**Summer Youth Foundations (SYF) FAQ** (Updated May 13, 2020)

*Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) will continue to review changes and updates to this protocol and may revise guidance based on any changes to Ohio Department of Health rules and protocols.*

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**Scheduling & Preparation**

**Can providers change their start date of services if they would like to have a little more time to prepare for remote service delivery (staff training, service materials, etc.)?**

Yes, providers may change their service start dates as needed. Services may begin after the students’ academic year is completed and should finish before school resumes in the fall. For example, if a provider had originally planned to begin in person on June 1ST, but is now offering remote services, they may choose to move their service start date to later in June.

**What if I have completed the Intake, but the worksite is no longer available? How should we inform counselors/coordinators?**

Providers will utilize the Summer Youth Foundations (SYF) Participant Update form to communicate to the counselor/coordinator changes in service plans for referred students.

**Will OOD pay providers for time associated with planning or preparing for SYF, for example, video recording a worksite visit or delivering materials to students?**

No, these activities are not direct service and therefore are not billable. OOD reduced the number of required service hours from 20 to 12 per week to offset these costs. Providers should consider other options for delivering materials first, e.g., mailing or sending electronic versions via email.

**Do individual services still need to be 1:1 if being done remotely?**

Yes, if the service has been authorized as an individual service, then the provider may only have staff work with the one individual.

**If you have several different groups, can each group be built differently to meet the needs of the students in that group?**

Yes. OOD encourages providers to group students together based on needs, availability, and ability level and adapt services accordingly.

**Can we have one group with eight students and two coaches remotely?**

No. Each virtual (remote) group should be no more than four people. The larger group sizes make it more challenging to engage students in activities and to monitor participation in the virtual environment.

**Can SYF be provided in the student’s home or the provider’s office?**

No, provider staff cannot provide services in a student’s home (including porch, stairwell, etc.), property, or in a car (with the exception of transportation). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, OOD has redesigned services to be delivered remotely so that they can continue in a manner that complies with Ohio’s public health orders. Providers should plan to deliver services remotely and not in their office or another setting in the community, except for the work experiences. The students will engage in remote services at their own homes.

**What is expected of the one-day orientation for remote SYF? Can this be provided in groups of more than four?**

The Orientation Day should be limited to the group who will be participating in services together, and the 4:1 ratio must be followed. For remote services, the first day should review features of the software, how to engage in remote services, virtual classroom behavioral and participation expectations, along with training stipend expectations.

**For students who were referred for traditional career exploration, what configuration would they receive under Summer Youth Foundations?**

Students may receive three weeks of career exploration under the SY Foundations model authorization and fees. The student would receive the vocational training stipend.

**How should services be accommodated for deaf students or students needing foreign language interpreters?** Interpreting services can be authorized for virtual services the same as they are for in-person services. Individual services can also be considered if necessary

**Can two siblings participate remotely on one video link?**

Yes, if this is appropriate and discussed with the referring counselor(s)/coordinator(s) and as long as both students are actively engaged in services.

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**Safety/PPE**

**If the student does not feel comfortable wearing a mask on the work site, does this mean that they cannot participate in the work experience?**

Yes, face coverings are currently, as of 05/07/20, required by COVID-19 “Protocols For All Businesses,” with limited exceptions. Providers and students must follow these guidelines.

**Will OOD provide an authorization to providers to purchase PPE for the students at their worksites?**

Providers will be responsible to provide PPE to its staff and students. Authorizations will not be issued. The minimum required hours for the service was lowered in part to accommodate these increased costs of doing business.

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**Transportation**

**Can providers transport more than one individual at a time if we are utilizing a larger van? What if we believe the students have already been in contact with each other or if they are siblings?**

OOD is requiring providers to follow ODH’s “Protocols For All Businesses guidance,” available online at [coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/home), when you are providing transportation services. This will in most cases limit the transportation of students at a maximum of one student per car, up to two students in a van, and potentially more if using a bus so long as all individuals (driver and students) can maintain a distance of 6 feet apart to comply with the Ohio Department of Health’s protocols for social distancing. PPE must always be worn by provider staff and passengers while in the vehicle. Providers also need to ensure that vehicles are cleaned between trips. OOD will continue to review changes and updates to this protocol and may revise guidance based on any changes in public health orders. If referrals for transportation exceed your capacity to deliver the services, please be in touch with the local offices so that alternate transportation arrangements can be made.

