# Vocational Rehabilitation Services Manual C-1400: Supportive Goods and Services

**New section** added on January 15, 2020

## C-1408: Wage Services for Work Experience through WorkQuest

WorkQuest is a private, nonprofit corporation that links Texans with disabilities to meaningful employment opportunities, improving quality of life for thousands of individuals across the state. TWC has entered into a contract with WorkQuest to provide Wage Services for VR customers. Wage services allows VR to pay a customer’s wages when he or she is participating in a work experience service. Wage services includes gross earnings, worker compensation and associated costs including payroll processing, payroll reporting, and other payroll processing functions.

Work experience services are intended to be short-term (12 weeks or fewer) and part-time, see C-421 Work Experience Services for additional information.

WorkQuest CRPs define part-time as not exceeding an average of 30 hours per week over the course of the entire work experience assignment (training period). A customer may work up to 40 hours per week for one or more weeks during the training period, if such a schedule is necessary for completion of training or demonstration of readiness for full-time employment, so long as the average of 30 hours per week over the training period is not exceeded. For services described and purchased through [Chapter 13: Work Readiness Services](https://twc.texas.gov/standards-manual/vr-sfp-chapter-13) the customer’s hours cannot be greater than part-time.

WorkQuest through one of their Community Rehabilitation Providers (not a TWC-VR provider) will:

* be the employer of record for the customer;
* be responsible for onboarding the customer and completing tasks such as I-9 verification;
* coordinate and collect payroll documentation from the VR customer’s work experience worksite entity;
* accurately process a bimonthly paycheck, unless a different frequency is agreed to in writing by VR and WorkQuest;
* make direct deposits or deposits to a pay card, that include a pay stub on the pay date;
* provide W-2 forms in accordance with Internal Revenue Service requirements;
* prepare supplemental payroll to correct errors in pay when necessary and applicable;
* notify the VR counselor of any worker’s compensation claims made by or on behalf of VR customers; and
* notify the VR counselor of worksite incidents involving injury, property damage, or behavioral issues that result in termination of a customer’s placement at the worksite, as soon as possible, but not later than forty-eight (48) hours after the incident.

Wage services provided through WorkQuest are intended to support VR customers and “students and youth with disabilities,” including those who are potentially eligible when participating in Work Experience Services as defined in the VR-SFP Chapter 14 Work Experience Services.

Students with disabilities, including those who are potentially eligible, may also receive wage services through WorkQuest when a Workforce Development Board (WDB) Wage Services is not available. However, Deputy Regional Director approval is required when using WorkQuest in lieu of a WDB for the wage services for students and youth with disabilities.

Pre-ETS funds may be used in cases where the customer meets the Student with a disability criterion established in C-1302-1: Student or Transition Services Customer. When a “student with a disability” is potentially eligible, the VR counselor must follow policy found in C-1305-6: Providing Pre-Employment Transition Services, Working with Potentially Eligible Students.

Wage services can be purchased for multiple work experiences for the same customer when necessary to meet the customer's goals. Wage services should not be purchased for a customer to be placed in the same type of position at the same work experience site. Refer to VRSM C-421: Work Experience Services and VR-SFP Chapter 14: Work Experience for additional information.

Wage Services can be purchased when a customer obtains a work experience placement through various ways or avenues such as:

* VR-SFP Chapter 14: Work Experience Services;
* On an exception basis to support students in work experience opportunities, when a Workforce Development Board (WDB) is not contracted to perform wage services, or the wage services is otherwise unavailable from the WDB (requires DRD approval);and
* When VR staff work directly with a business to develop a training model designed around their business structure that includes paid work experience. In these models, the goal is for VR customers to gain training that leads to employment with the business partner. These models are to be coordinated with the Business Relations Coordinator and approved by the Deputy Regional Director or Regional Director.

When VR customers are placed at the job site TWS-VRS staff are responsible for monitoring each worksite.

Prior to making a referral for Wage Services, the customer must obtain a work experience placement, that matches the customer’s individualized plan for employment (IPE) or the trial work plan (TWP).

For a Work Experience Placement obtained via SFP Chapter 14: Work Experience services, a VR3142 Worksite Agreement for Wage Services must be signed by the representative from the work experience site. Either the VR counselor or Work Experience Specialist can obtain the required signatures on the VR3142 Worksite Agreement for Wage Services. The VR3142 Worksite Agreement for Wage Services must be in place prior to making a referral to WorkQuest for Wage Services and before issuing a service authorization for wage services. For additional information refer to [Chapter 14: Work Experience Services](https://twc.texas.gov/standards-manual/vr-sfp-chapter-14).

Work Experience via Summer Earn and Learn and work experience placements arranged by VR staff may require a work site agreement or other related agreement.

