



IOWA VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES

Policy No. 002	Subject: Scope of Vocational Rehabilitation Services
Section: IVRS Overview	Revised: 02/2018
Signature: Eric Evans, Bureau Chief	Version: FINAL

1. DESCRIPTION

Services for individuals who have applied for or been determined eligible and in the priority of services category for vocational rehabilitation services are made available as appropriate to the needs of each individual and consistent with each individual's IPE. Select services may be provided to students and youth with disabilities through the provision of pre-employment transition services as outlined in the [Serving Students and Youth in Transition](#) section of this manual.

IVRS must ensure that the services are available to assist the individual with a disability in preparing for, securing, retaining, advancing in or regaining an employment outcome that is consistent with the individual's unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice so as to enhance the individual's self-sufficiency. IVRS should support an employment goal that enhances an individual's skill development so that the individual achieves economic self-sufficiency independence, inclusion and integration into society; and supports the State of Iowa's business community by encouraging individuals to secure employment in middle skill jobs or Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM). However, IVRS continues to encourage and support individuals with disabilities to pursue other programs in higher education, including education in other advanced degrees. The vocational rehabilitation services are intended to maximize the potential for individuals with disabilities to pursue and advance in the same high-quality jobs, and high demand careers as persons without disabilities.

Since 2013, IVRS has been the lead agency in the State of Iowa for the Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) Employment First Initiative. IVRS believes all individuals are capable of full participation in competitive, integrated

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community settings with the right services and supports. IVRS supports the provision of customized employment services, facilitating progressive employment opportunities for all individuals.

IVRS can impact the workforce system by providing opportunities for individuals with disabilities to participate in job-driven training and pursue high-quality employment outcomes. Through the expansion of services that connects with business and industry, IVRS creates fundamental linkages with the business community in a manner that strengthens informed choice of the individual with a disability and develops the labor pool needed by Iowa's business community. Often the individual with a disability not only needs the information about projected openings and specific training to achieve the necessary skill sets, but also job specific training in order to learn and understand the unique needs of the business. At times this requires not only training for the individual with a disability but training and services needed by the employer, and IVRS has the expertise to bridge this gap and solidify a strong working relationship that is dedicated to a skilled workforce.

It is the policy of IVRS that services are carried out in a manner consistent with the following principles:

- a. Individuals disabilities are presumed capable of engaging in gainful employment and the provision of individualized vocational rehabilitation services can improve their ability to become gainfully employed.
- b. Individuals with disabilities, who receive services through IVRS, are provided these services with the expectation that they will achieve competitive integrated employment.
- c. Individuals with disabilities must be active and full partners in the vocational rehabilitation process, making meaningful and informed choices.
- d. Informed choice means that the individual has been provided with information, exploration, and experiences necessary to understand the opportunities available to them, the potential implications of their choices and the supports available to assist them.

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- e. Families and other natural supports can play important roles in the success of a vocational rehabilitation program if the job candidate so desires, or needs such supports.
- f. All parties involved understand their roles and responsibilities in the provision of the vocational rehabilitation program and the financial obligations involved.
- g. IVRS strives to support job candidates in reaching their employment goals. Each job candidate is unique and will be treated with dignity, respect and compassion.
- h. Job candidates may be assisted by any advocates in the development of the IPE for employment, but recognize that only a qualified IVRS rehabilitation counselor has the authority to review and approve the IPE.

2. SCOPE OF SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

The following are the scope of services:

- a. **Assessment:** Used for determining eligibility, priority of service and vocational rehabilitation needs by qualified personnel, including personnel skilled in rehabilitation technology when appropriate.
- b. **Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling and Guidance:** Including information and support services to assist an individual in exercising informed choice. Counseling and guidance is focused on the job skills that a job candidate demonstrates so that they can perform the essential functions of the job. Critical to providing quality counseling and guidance services is understanding the individual's disability and the impediments to employment that creates, what accommodations may enhance the performance of the essential functions, and the job driven demands and 21st century work skills required by Iowa's business community. Motivational interviewing techniques are utilized throughout the counseling process to engage job candidates and infuse informed choice into the relationship.
- c. **Physical and Mental Restoration Services:** Corrective surgery or therapeutic treatment that is likely, within a reasonable period of time, to correct or modify substantially a stable or slowly progressive physical or mental impairment that constitutes a substantial impediment to employment; is available to the extent that financial support is not readily available from a source other than IVRS (such as through health insurance or a comparable service or benefit).

