

## **ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY**

**Program Name:** Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

**Policy Number:** VR-1.4-v2

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2008

**Last Revision:** March 31, 2022

**CHAPTER 1:** Introduction

**Section 1.4:** Vocational Counseling and Guidance (VCG)

### **I. Policy Statement**

This policy outlines the standards of vocational counseling and guidance (VCG) as a core service provided by VR Counselors throughout the VR process. This process is the foundation in which the counseling relationship with the applicant/client is established and identifies VR services that may be provided to empower the applicant/client to achieve a successful employment outcome.

### **II. Authority**

Authority for policies contained in this document includes the following:

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), 29 U.S.C. § 3101 et seq.
- Title IV Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 701 et seq.
- State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program, 34 C.F.R. §§:
  - Comprehensive system of personnel development 361.18 (c)(ii)(C)
  - Scope of vocational rehabilitation services for individuals with disabilities 361.48 (b)(3)
- A.R.S. §§ 23-502 and 503
- Code of Professional Ethics for Rehabilitation Counselors, Developed and Administered by the Commission of Rehabilitation Counselor Certification

### **III. Applicability**

This policy applies to circumstances when an applicant or client receives vocational counseling and guidance as part of their participation and progress in the Vocational Rehabilitation program. The following are the intent of VCG to assist clients to:

- A. Develop and use decision-making and self-advocacy skills.

- B. Learn to make career choices consistent with identified strengths, resources, abilities, and environmental realities.
- C. Take responsibility for the results of decisions, and for following through on planned activities and steps toward their employment goal.
- D. Choose whether to include family, advocates or service providers in identifying options.
- E. Learn to offset barriers through technology, adaptive and other skills, natural supports and reasonable accommodations.
- F. Learn to advocate for their choices, when the counselor or others do not agree, by presenting additional information, by finding solutions or resources, and by using the right to appeal.
- G. Learn skills for maintaining or advancing in employment.

#### **IV. Standards**

- A. The primary objectives for VCG are to:
  1. Establish and develop a collaborative counseling relationship with applicants/clients that fosters mutual respect and promotes their full involvement and participation in the VR process,
  2. Assist applicants/clients in exercising informed choice. Refer to Section 1.5 Informed Choice in this manual for more details,
  3. Address applicants/clients' abilities, capabilities, interests, strengths, resources, priorities and concerns to identify potential impediments to employment and factors that are essential for the achievement of employment,
  4. Provide support and assistance with problem solving and clarification of values, as well as information about and referral to the community resources and coordination of services,
  5. Encourage and facilitate applicants/clients' participation in the VR program, and
  6. Engage applicants/clients in the selection, planning and achievement of an employment outcome.
- B. VCG provided by VR does not include treatment services (treatment and management of diagnosed psychological issues).
- C. Economic need and comparable benefits are not applicable for VCG.

- D. The VR Counselor must interact with the applicant/client in a respectful and engaging manner that promotes the applicant/client's well-being while participating in the VR program.
- E. In circumstances when the applicant/client prefers to be referred to as a different name and/or pronoun, it is best practice to respect the applicant/client's preference to ensure and promote relationship building.
- F. VCG must be identified as a separate service on the IPE when VCG is provided by the VR Counselor.
- G. VCG includes discussion and review of the following:
  - 1. Agency policies/procedures and the rehabilitation process,
  - 2. The scope of VR services, and availability of service providers,
  - 3. Community programs, resources and services that can assist the client in the selection and achievement of an employment outcome,
  - 4. The client's disability related functional limitations and vocational and psychosocial adjustment to the disability,
  - 5. Occupational requirements, job market trends, available openings, and other vocational topics, and
  - 6. Vocational exploration activities to establish long and short-term goals in career decision making.
- H. VCG must be provided throughout the VR process to:
  - 1. Help the applicant/client realize their strengths and self-awareness regarding their disability related barriers to employment and provide empowerment in seeking reasonable accommodations as necessary,
  - 2. Explore the applicant/client's transferable skills and discuss how they may be applied to overcome impediments to employment,
  - 3. Facilitate the applicant/client's informed choice in the selection of a employment goal, appropriate services to obtain that goal, and choice of service providers,
  - 4. Coordinate the provision of VR services that are necessary for the achievement of the selected employment outcome,
  - 5. Assist the applicant/client in exploring alternatives when there are limits on the provision or availability of VR services,
  - 6. Help the client develop the self-advocacy skills needed for taking responsibility for continued career success in the workplace.
- I. The VR Program Supervisor must ensure service continuation in the absence of the VR Counselor who was initially assigned to the applicant/client's case.

- J. The VR Counselor must consistently engage the client and monitor for ongoing and satisfactory case progress.
- K. When the client is not making sufficient progress towards their employment goal, the VR Counselor must initiate steps to assist them with identifying and resolving the issues that may be impeding their progress.

**V. Procedure**

- A. Refer to IV. above.
- B. Refer to Standard Work, if available.

**VI. Documentation Requirements**

The client's electronic case file shall include the following:

- A. Case notes or narratives relating to VCG.
- B. Documentation of informed choice.