



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND & PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
OFFICE OF REHABILITATION SERVICES  
40 Fountain Street Providence, RI 02903  
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## *Vocational Rehabilitation Fact Sheet*

**The purpose of the Vocational Rehabilitation Program is to assist eligible individuals with disabilities to choose, prepare for, obtain, and maintain employment.**

**Who is Eligible?** You are eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services when:

- ◆ Your disability makes it difficult for you to work (presents a significant barrier to employment);
- ◆ You require vocational rehabilitation services in order to work; and
- ◆ You expect, with services, to be able to obtain and maintain employment; or
- ◆ You receive SSI/SSDI benefits, intend on becoming employed, and apply for VR services.

### **How Do You Apply?**

- ◆ **The best way is to attend a group orientation.** VR staff will describe the program; answer your questions; and assist you in applying if you choose. Call the VR Intake at (401) 421-7005 or (401) 421-7016 (TDD) for more information and an orientation schedule.
- ◆ **Other options:**
  - Visit a netWORKri One-Stop Career Center and ask to see an ORS Counselor.
  - Ask if an ORS Counselor visits your school or community organization.
  - Apply by requesting vocational rehabilitation services in writing.
  - Visit our web site at <http://www.ors.ri.gov> for more information.

### **How Do You Plan for Employment?**

Services leading to employment are provided through your Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). Your counselor can assist you with developing your employment plan, career planning, choosing your vocational goal and services, and obtaining a job. You may develop your plan for employment on your own, with the assistance of a qualified Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, or with the assistance of others you select. ORS will assist you to:

- ◆ Develop your Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).
- ◆ Make informed and cost-effective choices regarding necessary services, supports and training.
- ◆ Build upon your strengths and develop strategies to overcome obstacles.

- ◆ Investigate how assistive technology may help you reduce employment barriers and reach your employment goal.
- ◆ Learn about community resources to help you prepare for and maintain work.
- ◆ Match your strengths and skills to available jobs in the community.

### **Do All Eligible Individuals Receive VR Services?**

Sometimes there are not enough resources to serve all eligible individuals. A priority system for services called Order of Selection (OOS) is in place. Under OOS individuals with the most significant disabilities, which include recipients of SSI and/or SSDI, are given priority for VR services.

### **What are Your Responsibilities?**

- ◆ To make informed choices and to actively participate in your plan.
- ◆ To keep your Rehabilitation Counselor informed of your plans, progress, problems and provide additional information as necessary.
- ◆ To apply for other sources of funding when required and to pay for your share of services if your income exceeds Agency guidelines.

### **What Can You do if You Disagree with an ORS Decision?**

- ◆ Talk to your Rehabilitation Counselor. You and your counselor are working as partners to solve problems.
- ◆ Ask for a Supervisory Conference or a Customer Relations Conference. The Office of Customer Relations can be reached at (401) 421-7005 x354 (V) or (401) 421-7016 (TDD).
- ◆ You can request Mediation. (Mediation is a voluntary process with a qualified and impartial mediator for both parties to explore options to reach agreement.)
- ◆ Request an Administrative Hearing (a formal hearing process).
- ◆ Contact the Client Assistance Program (CAP), which is a protection & advocacy service provided by the RI Disability Law Center, 349 Eddy Street, Providence, RI 02903. CAP can be reached at (401) 831-3150 (V) or (401) 831-5335 (TDD).

### **Success is Employment!**

- ◆ You are considered successfully employed when you have reached your employment goal and held your job for 90 days.
- ◆ Your file is closed with ORS when your individual plan for employment is complete.
- ◆ You may request post-employment services if you need further assistance to regain or maintain employment after your ORS file is closed.
- ◆ You may always re-apply for services as conditions or needs change.