### C-1408-1: Determining the Wage and Associated Cost for Work Services

VR work experience placements are classified into three levels using O\*NET’s My Next Move Job Zones found at <https://www.onetonline.org/find/zone>. The VR counselor must identify the 6-digit SOC code that represents the position for which the customer will be fulfilling in the work experience placement and enter the 6-digit SOC code into My Next Move to identify the Job Zone the position falls under. The Job Zone level identifies what the customer’s gross income and WorkQuest corresponding bill rate when wage services are purchased for a customer.

### C-1408-2: Wage Levels and Rates

The customer hourly wage rates were derived from My Next Move wage rates supplied by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data as adapted by O\*Net and they serve as the basis for the WorkQuest Bill Rate which are “fully-loaded” with all applicable taxes, insurance, and fees.

TWC-VR is using the O\*Net, Job Zones to describe the Entry, Intermediate, and Advanced wage levels associated with a customer’s position when in work experience.

#### Entry Level: Includes O\*Nets’ My Next Move Job Zones One and Two

* Purpose:
  + determine if customer is ready for competitive integrated employment;
  + explore possible career options for customer; and
  + develop skills to increase a customer’s employability.
* Knowledge, experience, responsibilities and level of supervision of a customer:
  + little or no previous work-related skill, knowledge, or experience;
  + may have some transferable skills, basic knowledge from experience;
  + knowledge of the tasks, duties and responsibilities related to position;
  + follows standard procedures and written instructions to accomplish assigned tasks;
  + work is routine, and tasks are standardized; and
  + works under direct supervision.
* Education and training of the customer may require a high school diploma or GED certificate.
* The associated gross wage is $10.90 per hour, and
* WorkQuest bill rate per hour is $19.96.

Examples of positions classified as entry level include, but are not limited to: (Refer to <https://www.onetonline.org/find/zone> for a complete list.)

* Baristas
* Cooks/ Food preparations / Food Servers
* Counter attendants
* Customer services representatives/ Order Clerk/ Receptionist/ Information Clerk
* Data Entry/Word Processor
* Floral Designer
* Helpers for carpenters. electricians, installers, mason
* Home Health Aides/ Personal Care Aides/ Nursing Assistant/ Physical Therapy Assistant
* Janitors/Cleaners/ House Keeper/ Maid
* Landscapers/ Ground Keepers
* Nursery Worker/ Nanny/ Child Care Worker
* Office Clerk/ File Clerks/ Mail Clerk
* Painter/ Construction/ Maintenance Worker
* Parking Attendant/ Security Guard
* Reservation/ Ticket agent
* Stock Clerks
* Telemarketers
* Waiters/ Waitresses

#### Intermediate Level: Includes O\*Nets’ My Next Move Job Zone Three

* Purpose:
  + demonstrate skills and gain experience applicable to potential vocational or associates degree trainings; and
  + evaluate if the customer still has capacity to continue to work in a field due to acquired vocational barrier(s).
* Knowledge, experience, responsibilities and level of supervision of a customer:
  + previous work-related skill, knowledge, or experience (completion of training program);
  + demonstrates and applies the fundamental concepts, practices and procedures of field of specialization;
  + performs work that is varied and may be somewhat difficult; and
  + performs work under minimum supervision that is somewhat difficult and requires limited responsibility.
* Education and training the customer may be required to complete:
  + an apprenticeship; or
  + one or two years of vocational training (certificate program or on the job training) or associate degree.
* The associated gross wage is $13.92 per hour, and
* WorkQuest bill rate per hour is $24.74.

Examples of positions classified as intermediate level include, but are not limited to: (Refer to <https://www.onetonline.org/find/zone> for a complete list.)

* Auto mechanic-certified
* Book Keeping/Accounting/Audit Clerk
* Computer Operators
* Construction and Building Inspectors
* Court Reporters
* Dental Assistant/Hygienist
* Desktop Publishing
* Electrician
* Emergency Medical Technician
* Fire Inspector
* Fitness Trainer/Aerobics Instructor
* Hairdresser/Hairstylist/Cosmetologist/Barber
* Human Recourse Assistant
* Insurance Claims Clerk
* Licensed Vocational Nurse
* Manufacturing Production Technician
* Medical/Clinical Lab Technician
* Medical/Legal Secretaries
* Medical Assistant
* Surveying Technicians
* Tailors/Dress maker/Custom Sewers
* Teacher Assistant/ Preschool Teacher
* Occupational Therapy/Physical Therapy Assistant
* Plumbers
* Police Officer
* Veterinary Assistant
* Welder

#### Advanced Level: Includes O\*Nets’ My Next Move Job Zone Four

* Purpose:
  + demonstrate skills and to gain experience related to the degree; and
  + evaluates if the customer still has capacity to continue to work in a field due to acquired vocational barriers.
* Knowledge, experience, responsibilities and level of supervision of a customer:
  + works with general supervision;
  + possesses and applies a broad knowledge of principles, practices, and procedures of particular field of specialization to the completion of difficult assignments;
  + work responsibilities maybe board in nature; and
  + competent in skills and may assist or teach others.
* Education and training the customer may be required to complete a four-year bachelor's degree or higher degree.
* The associated gross wage is $20.32 per hour, and
* WorkQuest bill rate per hour is $34.83

Examples of positions classified as advance level include, but are not limited to: (Refer to <https://www.onetonline.org/find/zone> for a complete list.)

