their communities

Community-Based Services Definition

Aligned with the IPS manual, the Oregon Supported Employment Center for Excellence (OSECE) defines community-based services as conducting **employment services such as engagement, job finding, and follow-along supports in natural community settings with and/or on behalf of client(s) in the community that cannot be otherwise conducted in the office**. Exception to this includes meeting clients out in the community for individualized follow along supports.

What are Natural Community Settings?

Examples of natural community settings include:

- State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) offices
- Local businesses
- Libraries
- Schools and Colleges
- Coffee shops
- Client homes
- A monthly meeting of job developers (e.g., job fair)
- Time spent traveling to and from community locations

If an employment specialist meets with a client at an agency office, this may not count as community time. This extends to any building that is owned in full or partially by the agency. Exceptions to this rule may be made when the building serves as supportive housing for the client, in which case the employment specialist may count the visit to the client's residence in the building as a visit to the client's home.

Fidelity Reviews What is an Applicable Community-Based Service?

IPS Specialists may count the following activities when provided in natural community settings:

- Employer contacts
- Resume development*
- Filling out career profile*
- Job development
- Interview practice*
- Attending job fairs
- Client engagement
- Onsite tour/information sessions
- Travel time to and from community settings

* Indicates that client must be present for the activity to count as community-based services

The following activities do not count as community-based services:

- Completing agency documentation, including updating progress notes and other administrative tasks consistent in Employment Specialist roles
- Searching for jobs online without the client present
- If a client does not show up for a previously scheduled meeting in the community (Note: employment specialists may still count the travel time spent to attend the meeting)

Understanding IPS Community-Based Services Model Fidelity Expectations

Per IPS fidelity, all IPS Employment Specialists are expected to spend **65% or more of their total scheduled work hours conducting community-based services**. To understand how many hours each IPS Employment Specialist is expected to spend conducting community-based services, reference the formula and table below:

Formula: Regularly scheduled work hours X .65 = number of hours to spend conducting community-based services

Number of regularly scheduled work hours	Goal time to spend in the community
40 hours	26 hours per week
32 hours	20.8 hours per week
24 hours	15.6 hours per week
16 hours	10.4 hours per week

Documenting Community Based Services for Fidelity Reviews

Proper documentation of community-based services is an essential way to effectively communicate how your agency provides IPS services in the community. During annual

fidelity reviews, OSECE reviewers will request to view a three-week time sample from each employment specialist's calendars. All IPS Employment Specialists must designate the following on their calendars:

- Any meetings with clients, including their location*
- Any job developments and/or employer contacts
- Travel time in the community

* Employment Specialists should not provide client information in their calendars. Instead, meeting titles should note that the meeting was with the client and the location of the meeting. Example: Meeting with client at Library

There are a few ways Employment Specialists can document their community-based services:

- Color coding/highlighting: designate a single color and clearly designate which meetings/travel time are from providing community-based services
- Software calendar labeling

Example 1: Calendar/meeting titles specify meeting is with client

MON 18	TUE 19	WED 20	THU 21	FRI 22	TUE 19
Admin time, 9am Travel time, 9:30am	Treatment team meeting 9 – 10am	Meeting with client at 9 – 10am	OSECE TA Call 9 – 10am	Meeting with client at 9 – 10am	9 AM Treatment team meeting 9 – 10am
Meeting with client at 10 – 11am	Travel time, 10am	Meeting with client at 10 – 11am	Travel time, 10am	Meeting with client at 10 – 11am	10 AM Travel time, 10am
Meeting with client at 11am – 12pm	Job development 10:30am – 12pm	Travel time, 11am Admin time, 11:30am	Job fair at Expo Center 10:30am – 2pm	Meeting with client at 11am – 12pm	11 AM Job development 10:30am – 12pm
Job Development 12 – 2pm	Meeting with client at 12 – 1pm	Vocational Team Meeting 12 – 1pm		Travel time, 12pm Weekly Supervision 12:30 – 1:30pm	12 PM Meeting with client at VR Office 12 – 1pm
Meeting with client at 2 – 3pm	Job Development 1 – 3pm	Admin time 1 – 2pm	Travel time, 2pm	Travel time, 1:30pm Meeting with Client 2 – 3pm	1 PM Job Development 1 – 3pm
Travel time, 3pm	Meeting with Client 3 – 4pm	Job Development 2 – 5pm	Meeting with client at 2:30 – 3:30pm	Travel time, 3pm	2 PM Meeting with Client at library 3 – 4pm
Admin time 3:30 – 5pm	Travel time, 4pm Admin time, 4:30pm		Travel time, 3:30pm Admin time 4 – 5pm	Admin time 3:30 – 5pm	3 PM Travel time, 4pm Admin time, 4:30pm
					4 PM Admin time, 4:30pm
					5 PM

