

To learn more about these and other programs, contact Family Voices Indiana. We will assist you as you navigate health care systems and services, especially those available to individuals with special health care needs.
1-844-F2F-INFO
1-844-232-4636
fvindiana.org

Vocational Rehabilitation Services

We all go to work at some point—some of us right out of high school, and some after further education and training. If you are a person with a disability who wants to work or return to work, Vocational Rehabilitative Services may be able to help. You could get a job, reduce your dependence on public assistance programs, and achieve greater self-direction.

What is vocational rehabilitation?

Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Services (or VR) provides eligible individuals with disabilities assistance to achieve greater independence through employment.

Who is eligible for VR?

If you are an individual with a disability (intellectual/developmental, physical, mental health, vision and/or hearing impairment, etc.) and want to find a job, you may be eligible for VR. You are eligible for VR if you 1) have a physical or mental condition that makes it hard for you to work *and* 2) demonstrate that you need and could benefit from VR services to help you prepare for, find, or keep a job. Call 1-800-545-7763 or click this link for a statewide map http://www.in.gov/fssa/files/VRS_Area_Offices.pdf.

What are the steps in the VR process?

1. Referral: The process begins when you, a family member, teacher, etc. contacts VR. Anyone can make a referral at any point, but a good time to start is the junior or senior year of high school.
2. Application: You will meet with a VR counselor to complete an application to see if you are eligible. At this appointment, the counselor will gather information on your medical, psychological, academic, and employment history. You will sign release forms so that the counselor may request additional information as needed. If necessary, new diagnostic tests/evaluations will be scheduled.
3. Eligibility Determination: You will be notified within 60 days from the application appointment whether or not you are eligible for VR services.
4. Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE): If you are determined eligible, you will complete an assessment to explore your interests, strengths, limitations, resources, etc., as they relate to your job goals. You and your counselor will together to develop the IPE—a signed agreement of what services VR will provide to help you achieve your employment goal, including a timeline.
5. Service Implementation: VR will deliver services based on the IPE. See below for a list of possible services.
6. Employment: You get a part-time or full-time job in an integrated (community) setting, with pay at or above federal minimum wage. In addition, wages and benefits must be comparable to employees without disabilities who do the same or similar work for the same company.
7. Case Closure: Once you have been successfully employed for 90 days, your case will be closed. You will be informed of post-employment services for which you may be eligible.

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If I am eligible, what services could VR provide?

VR services may include but are not necessarily limited to the following:

- Assessment to determine eligibility and VR needs
- Vocational guidance and counseling
- Medical treatment to correct or modify a physical or mental health challenge, including corrective surgery or therapy, artificial limbs or braces, etc.
 - Assistive technology, including devices like speech-to-text software, telecommunications, etc.
 - Vocational or other training services, including vocational school, college/university, and on-the-job training
 - Reader services, rehabilitation teaching services, and orientation and mobility services for persons who are blind
 - Interpreter services for people who are deaf
 - Occupational licenses, tools, equipment, and initial stock and supplies
 - Transportation
 - Transition services to help make the transition from school to work
 - Work-related placement services
 - Post-employment services, including supported employment services
 - Personal assistance service
 - Maintenance for additional basic living costs

What are my responsibilities in the process?

You will work closely with a VR counselor and are expected to become a full partner in the process. You will be responsible to make informed choices about your vocational (job) goals, select appropriate services, and follow through on work-related preparation and tasks—all with the ongoing support of your VR counselor. You have the right to seek support from family members, friends, and other advocates during the process.

How much does it cost?

There is no charge. However, some services require VR to explore other funding options. For some postsecondary expenses, for example, students and their parents are first required to file a FAFSA (the Free Application for Federal Student Aid). Students will use any federal student aid they may be eligible for to help pay for certain costs (e.g., tuition and books).

What if I don't know what job I want?

Feeling uncertain about entering the workforce? Not sure which job is right for you? VR now provides a service called Guided Discovery that can assist you with exploring employment options. For further assistance, contact VR at 1-800-545-7763.

Information adapted from IN Vocational Rehabilitation website and fact sheet, "Working," a publication of VRS, IN Department of Education, and The Center on Community Living and Careers.

Programs and systems change often. It is important to ensure that you are using the most current information. This fact sheet was updated April 2019. Please check http://fvindiana.org/fact_sheets for the most recent edition.

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