**If we have more than one youth that requires transportation and we can only transport 1 at a time, who is expected to stay with the students on the worksite while the others are being transported?**

Provider staff must be with students at all times. Students cannot be left at a worksite without Provider supervision. Consider multiple staff providing transportation to sites for individual students, smaller workgroups for sites, public, family, or personal transportation, or remote services as alternatives. Keep in mind that there is separate billing for transportation services.

**Will OOD consider individual service due to transportation issues for either career exploration or work experience?**

OOD is open to adjusting group sizes for the safe provision of services and the needs in the community. Please discuss any suggested changes in group size with the referring counselor/coordinator.

**Does the one person at a time transportation rule apply to use of public transportation?**

Public transportation can be used, and the student must follow the rules of the transit system. Public transportation systems have adjusted their policies (including social distancing, etc.) to comply with ODH orders and protocol.

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**Vocational Training Stipend**

**How should the Foundations Vocational Training Stipend be paid?**

OOD is allowing for the vocational training stipend to be paid for students participating in remote services in addition to those at work sites. Students will be paid a vocational training stipend for the actual time (up to 20 hours/week) that they are participating in the service, regardless if it is training or work activities. If a student misses a day or doesn’t participate for the whole duration of a day, e.g., leaves an hour early, the report should reflect that, and that time will not be paid. Students will be paid equivalent to the Ohio Minimum wage, $8.70/hour. Providers are responsible for providing Worker’s Compensation coverage for students. Providers should consult with their Human Resource and/or Legal Departments to determine how to classify students. This should be the same process that providers used to pay students for the four weeks of Summer Youth Work Experience in 2019.

**Work Permits**

Work permits are required under the “Minor Labor” law for individuals under the age of 16. Ohio Department of Education has published the following guidance on work permits in relationship to schools being closed, see #34. <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Student-Supports/Coronavirus/Frequently-Asked-Questions-Governor-DeWine%E2%80%99s-Scho>

**Does the vocational training stipend count toward earned income for the purpose of SSI?**

Yes, this should be classified as earned income, and needs to be reported to SSI and is applicable for Social Security work incentives.

**Can students choose not to get paid e.g., if they cannot obtain required employment documentation?**

Yes, with counselor approval. Students can have conversations with their counselor about waiving the vocational training stipend. This must be documented in the AWARE case notes.

**Do providers need to request the vocational training stipend for students that were given SYCX authorizations?**

Counselors/coordinators will automatically authorize for the vocational training stipend along with Summer Youth Foundations.

**Can more than 12 hours/week of service be provided? How should the Foundations Training Stipend be authorized?**

Yes. Summer Youth Foundations is based on the SYWE service and rate, which is a flat fee for 20 hours weekly. SYF reduces the minimum service hour requirement to 12, to allow for the realities of remote service delivery, more flexibility in scheduling, greater capacity, and provider preparation. If a provider chooses to schedule the work experience for more than 12 hours, they will receive the full flat weekly fee, and students would receive the vocational training stipend of actual hours worked.

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**Access to Technology**

**Will the counselor ensure the student has access to a computer, tablet, or smartphone to participate in SYF?**

Yes, counselors will be talking with students and families to ensure that they have access to the technology needed to fully participate in Summer Youth Foundations. Providers also should be discussing this with students and families in preparation for the start of services.

**What if the student does not have access to a computer with a webcam? If a student is doing the work experience, but does not have access to an iPad or computer, what are our options?**

OOD can purchase the technology needed for the student to access services if it is not otherwise available. OOD will be communicating a strategy for purchasing technology for individuals in the near future. We are advising counselors to assume some or all the services for each student will be provided remotely, given all the uncertainties regarding work sites.

**What will happen if the student loses or breaks the OOD provided technology?**

Counselors/Coordinators will discuss with students the importance of protecting any purchased equipment. Any specific incidents of lost equipment will be addressed on a case by case basis, but in general, OOD will not be replacing lost or stolen equipment.

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**Remote Service Delivery**

**Is it okay to utilize the telephone during JSST to practice phone interviewing?**

Yes, while the overall service can be provided remotely with audio and video, it may be useful to have a portion of this week practicing phone interviewing via telephone. If JSST is being provided to a group, the other students would have to be on the phone call as well so they could hear both sides of the interview.

**Can services be provided over the phone or through a smartphone?**

Summer Youth Foundations services cannot be provided by audio only, but smartphones can be used for the purposes of accessing apps (FaceTime, Skype, Google Hangouts, etc.) to deliver these services.