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- d. **Technical Assistance and Other Consultation Services:** To conduct market analysis, develop business plans, and otherwise provide resources to eligible individuals pursuing self-employment or telecommuting as an employment outcome.
- e. **Vocational and Other Training Services:** Including personal and vocational adjustment training, advanced training in a field of science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (including computer science) medicine, law, or business; books, tools, and other training materials, except that no training or training services in an IHE may be paid for with IVRS funds unless maximum efforts have been made by the VR counselor and the job candidate to secure grant assistance in whole or in part from other sources to pay for that training.
- f. **Supported Employment Services:** Ongoing support services, including customized employment, needed to support and maintain an individual with the most significant disability in supported employment, that:
 - i. Are provided singly or in combination and are organized and made available as to assist the individual with a most significant disability achieve competitive integrated employment;
 - ii. Are based on a determination of the needs of the eligible individual as specified in the IPE; and
 - iii. Are provided for a period of 24 months (although the timeframe may be extended if necessary) in order to achieve the employment outcome identified in the IPE.
 - iv. Transitional employment for individuals with the most significant disabilities due to mental illness: In transitional employment, the provision of “ongoing” in this definition means a series of temporary job placements in competitive work in integrated settings with ongoing support services. These must include continuing sequential job placements until job permanency is achieved.
- g. **Extended Support Services:** Ongoing support services and other appropriate services needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability in supported employment, that:

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- i. Are provided singly or in combination and organized in such a way as to assist an eligible individual in maintaining supported employment;
- ii. Are based on a determination of the needs of an eligible individual, as specified in the IPE; and
- iii. Are provided by a nonprofit or private organization or any other appropriate resource, after the individual has made the transition from support provided by IVRS.

IVRS funding for this is available only to youth with the most significant disabilities who are in Supported Employment and on a waiver waiting list.

- h. **Rehabilitation Technology:** Includes vehicular modification, telecommunications, sensory and other technological aids and devices.
- i. **Referral and Other Services:** Necessary to assist applicants and eligible individuals with disabilities to secure needed services from other agencies, including other components of the statewide workforce development system, and to advise those individuals about client assistance programs (i.e. CAP, DRI).
- j. **Job Related Services:** Including on-the-job training, job search and placement assistance, job retention services, follow-up services, and follow-along services.
- k. **Customized Employment:** The creation of a job that otherwise did not exist by identifying the essential functions of the job and creating within those functions a specific function that creates a new job description and adds value to the business at which the individual works. Job candidates must be classified as significantly disabled (SD) or most significantly disabled (MSD) to receive this service.
- l. **Other Goods and Services:** Determined necessary for the individual to achieve an employment outcome.
- m. **Transition Services for Students and Youth:** Facilitates the transition from school to post-secondary life, such as achievement of an employment outcome in competitive integrated employment, or pre-employment transition services.

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- n. **Post-Employment Services:** One or more of the services identified that are provided subsequent to the achievement of an employment outcome and are necessary for an individual to maintain, regain, or advance in employment, consistent with the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice. These services do not require complex and comprehensive provision of services and should be limited in scope and duration.

Services in Support of Those Listed Above:

- o. **Benefits Planning:** Provided to individuals receiving Social Security benefits that need information to determine the nature and scope of their IPE to achieve gainful employment.
- p. **Maintenance:** Requires a demonstration that participation in the VR program has created an extra expense that otherwise would not have occurred in the course of daily life and includes the option of providing maintenance to offset those extra costs. Maintenance provides monetary support for these extra expenses such as food, shelter, and clothing that are in excess of the normal expenses of the individual and are necessitated by the individual's participation in the VR program.
- q. **Transportation:** In connection with the provision of any vocational rehabilitation services means travel and related expenses that are necessary to enable an applicant or eligible individual to participate in IVRS services, including expenses for training in the use of public transportation.
- r. **Vocational Rehabilitation Services to Family Members:** As defined is for family members of an applicant or eligible individual if necessary to enable the applicant or eligible to achieve an employment outcome.
- s. **Interpreter Services:** Including sign language and oral interpreter services, for individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing and tactile interpreting services.
- t. **Reader Services, Rehabilitation Teaching Services:** Means services that assist the individual with a disability to understand written materials, how to manage the

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disability, and strategies to teach skills so that the individual learns the information and then can perform the work.

- u. **Occupational Licenses, Tools, and Equipment:** Includes initial stocks and supplies.
- v. **Personal Assistance Services:** A range of services, including among other things, training in managing, supervising, and directing personal assistance services provided by one or more persons to assist the individual with a disability to perform the daily living activities on or off the job that the individual would typically perform without assistance if the individual did not have a disability.

3. EXCEPTIONS

See each policy section.

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