



The VR Advantage



North Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Services

North Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VR) assists individuals with disabilities with obtaining, retaining or maintaining employment.

Who Is Eligible?

You are eligible for vocational rehabilitation services —

If you have a physical, mental, or emotional disability that affects your ability to find or keep a job; and

You require the services that VR provides to get ready for, find, or keep a job; or

If you have a disability and are receiving SSDI or SSI benefits and you intend to get or keep a job.



Discover Your Possibilities

A disability can cause a person to be less hopeful about living a productive life.

When you become a vocational rehabilitation consumer, your rehabilitation plan will focus on your *abilities* and your new *possibilities*. The process is outlined in this booklet. The goal is gainful employment.

Applying for vocational rehabilitation services may be your own idea, may be recommended by family members or by:

- Teachers or school counselors
- Doctors or other health professionals
- Mental health professionals
- Counselors or professionals in the judicial system

If you have ever wondered how you could benefit from a vocational rehabilitation program and what your employment options are, remember that the VR staff are ready to answer your questions and assist you in the application process.



With your help, your counselor will review your information and make a determination on your eligibility. You and your counselor will form a partnership and explore your options.

Getting Started With Your Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Your First VR Appointment

As a first step, you will meet with a VR staff member who will get to know you and learn about your needs, desires and challenges. You will learn about the vocational rehabilitation program and, if you choose, complete an application. To meet your needs, your VR counselor will need some information about your disability. You may be asked to:

- Provide medical records. If you have been referred to VR by a doctor or other professional, you may have been given these records and asked to bring them to your interview.
- Sign a release form so your counselor may obtain medical, educational, psychological or other information.
- Have a medical, psychological, vocational or other type of evaluation that will be arranged by your counselor.
- Verify your SSI/SSDI eligibility.

Your counselor will:

- Guide you through each phase of the process.
- Explain the eligibility requirements for VR services.
- Help you plan and obtain your job choice.

Once you and your parent or guardian (if necessary) have signed the application, the rehabilitation process begins.

Determining Your Eligibility

The first step in the process is to gather information to assist you and your counselor with making a decision about your eligibility for services. If you are eligible, your Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) may be developed immediately. In some cases, after you are determined eligible, additional information or evaluations may be needed before your IPE is developed. This information will assist in choosing an appropriate employment goal and the services you need.

If More Information Is Needed...

If there is uncertainty about VR services being able to help you gain employment, we may arrange for you to have a “trial work experience” where you’ll work for a short time in a real job. You won’t be paid for this work, but it will be an important way for you and your counselor to decide if you are able to work. If you are not, you may not be eligible to receive VR services.

Determining Your Rehabilitation Needs

You and your counselor will identify your needs, interests, and skills and how you think and learn to determine your vocational goal and necessary services. The services listed on the next page are available to help you complete your rehabilitation plan. Some may be provided by VR staff; others may be provided by other agencies in your community.



Your plan will identify the services you need to achieve your goal of successful employment.

Services to Help You Get Ready to Work or Stay On the Job

VR Services

The length of time you receive the services outlined in your plan will depend on your individual needs. Services can be provided by:

- Your VR counselor and other VR staff
- Community rehabilitation programs
- Community colleges and universities
- Vocational training programs or schools
- Treatment centers
- Mental health centers
- Employers (with, for example, community based-work experience)

The following are offered, at no cost to you, if needed to reach your goals:

- Testing, evaluations and assessments
- Guidance and counseling
- Work-adjustment job-coaching
- Rehabilitation engineering services
- Interpreter services
- Supported-employment services
- Job-seeking skills training
- Job placement and follow-up

Making Use of All Resources

Your plan will outline how to best use all available resources. VR funds are not used when resources such as insurance, Medicaid, Medicare, and educational grants and contributions are available. These services may be provided at a charge that may depend on your income and other personal resources:

- Medical services such as hospital care or psychiatric treatment
- Community rehabilitation program training
- Costs related to college education or training
- While you are in training: services to family members, telecommunication, sensory and other technological aids and devices
- Personal assistance services, tools, equipment and licenses
- Other related goods and services

You and your counselor will explore and identify other community and financial resources that will help meet your rehabilitation goals.





You and your counselor will plan what to do in order for you to successfully find a job.

Developing Your Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)

The Goal

If you have never worked or cannot return to the kind of work you have done in the past, you may benefit from help with identifying different types of jobs that are related to your abilities.

Your counselor will make recommendations based on the evaluations or tests you have taken and the interests you have expressed.

You may change your goal later, but it is best to have a good idea from the start if possible.