**How can I learn more about providing services remotely, including software, video sharing, and student engagement?**

Please utilize the resources shared in the Summer Youth Foundations Training and available on the training page of the Provider tab at <http://ood.ohio.gov>. Please also reference the Remote Virtual Job Coaching document. Providers delivering remote services must be prepared to utilize remote services software, manage a remote classroom, screen share, and foster student engagement.

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**Service Scheduling & Planning**

**Are Foundations Weeks 1-2 Mandatory, and then the other building blocks for weeks 3-5?**

Foundations Weeks 1 and 2 are not mandatory. Providers can include any combination of building blocks to create a schedule of up to five weeks of service, depending on what makes the most sense for the students.

**Are multiple sessions over the summer still possible, expected?**

Yes, providers have the flexibility to schedule; however, many sessions are needed to complete services for students referred. Students can only receive one session of Summer Youth Foundations (2-5 weeks) this summer.

**When doing the building blocks, can we stagger the work site block with some students starting there, others in the middle, and some at the end of the five weeks?**

Yes, providers have the flexibility to schedule services based on what is occurring in their community, the needs of the students, and available work sites. Each week much be a cohesive week following one service “block” for each student.

**If a student only attends one day during the week will providers get paid for whole week?**

Yes, because Summer Youth Foundations is a flat rate fee, if a student shows up for one day and misses the rest of the week, the provider will still be paid for the week. Please report any absences or attendance issues to the referring counselor/coordinator as soon as possible. The training stipend will only be paid for actual hours the student participated.

**Do services need to be done within five weeks, or can they be completed over a six week period due to staffing and sites? For example, if we did four weeks of the other foundations and one week of work experience for one group at a site and the following week take the other part of the group. So that would mean one group would have a week off.**

For specific scheduling questions, please contact crpvendor@ood.ohio.gov for guidance.

**If the students are doing work experience at half days, do they still need a lunch if they are working four hours?**

Yes, if this falls over the traditional lunch period. Providers must follow the VR Provider Manual guidance regarding meal periods.

**If an employer will not allow us onsite for 12 hours a week for a full week of work experience, will OOD consider allowing fewer hours of work experience on-site as part of a SYF block to allow students to have some in-person work experience?.**

Each block of Foundations is generally a separate week of service. OOD intends to offer flexibility while still having the structure to services this summer. Work experiences at less than 12 hours can be considered to give students direct exposure to an actual work setting (e.g., an employer will allow students on site one day a week) can be proposed by emailing crpvendor@ood.ohio.gov. Considerations must be given to transportation, group cohesion, and willingness of the group of students to engage in the community. Other Summer Youth Foundation services would be provided for the remaining hours of the week.

**If we create a configuration and a student does not wish to participate in a component of the configuration, can the student choose to only take part in the components they are interested in? (i.e. they do not wish to participate in post-secondary education but want to do the other remote components).**

For scheduling questions regarding a specific student, please contact the referring counselor/coordinator for guidance. Generally, OOD expects students to participate in the complete service schedule.

**Would a work experience site be acceptable at a provider office location or a volunteer site?**

All worksites must be able to offer meaningful work experiences and meet the definition of competitive integrated employment under normal circumstances. We are, however, open to considering volunteer sites, such as food banks, that can offer meaningful work activities. For any volunteer-type sites or sites not already approved via the Summer Youth Site List, please email**crpvendor@ood.ohio.gov**for consideration and approval.

**If we don't have students who want to participate in an off-site work experience, can we do ALL remote sessions covering the four subject areas (Self-Advocacy, Postsecondary, Career Exploration and JSST) can we use the final week five as a recap of all other sessions? What would we cover on week five if they are not on-site working?**

It is not required to have a week of work experience in all schedules for Summer Youth Foundations. Providers can include any combination of the building blocks for 2-5 weeks in total service. In this scenario, the Summer Youth Foundations could only be four weeks of service. You could also consider having an additional week of Career Exploration if you are seeking to schedule 5 weeks of service.

**How does Foundations Week 2 differ from the PRE-ETS Counseling on Post-Secondary Options service?**

Foundations Week 2 is similar to the Pre-ETS Counseling on Post-Secondary Options service. The SYF allows 12 hours of service, and the students will receive a training stipend for their participation.

