

NC DIVISION OF SERVICES FOR THE BLIND POLICIES AND PROCEDURES VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

Section:	H
Title:	Homemaker Services and Closure
Current Effective Date:	09/16
Revision History:	Issued 01/95 Revised 02/96; 03/05; 02/08; 09/16

Formerly the Rehabilitation Act and the implementing regulations governing the State Agency Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program placed emphasis on competitive gainful employment outcomes as the optimal employment goal and the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) also provided for non-competitive employment outcomes in integrated work settings (integrated settings), such as homemaker or unpaid family member outcomes, in which the eligible individual received no remunerative compensation.

However, according to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, the statement of program purpose in §361.1: replaces the term “gainful employment” with “competitive, integrated employment.” This definition of **employment outcome** in §361.5(c)(15) would mean, with respect to an individual, entering, advancing in, or retaining full-time or, if appropriate, part-time competitive integrated employment, as defined in §361.5(c)(9) (including customized employment, self-employment, telecommuting, or business ownership), or supported employment, that is consistent with an individual's unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice.

This definition would eliminate uncompensated outcomes, such as homemakers and unpaid family workers, from the scope of the definition of competitive, integrated employment outcome for purposes of the VR program.

To allow agencies to complete the VR process for these individuals, a transition period of **six months** following the effective date of the final regulations (August 19, 2016) to implement the proposed definition has been provided.

In this case, Homemaker means an individual who has the skills and abilities to maintain a home and actively functions in that capacity as a result of substantial VR service provision to improve the individual's homemaking abilities. To achieve a successful employment outcome with this job goal during this transition period (August 19, 2016 – February 19, 2017), an individual must satisfy one of the following criteria: (1) performs activities that enable another household member to be the primary wage earner; (2) enables the individual to remain in the home; or (3) acts as primary caregiver for another member of the household and bears the primary responsibility for the majority of the following: (a) bill paying, (b) household laundry, (c) handling mail, (d) cooking, (e) grocery shopping, (f) housecleaning, and (g) home maintenance.

A person who lives alone and needs services related to the maintenance of a home and is actively performing the duties may be closed as a homemaker during this time as well. The VR Counselor must differentiate between self-care and home management activities. Self-care activities can include grooming skills (personal hygiene, care of hair, makeup, and shaving), social skills (eating techniques, table manners), communication skills (dialing a telephone, handwriting), and mobility skills. These are all examples of activities of daily living which, while being essential for an individual to learn, do not constitute the responsibilities of a homemaker.

Effective immediately all individuals requesting VR services that intend to pursue an outcome to include homemaking and other unpaid family member activities (bill paying, handling mail, grocery shopping, household laundry, cooking, housecleaning, and home maintenance) are to be served in the Independent Living Services (ILS) or Independent Living Rehabilitation (ILR) Programs. The goals of the ILS and/or ILR programs are to enable individuals to live or continue to live more independently in their homes to achieve a maximum degree of self-direction. In the event that resources are unavailable in the ILS or the ILR programs, an individual case may be evaluated for referral to other programs. The Area VR Supervisor may make this decision or his/her designee, as appropriate.

Change of Vocational Goal – This transition period is only allowed for those that already have homemaker or unpaid family member as a goal prior to the August 19, 2016 change.

All homemaker closures during this transition period must have approval of the VR Area Supervisor.