Your IPE Will Include:

- Your job choice
- Services, service providers, comparable benefits
- Evaluation criteria for the services you receive
- Your and VR's responsibilities
- Your input, ideas, preferences
- The IPE handbook

Your Job Choice

This is the type of work or job that you and your counselor have agreed upon and plan to obtain.

The Services

You and your counselor will determine who will provide your rehabilitation services and how long these services should continue. VR's major services include:

- Guidance and counseling
- Physical and mental restoration
- Training/education
- Rehabilitation technology
- Job-related services, such as job placement and follow-up on the job

Evaluation Criteria

For each service that you and your counselor plan, there will be an agreed-upon way to evaluate how and whether that service is assisting with your goal of going to work. These may include grade reports, medical reports, your own assessment of your progress, and your counselor's assessment and observations.

VR's Responsibilities

VR's responsibilities with providing or coordinating services will be clearly identified in your plan.

Your Responsibilities

The part you play in completing your plan is important and will be clearly identified. Your counselor will work with you to be sure you understand what you are responsible for and how to meet your goals.

The IPE Handbook

Your counselor will go over the handbook with you and answer your questions. You may also be asked to sign a statement that you received the book, understand its contents, and helped develop your plan.



It is your responsibility to express concerns and satisfaction and participate during the VR process.

Client Assistance Program

If a problem arises that you and your counselor cannot resolve at any time during the vocational rehabilitation process, you may contact the Client Assistance Program.

The goal of the CAP program is to assist you in understanding and using rehabilitation services. You may contact CAP at 919-855-3600 (voice or TTY) or 1-800-215-7227.

The CAP staff can: answer your questions about VR, work with you and your counselor to solve problems, advise you on how to appeal decisions that remain unresolved following informal discussions, and direct you to other resources as necessary.

Partnership

You and your VR counselor will be partners throughout the rehabilitation process.

It is your responsibility to work with your counselor in planning and completing your rehabilitation plan. Your counselor will assist you in making informed choices related to your job goals, the services you will receive, service providers, employment settings and the methods for obtaining services.

- You can request, if you move anywhere in North Carolina, that your counselor transfer your records to the office closest to your new residence.
- If you move out of state, your counselor may not always have to close your case record but, if necessary, can give you information about contacting a vocational rehabilitation program in the state where you move.
- If you decide to take a job without the assistance of VR, please contact your counselor.
- If you cannot complete your plan for other reasons, please call or meet with your counselor to discuss your situation.

Local Office	Telephone	Toll-Free
Albemarle	(704) 982-8124	1-877-699-7579
Asheville	(828) 670-3377	1-877-832-3832
Boone	(828) 265-5396	1-888-521-5054
Burlington	(336) 570-6855	1-800-570-7668
Chapel Hill	(919) 969-7350	1-888-359-3695
Charlotte	(704) 568-8804	1-888-521-5484
Dunn	(910) 892-7040	1-888-877-8745
Durham	(919) 560-6810	1-888-666-4916
Elizabeth City	(252) 331-4768	1-877-699-7576
Fayetteville	(910) 486-1101	1-888-258-1473
Forest City	(828) 245-1223	1-877-282-0760
Gastonia	(704) 853-5358	1-877-282-0757
Goldsboro	(919) 778-3795	1-877-858-8465
Greensboro	(336) 299-7337	1-877-727-4506
Greenville	(252) 830-8560	1-877-858-8461
Henderson	(252) 492-3141	1-800-495-8220
Hickory	(828) 322-2921	1-877-699-7580
Jacksonville	(910) 455-1445	1-877-858-8471
Lexington	(336) 249-0241	1-877-727-4508
Lumberton	(910) 618-5513	1-888-231-8259
Morganton	(828) 432-5404	1-877-472-2729
New Bern	(252) 514-4727	1-877-858-8470
Pinehurst	(910) 295-1530	1-888-445-9218
Raleigh	(919) 733-7807	1-888-479-6095
Rocky Mount	(252) 977-2112	1-877-699-7573
Salisbury	(704) 639-7575	1-866-760-8282
Sylva	(828) 586-4032	1-877-282-0753
Washington	(252) 946-0051	1-877-242-6177
Whiteville	(910) 642-5406	1-877-699-7575
Wilmington	(910) 251-5710	1-877-832-3831
Wilson	(252) 237-7161	1-877-832-3837
Winston-Salem	(336) 784-2700	1-877-699-7578

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N.C. State Rehabilitation Council

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State of North Carolina | Pat McCrory, Governor
Department of Health and Human Services | Aldona Z. Wos, M.D., Secretary
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