**Can an approved Pre-ETS curriculum be used for self-advocacy, counseling on post-secondary (Foundations), and job exploration counseling (Career Exploration).**

Providers are welcome to use existing Pre-ETS resources they have available for the Summer Youth Foundations service.

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**Reports & Authorizations**

**What form do I use to for Summer Youth Foundations? How do I complete the report?**

Providers will use Form 21, available on the OOD website under Provider Forms, for all types of weeks and includes the training stipend. Providers will do a weekly summary that will address the group activities and discusses the individual’s performance. Providers will be trained to complete reports on May 14TH.

**When is the student and provider assessment section of the report completed?**

It is only required for the final report, not for the mid-point billing.

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**End of Service Report Out**

**Is the report out supposed to be done individually with the student and their VR counselor or within the group session that we have?**

The Report Out can be done within the group session as part of the service hours unless it would be inappropriate, e.g., specific behaviors needed to be addressed. If that is the case, please discuss with the referring counselor/coordinator.

**Can the report out meeting and end of service staffing happen at the same time?**

Yes, if everyone is available. In some cases, school personnel may need/want to attend; if so, the staffing should be scheduled when they are available.

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**Case Decisions & Case Management**

**What if I referred a student to a provider, but the service is no longer available?**

Counselors/coordinators should have an informed choice discussion, and students may switch to a provider that offers the service. To avoid unnecessary delays or disruptions in services, students should be encouraged to stay with the same provider if at all possible.

**Since we are doing something different this summer, are the Project SEARCH students eligible to participate in SYF?**

In most cases, Project Search students should now be ready for job development. In some cases, if a student is not job-ready, counselors/coordinators should identify the student’s need and the VR service that can best meet that particular need. If there is a question, counselors/coordinators should consult with their supervisor.

**Can I refer new students to Summer Youth Foundations?**

Yes, new students can be referred to Summer Youth Foundations based on the providers’ capacity. Please contact your local providers to check their capacity to accept new referrals.

**Can students participate in this new Summer Youth Foundations service if they have done either SYWE or SYCX previously?**

Yes, VR Staff can refer for Summer Youth Foundations based on individual student needs.

**When can counselors/coordinators authorize for SY Foundations? When will Providers send in the SY Foundations Participant Updates?**

Providers attended the SY Foundations Training on May 4TH and are working to reach out to businesses and students to verify availability and develop options. Providers will send counselors/coordinators a Participant Update form (Form 22) outlining changes, # of weeks, weekly modules, and dates of service for each student. VRC may authorize once the SYF Participant Update has been received. Providers can also share information on service offerings to supervisors for distribution to local teams for any new referrals and planning.

**Can the dates on the authorization be flexible, e.g., cover a range of dates, like Pre-ETS?**

Yes, the authorization dates may be made for a range, e.g., 06/01/20 – 07/31/20, to allow authorizations to be issued without the need for amendments, but providers must still inform VR Staff of the actual dates prior to the first date of service.

**Can students do Pre-ETS and Summer Youth Foundations at the same time?**

Yes, both can be authorized by the counselor/coordinator, but please consider the following:

* The counselor may want to check in with the provider to see how the timing of both services would work out now that SY Foundations is an option
* It may be more manageable for the students in terms of their attention span to participate in SYF this summer at a later time (i.e., Pre-ETS during the school year)
* There may be an overlap in content
* Since SY Foundations has a training stipend and Pre-ETS does not, a student may not be interested in doing both

**Does SYF have to be consecutive weeks, or can it be broken up over the summer months?**

The SYF services are designed to be delivered in consecutive weeks. Please reach out to crpvendor@ood.ohio.gov to propose any alternatives and seek approval before finalizing.

**Can providers choose to provide multiple configurations based on student’s needs?**

Yes. Providers can offer multiple configurations for differing students’ needs and different areas. Students can only participate in one configuration (2-5 weeks) this summer.

**Do VR Staff have any say in which modules will be provided to students? For example, week two may not be appropriate for all SY students.**

Given the timing of services beginning soon, counselors/coordinators should be as flexible as possible in approving sessions for students knowing that providers will be adapting the services to meet the students’ individual needs.

**If students participate in the Summer Youth Foundations, will they be eligible for SYWE next summer?**

Yes, this is allowable based on counselor judgment and the individual case decision. The Transition Policy/Procedure outlines the process for repeating a summer youth experience. It may also depend on what other services the individual receives during the school year, and where they are in their career development.

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