



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND & PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
OFFICE OF REHABILITATION SERVICES
SERVICES FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

40 Fountain Street Providence, RI 02903
Voice 222-2300~TDD 421-7016
Spanish 272-8090 ~ Fax 222-1328

Vocational Rehabilitation Fact Sheet

The purpose of the Vocational Rehabilitation Program at Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired is to assist eligible individuals with visual impairments to choose, prepare for, obtain, and maintain employment.

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

- ◆ You have a visual impairment with acuity of 20/60 or less in the better eye with best correction or a visual field of twenty degrees or less; and
- ◆ 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

How Do You Apply?

- ◆ **The best way is to call and ask for an intake worker.** Staff will ask some basic questions, and you will be assigned to a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. The counselor will contact you and describe the program; answer your questions; and assist you in applying if you choose. Call the Services for the Blind Intake at (401) 222-2300 or (401) 421-7016 (TDD) for more information.
- ◆ **Other options:**
 - Attend an Orientation Schedule
 - 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.state.ri.us> 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.

SBVI will assist you to:

<http://www.ors.state.ri.us>

- ◆ 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.

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.
- ◆ Most services are provided free of charge. However, you must 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 a SBVI 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 SBVI 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 SBVI file is closed.
- ◆ You may always re-apply for services as conditions or needs change.