The above calendar demonstrates basic documentation for Employment Specialists to follow when documenting community-based services. What makes this calendar successful:

- ✔ Clearly identified community time by specifying which meetings are with clients and where in the community they take place
- ✔ Creating a thread of where and how community time is conducted

Example 2: Color coded/highlighted calendar to designate community-based services

MON 18	TUE 19	WED 20	THU 21	FRI 22	TUE 19
Admin time, 9am	Treatment team mee 9 – 10am	Meeting with client a 9 – 10am	OSECE TA Call 9 – 10am	Meeting with client a 9 – 10am	9 AM Treatment team meeting 9 – 10am
Travel time, 9:30am	Travel time, 10am	Meeting with client a 10 – 11am	Travel time, 10am	Meeting with client a 10 – 11am	10 AM Travel time, 10am
Meeting with client a 10 – 11am	Job development 10:30am – 12pm	Travel time, 11am	Job fair at Expo Center 10:30am – 1pm	Meeting with client a 11am – 12pm	11 AM Job development 10:30am – 12pm
Meeting with client a 11am – 12pm	Meeting with client a 12 – 1pm	Admin time, 11:30am		Meeting with client a 11am – 12pm	12 PM Meeting with client at VR Office 12 – 1pm
Lunch break, 12pm	Lunch break, 1pm	Vocational Team Me 12 – 1pm		Travel time, 12pm	1 PM Lunch break, 1pm
Job Development 12:30 – 2pm	Job Development 1:30 – 3pm	Admin time, 1:30pm	Lunch break, 1pm	Weekly Supervision 12:30 – 1:30pm	2 PM Job Development 1:30 – 3pm
Meeting with client a 2 – 3pm	Meeting with Client 3 – 4pm	Job Development 2 – 5pm	Meeting with client a 1:30 – 2:30pm	Travel time, 2pm	3 PM Meeting with Client at library 3 – 4pm
Travel time, 3pm	Travel time, 4pm		Travel time, 2:30pm	Meeting with Client 2:30 – 3:30pm	4 PM Travel time, 4pm
Admin time 3:30 – 5pm	Admin time, 4:30pm		Admin time 3 – 5pm	Travel time, 3:30pm	5 PM Admin time, 4:30pm
				Admin time 4 – 5pm	

This color-coded calendar is another option for Employment Specialists to clearly identify their community time. Employment specialists may also use highlighters to color code calendars. What makes this calendar successful:

- 🟢 Clearly identified community time by color coding and specifying which meetings are with clients and where in the community they take place
- 🟢 Creating a thread of where and how community time is conducted

Example 3: Software calendar labeling

If your agency utilizes a software that allows Employment Specialists to tag and/or code specific calendar activities as community time, you may use this system to document community-based services. When using this approach, ensure:

- Community-based services are specified by a tag, color code, or legend
- Meetings with clients are specified following the convention outlined in the previous examples: Meeting with Client at [location]
- Timestamps of when community-based services were provided is noted (e.g., 10:00-11:00am)

Note: if your agency uses a coding software, OSECE reviewers will still need to see a detailed calendar or schedule) to fully assess how much of each employment specialist spends conducting community-based services.

Other considerations for documenting community-based services:

1. Avoid vague documentation to ensure all community-based services are counted.
 - 🟢 Example: “Meeting with CM”
 - *Why is it unclear:* CM makes it unclear if this is a meeting with a client, fellow staff, or any other professional you may interface with.

