

**Department of Developmental Services and Department of Rehabilitation  
Proposed Trailer Bill Legislation  
Fiscal Year 2026-27**

**Employment Access Alignment  
FACT SHEET**

**1. Proposal:**

The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) propose statutory changes that would give both departments authority to establish a dual provider system for individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities (I/DD) seeking competitive integrated employment. The proposed changes would also align vendorization requirements between the two departments and remove barriers that prevent individuals from accessing employment.

Further, the statutory changes would remove the requirement that habilitation service providers vendored by regional centers, referred to as employment service providers, be accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF).

**2. Background:**

State law requires individuals pursuing employment services to exhaust "generic services" and or maximize utilization of "comparable services" before receiving regional center-funded services. For employment services, DOR often is the generic service, placing the burden on individuals to navigate between regional center-funded and DOR-funded services.

Some community service providers are dually approved by both departments. However, the departmental processes remain largely independent of each other. Individuals with I/DD seeking employment supports have experienced challenges related to transitioning between employment service providers when redirected between DOR and DDS, impacting and destabilizing successful employment opportunities.

Additionally, current law requires all employment service providers to be accredited by CARF. Historically, regional center-funded programs, such as day programs, provided employment-related services under different service codes that do not require accreditation. As part of the recently implemented DDS service provider rate reform, these programs are required to transition to service codes that match the services they provide. Transitioning to an employment service code requires pursuing CARF accreditation, which is a costly barrier to becoming an employment vendor.

**3. Justification for the Change:**

DDS and DOR are partnering in creating a dual provider service delivery model at the local level for individuals pursuing employment services. A new framework between regional centers and vocational rehabilitation offices aims to streamline navigating program processes for individuals, thus expediting provision of employment services. Improving access to employment services will result in a reduction of barriers to employment for individuals with I/DD.

Removing the CARF accreditation requirement would encourage more vendors to provide supported employment services. Feedback from the provider community notes the costly nature (upwards of \$11,000) and time-intensive process of CARF accreditation as a major reason potential providers do not pursue vendorization for employment services. Furthermore, employment service providers are already subject to other regular oversight and monitoring activities from DDS, regional centers, DOR, and recent Home and Community-Based Services monitoring.

**4. Summary of Arguments in Support:**

- Strengthens coordination of employment services between DDS and DOR creating more timely employment opportunities for individuals with I/DD.
- Streamlines the employment service process, reducing confusion for individuals navigating both systems.
- Removes administrative barriers for providers to create and maintain employment services for individuals with I/DD.

**5. BCP or Estimate Issue # and Title:** 5160-012-BBA-2026-GB