* Adult Basic/ Secondary Education/ Special Education/Literacy Teachers and Instructors
* Advertising Agent
* Automotive/Bio Chemical/ Chemical/ Civil Engineers
* Budget Analysts
* Clinical Data Manager
* Construction Manager
* Database Administrator/Architect
* Editors
* Logisticians
* Manufacturing Engineers
* Museum Technicians & conservators
* Park Naturalist
* Patient Representative
* Program Directors
* Public Relations/Fundraising Manager
* General/Operational Manager
* Human Resource Specialists/Manager
* Insurance Sale Agent
* Landscape Architect
* Real Estate Broker
* Occupational/ Physical/Recreational/Music Therapist
* Sale Representative Wholesale/Manufacturing
* Sales Manager
* Software Developers
* Storage/Distribution Manager
* Training and Development Specialist/Manager

Note: The “net pay” the customer will receive will vary based on the individual customer’s W-4 information.

### C-1408-3: VR Counselor Roles and Responsibilities in Wage Services

VR staff should proactively collaborate and coordinate with prospective employers to connect individuals with disabilities to opportunities for successful employment. VR counselors are encouraged to work with their local Business Relations Coordinator to help set up a training model with a local employer. When VR customers are placed at the job site, VR staff are responsible for monitoring each worksite.

When students with disabilities are participating in paid work experience and WIOA Title I programs, such as WIOA youth program, work experience is permitted. VR staff must ensure the services provided are complimentary and not duplicative, and that both sets of services are documented in the student’s ReHabWorks (RHW) case, indicating which services are purchased and which are arranged.

To make a referral for Wage Services, VR counselor must ensure the following are submitted via encrypted email to [wageservicesSA@workquest.com](mailto:wageservicesSA@workquest.com):

The email should include the following:

* must include the TWC SA #xxxxxxx in the email subject line;
* an attached Service Authorization;
* an attached VR3141, Referral for Wage Services - WorkQuest; and
* a Worksite Agreement (when applicable).

When a customer is actively receiving Wage Services from WorkQuest, the VR counselor ensures the following are completed by VR staff:

* develop or coordinate the work experience placement that is made by VR directly, or an employment service provider;
* purchase work experience training from an employment service provider when a customer needs more training or supervision than the work experience site can provide;
* explain the availability of TWS-VRS sponsorship of wage services while the customer is participating in a work experience when placements are established by an employment service provider;
* obtain worksite agreements if one is required
* issue a SA to WorkQuest authorizing payment of wages for a VR customer;
* complete a Referral Form to accompany the SA;
* assist the customer with completing documents provided by the WorkQuest CRP for onboarding purposes. The employer of record is responsible for verifying information on the I-9 and is the signatory of record;
* monitor the worksite and addressing any needs or concerns shared by the worksite supervisor or worksite contact person regarding the customer’s performance at the worksite, or by the employment services provider as outlined in the VR Standards for Providers;
* monitor the work experience to ensure that the customer’s hours worked does not exceed the number of hours indicated on the Referral Form and SA; and
* process invoices received from WorkQuest in a timely manner.

A VR counselor should provide counseling and guidance to the customer through their participation in a work experience gaining information on hours work and skills learned. Refer to VRSM C-100: Counseling and Guidance.

### C-1408-4: Creating a Service Record for Wage Services in ReHabWorks

A service record must be created with the following specifications. MAPS Code “WRKQST” can assist with locating the specifications.

#### VR Basic:

Level 1-- Wage Services for Paid Work Experience WorkQuest (TIBH) only

Level 2--Wage Services for Paid Work-based Learning Programs - VR Basic Support (Payroll accounting services) WorkQuest only CONTRACT REQUIRED [84111-84111]

Choose the appropriate specifications for Level 3 and 4 based on the core service to be provided.

#### Pre-ETS:

Level 1-- Wage Services for Paid Work Experience WorkQuest (TIBH) only

Level 2--Wage Services for Paid Work Experience - VR Pre-ETS (Payroll accounting services) WorkQuest only CONTRACT REQUIRED [84111-84112]

Choose the appropriate specifications for Level 3 and 4 based on the core service to be provided.