2. Ensure all documented community-based services are eligible activities
 - 📌 Example: Documenting “notes in the community”
 - Why it doesn’t work: completing agency documentation, including updating progress notes and other administrative tasks in natural community settings does not count as community time
3. At the top of any schedules/calendars provided, please include how many hours each employment specialist was scheduled to regularly work that week. For example, if you have a full-time employment specialist that regularly works 40 hours each week, but took a sick day, let your reviewers know so they can appropriately prorate the time.

Data Tracking Tool: OSECE Community-Based Services Tool

If your IPS team would like assistance keeping track of how much time your community-based services time, please check out OSECE’s Community Time Tracker! This tool was developed to assist sites with tracking the overall number of hours each IPS Specialist spends in the community, and how team efforts translate on the fidelity scale.

Please note: This tool is not a substitute for providing a three-week time sample from Employment Specialists’ calendars, rather a tool to track team progress across a 12-week period. All IPS Teams will still be asked to provide a three-week time sample from each Employment Specialists’ calendars at your annual fidelity review.

The community time tracker has three primary pages:

1. Instruction page (tab 1)
2. Summary page with the percent of time each Employment Specialist on the team spends in the community, based on data put into each Employment Specialist’s tab, and the estimated corresponding fidelity score (tab 2)
3. Ten tabs for Employment Specialists to individually track the amount of time they spend in the community each day. These tabs span a 12-week period and can be reused. (Tabs 3-12)

Employment Specialist Name:			
Week 1		Week 2	
Dates:		Dates:	
Number of working hours this week:		Number of working hours this week:	
<i>Community hours conducted</i>		<i>Community hours conducted</i>	
Monday		Monday	
Tuesday		Tuesday	
Wednesday		Wednesday	
Thursday		Thursday	
Friday		Friday	
Total hours	0	Total hours	0
% of time in community	#DIV/0!	% of time in community	#DIV/0!
Total Average time spent in the community based on the		#DIV/0!	
<i>Note: the above calculation will be impacted by any of the numbers put in the data entry cells above. Make sure that all data above is accurate before referencing to the final percentage</i>			

Image 1.
Employment Specialist Tab to track daily community-based service time

Agency Name:			
Number of Supported Employment Specialists on staff:			
Dates this 12-week tracker covers:			
Supported Employment Specialist	% of time spent in the community to date	IPS Team average % time spent in the community	#DIV/0!
Supported Employment Specialist 1: [Name]	#DIV/0!	Score:	#DIV/0!
Supported Employment Specialist 2: [Name]	#DIV/0!		
Supported Employment Specialist 3: [Name]	#DIV/0!		
Supported Employment Specialist 4: [Name]	#DIV/0!		
Supported Employment Specialist 5: [Name]	#DIV/0!	IPS Fidelity Scoring Rubric	
Supported Employment Specialist 6: [Name]	#DIV/0!	5	65% or more of total scheduled hours conducting community hours
Supported Employment Specialist 7: [Name]	#DIV/0!	4	50-65% of total scheduled hours conducting community hours
Supported Employment Specialist 8: [Name]	#DIV/0!	3	40-49% of total scheduled hours conducting community hours
Supported Employment Specialist 9: [Name]	#DIV/0!	2	31-39% of total scheduled hours conducting community hours
Supported Employment Specialist 10: [Name]	#DIV/0!	1	30% or less of total scheduled hours conducting community hours

Image 2.
Team summary tab to view overall team percents and estimated fidelity score

To access the tool:

To access the community time calculator, [use this link](https://osece-psu.org/osece-resource/community-time-calculator-template/) to access the OSECE website, or paste the link below into a web browser:

Link: <https://osece-psu.org/osece-resource/community-time-calculator-template/>

If you have any questions, please reach out to your OSECE TA provider, or contact OSECE at:

Phone: (503) 725-3073

Email: info@osece-psu.org

Website: osece-psu.org

Thank you for your ongoing partnership!