ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY
Program Name: Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)
Policy Number: VR-7.3-v1
Effective Date: July 1, 2008
Last Revision: March 31, 2021
CHAPTER 7: General Services
Section 7.3: Economic Need

I. Policy Statement

VR will consider the economic need of the client to determine the level of participation and cost of services in the approved IPE. The purpose of economic need criteria is to verify if the client can contribute, in whole or in part, to the cost of services. This policy applies universally to all applicants/clients.

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. § Participation of individuals in cost of services base on financial need 361.54
- A.R.S. §§ 23-502 and 503
- Arizona Administrative Code, Title 6, Chapter 4 Economic need and similar benefits R6-4-403 (A)

III. Applicability

A. This applies to all clients that request VR services that are contingent on economic need. The client must provide any of the following applicable documents to determine economic need:

1. The most current U.S. federal income tax statement with the adjusted gross income listed belonging to the client, parent, or individual who claimed the client as a dependent,
2. Current Social Security Award letter for SSI or SSDI beneficiaries based on the client's own disability,
3. Documentation that the client is a Ward of the Court/State,

4. Documentation of the client’s current eligibility for any government assistance which is based on poverty or median income guidelines, or

5. Any other credible or verifiable documentation related to economic status which may include paycheck stubs, documentation, or eligibility for unemployment benefits.

B. Failure to submit the required documentations will result in an automatic determination the client does not meet economic need.

IV. Standards

A. The VR Counselor must determine economic need after determining eligibility or prior to developing IPE.

B. Any disability related costs may be subtracted from the client’s or their family’s adjusted gross income in instances when the client or their family:

1. Pays for their services,

2. Does not claim these costs as deductions on their income tax statements,

3. Does not receive reimbursement for the costs form any other public or private source, and

4. Provides documentation which verifies the cost of the disability related need is already subtracted from the client’s adjusted gross income.

C. The following circumstances exempt clients from economic need criteria when they are:

1. A current SSI/SSDI recipient under Titles II or XVI based on their own disability,

2. A ward of the court, or

3. Qualified for government assistance based on poverty or median income guidelines.

D. A client is considered a dependent and their parent(s) or legal guardian’s income must be used to determine economic need when:

1. They live with their parents or legal guardian and is claimed as a dependent on their federal income tax return, or

2. They receive over half of their financial support from their parents/legal guardians.

E. The client’s income can only be used to determine economic need when:

1. They are single and self-supporting, and

2. Are not claimed on anyone else's tax returns.

F. In instances when the client is a minor, they may be considered an independent adult for the purposes of IV. E when the following apply:

1. Minor and family are estranged,

2. Family is not substantially contributing to their welfare, and

3. They do not have a legal guardian.

G. In instances when a client has a fiduciary guardian, conditions under IV. E apply.

H. In instances when the client is married, their economic need must be based on the combined income of the couple.

I. The following VR services are not contingent upon economic need:

1. Assessment for determining eligibility and Order of Selection priority category,

2. Assessment to determine VR service needs,

3. Vocational counseling and guidance,

4. Information and referral services,

5. Job-related services,

6. Personal Assistance services, and

7. Any auxiliary aid or services which requires a client to participate in the VR program.

J. The following VR services are contingent upon economic need:

1. Private counseling services,

2. Treatment services,

3. Books, tools, computers, software, tape recorders, and other training materials necessary to complete basic educations, skills/vocational/technical training, or post-secondary education,

4. Occupational licenses, tools, computers, or equipment required for work,

5. Vehicle modifications,

6. Transportation cost, except when in support of an evaluation or adjustment to disability service,

7. Relocation maintenance, and

8. Childcare services.

K. Economic need must also be determined for any family member that receives any services listed IV.H above.

L. A client will meet economic need if the client's household adjusted gross income is at or below 100 percent of the current Arizona median income for the family size as published annually in the VR Economic Need Chart below.

Family Size	Monthly Income
1	$3,085.00
2	$4,034.00
3	$4,984.00
4	$5,933.00
5	$6,882.00
6	$7,831.00
7	$8,009.00
8	$8,187.00
9	$8,365.00
10	$8,543.00
11	$8,721.00
12	$8,899.00

(Note: This information is already pre-calculated on the Economic Need worksheet in the Libera Case Management system).

M. Family size only includes minor and non-minor individuals that currently live in the home that are also being claimed as dependents on the head of the household's income tax return.

N. Economic need will be re-determined in the event the client's financial situation changes since the most recent economic need decision and the redetermination will benefit the client.

O. The client's past year earnings will not be counted towards computing economic need if the client or individual who claims the client is no longer employed and has no income.

P. The VR Counselor must determine the client does not meet economic need if they do not provide the requested and required documentation to support an economic need decision.

Q. In instances when the client is not a recipient of any government assistance or does not have income, the VR Counselor will input a case note in the client's ECF.

V. Procedure

A. Refer to IV. A-B, D-H, N, and P-Q above.

B. Refer to Standard Work, if available.

C. The VR Counselor must complete the Economic Status Report in the ECF.

VI. Documentation Requirements

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

A. All documentation used to support the economic need decision.