



## InfoBrief: Retirement and Variances

### Employment First

Rhode Island is committed to an Employment First philosophy. We believe that everyone can work if they want to. If you think you'd like to get a job, having a disability shouldn't stop you.

### What if I don't want to work, or choose a non-integrated job?

The Division wants to promote choice, self-determination, and person-centered planning and services. We understand that some individuals may choose not to work at all, or choose to work in a segregated setting, or to retire from work.

### Retirement

DDD recognizes retirement at the age of 62. The annual ISP should reflect the individual's retirement goals. After retirement, individuals can change their mind and choose to return to work at any time. In order to show the individual's choice to stay retired, the annual Career Development Plan is still required, but the goal can be "Retired".

There is no early retirement age. Those under the age of 62 who wish to no longer work or pursue a job can submit an Integrated Day Only Variance.

### Do I need a Variance?

Some people may have other things they need to focus on first, such as finishing college, managing their health, or dealing with various personal issues. This does not mean a variance is needed. A person can take as long as needed to get ready for a job or find the right job, even if it takes years. A variance is not needed for those age 62 or over who want to retire.

### Variances

A variance documents the informed choice not to work in integrated competitive employment and what types of services are wanted. There are 2 types of variances: one for integrated day services only and one for segregated employment. There is no "medical" variance. Medical issues could be one of many factors influencing an individual's decision. For Integrated Day Only Variances, no medical documentation is needed. For the Segregated Employment Variance, medical documentation is needed only if there is a medical reason an individual cannot complete a trial work experience.

A variance is not a substitute for a Career Development Plan (CDP), and should not be submitted with an ISP. CDPs must still be submitted with an ISP or the ISP will be returned. The CDP may say that the individual does not want to work and a variance request has been submitted or approved.

A variance remains in effect until an individual decides it is no longer needed. However, variances do not permanently remove the responsibility of the Provider or the State to offer every individual the opportunity for employment. Each year at the Individualized Service Plan (ISP) meeting, individuals will be asked if they are still happy with the decision to get a variance or if they want to consider integrated employment. Individuals may change their mind at any time and decide to get a competitive integrated job.