

Virginia Department of Social Services
Division of Benefit Programs
Economic Assistance and Employment Unit

Q&A Session from the Full Employment Program (FEP) Virtual Roll-Out for Employers
Date: Tuesday, August 3, 2021

Q: Will temporary employment agencies be included in the FEP process?

If a temporary employment agency wanted to hire a VIEW participant to work at and carry out functions for that particular employment agency, then yes, that temporary employment agency may be eligible to become a FEP employer. If a temporary employment agency wanted to hire a VIEW participant for another employer that they have a contract with for staffing purposes, then no, in this case they will not be able to become a FEP employer.

Q: When recruiting do you have the pool of participants that you can work from? Are the participants eager to work through this program and the employers working with the FEP program?

The VIEW Worker will access which job-ready VIEW participants would be best suited for the FEP work opportunity. In the past, participants have been eager to work through this program.

Q: Does the stipend impact an employer from a tax perspective? Is there any additional tax burden to be aware of?

Please contact your business' tax professional to find out how the monthly stipend or Work Opportunity Tax Credit (if applicable) will impact the business.

Q: If the company is grant funded, will this cause any delay in receiving funds or any effect on the grant itself?

Please refer to the grant to ensure that receiving a FEP stipend would not affect the business' grant eligibility.

Q: Can all or part of the stipend be paid directly to the employee as a hiring incentive?

The FEP employer will receive all of the stipend on a monthly after providing verification of the average weekly hours that a FEP participant worked. It would be up to the employer to use all or part of FEP stipend as a hiring incentive.

Q: Can we refer employers to you?

Employers may be referred to Cassandra Elliston (c.elliston@dss.virginia.gov) or Cynthia Adams (cynthia.adams@dss.virginia.gov) and then, either Cassandra or Cynthia, will provide the prospective FEP employer with the POC for the VIEW Unit at the employer's Local Department of Social Services.

Q: Have you had any hotels participate in this program?

Out of the 121 local department of social services within the Commonwealth, there may have been hotels participating in the Full Employment Program over the years. If not, then this would be a great opportunity for the hospitality industry to partner with the LDSS/VIEW Units as community partners through FEP.

Q: What if an employee misses a significant amount of time that averages in a lower tier, is our stipend affected?

Yes, the stipend would be impacted. The employer should report to the VIEW case worker about the attendance issue.

Q: With an organization that has multiple positions open and the hiring managers in different departments, how would that work with providing job descriptions, reporting hours, and tracking the employees that are participating in this program?

The employer would follow the process that its HR unit has to interview, hire and onboard new employees. The difference would be that the employer would have the agreement(s) with the VIEW Units at their Local Department of Social Services to hire VIEW participants through the Full Employment Program.

Q: Hi there, just so I understand correctly. Even though we have an in-house recruiter, we must go through your recruiting efforts in order to receive the stipend. So the candidate we hire must come through you all, not our own efforts?

Yes.

Q: Where can we find a list of personnel to reach out to and discuss the FEP program? My company is in many different locations from Northern Virginia to Richmond to Newport News, so I would like to speak to someone for each area since many time the information varies by each area.

Employers may contact to Cassandra Elliston (c.elliston@dss.virginia.gov) or Cynthia Adams (cynthia.adams@dss.virginia.gov) and then, either Cassandra or Cynthia, will provide the prospective FEP employer with the POC for the VIEW Unit at the employer's Local Department of Social Services.

Q: Will the employer be eligible to access the Bond insurance and FEP program for the same person?

Yes.

Q: Is there a flyer that can be shared with employers?

Information and a downloadable flyer on FEP can be accessed at <https://www.dss.virginia.gov/benefit/tanf/fep.cgi>.

Q: Does an employee who begins at Tier 1 have to work his/her way up to Tier 3 within 6 months?

No. It would be based on the average weekly hours offered to the FEP employee to work.

Q: Can you share the PowerPoint and in particular the flyer.

The PowerPoint presentation will be emailed. Information and a downloadable flyer on FEP can be accessed at <https://www.dss.virginia.gov/benefit/tanf/fep.cgi>.

Q: How does the client's participation affect their TANF, SNAP (formerly known as Food Stamps), or MA benefits?

The FEP participant will be able to keep their TANF benefits while participating and earning wages through the Full Employment Program. The wages from FEP will be disregarded for TANF eligibility and evaluated for all other VDSS programs. As an employee, the FEP participant should also be offered benefits through the employer.

Q: Are you going to speak about the Volunteer program at Nonprofits?

The Full Employment Program matches job ready VIEW participants with employers. The FEP participant must be offered an average of 20 hours per week to work at the minimum wage through the program.

The volunteer programs under the Virginia Initiative for Education and Work (VIEW) are Community Work Experience Program (CWEP) and the Public Service Program (PSP). For more information about these two volunteer programs, please contact the VIEW Unit at your local department social services.