

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY

Program Name: Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

Policy Number: VR-8.5-v1

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CHAPTER 8: Assessment Services

Section 8.5: Assessments: Psychology/Psychiatry/Mental Health

I. Policy Statement

This policy provides the guidelines regarding the provision of psychological and psychiatric assessments for applicants/clients when the existing documentation is insufficient for determining eligibility, functional limitations, or scope of VR services.

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. §§:
 - Scope of vocational rehabilitation services for individuals with disabilities 361.48 (b)(1-2)
 - Comparable services and benefits 361.53 (b)(1)
 - Participation of individuals in cost of services based on financial need 361.54 (b)(3)(i)(A-B)
- A.R.S. §§ 23-502 and 503
- Arizona Administrative Code, Title 6, Chapter 4:
 - General considerations R6-4-201 (A)(1)(a)
 - Diagnostic Study R6-4-203
 - Service and provider standards, service authorizations equipment purchasing, Workers' Compensation R6-4-402 (A)(2) and (B)(2)(a-b)
 - Economic need and similar benefits R6-4-403 (A)(1)(b)(i-ii) and (B)(2)(b)(iv)

III. Applicability

This applies to circumstances when psychological and psychiatric assessments are authorized and purchased by VR.

IV. Standards

- A. The VR Counselor must provide the service provider with the following referral information:
 - 1. Pertinent background information regarding the applicant/client's social/vocational history, medical history, and vocational objectives,
 - 2. Specific questions addressing the areas of ambiguity regarding the applicant/client's behavior, psychosocial, or intellectual functioning in terms of employment.
- B. Economic need does not apply.
- C. Comparable benefits do not apply.
- D. The evaluator must determine psychological tests appropriate for the applicant/client's presenting disabilities and problems.
- E. All assessments must result in:
 - 1. Concrete, predictive statements about the applicant/client's behavior in a wide range of situations and person's ability to cope with life demands, and
 - 2. A comprehensive written report with precise conclusions and recommendations that answered the counselor's referral questions.
- F. All types of psychological evaluations must be modified to accommodate an applicant/client's disability, specifically for visually impaired and deaf clients.
- G. A minimal psychological evaluation must be utilized to confirm or update an established diagnosis and is appropriate for an applicant/clients with a known history of psychosocial or cognitive impairment, for whom recent psychological information is available and only clinical interview and review of records by a psychologist is required.
- H. Referral for a standard psychological evaluation must be utilized when current psychological or mental health information is not available.
- I. The standard evaluation includes measuring and assessing an applicant/client's cognitive and behavioral assets and liabilities, academic skills, and adaptive psychosocial functioning.
- J. Standard psychological evaluation with an educational component includes an additional focus on measuring and assessing an applicant/client's cognitive abilities, academic achievement and scholastic aptitudes related to learning disability diagnoses and attention deficit disorder.
- K. Standard psychological evaluation with a vocational interest component includes an additional focus on measuring and assessing an applicant/client's vocational

aptitudes, values and interests and provides recommendations regarding the fit between the person's personality and abilities and various vocational demands.

- L. Standard psychological evaluation with a psycho-sexual component is used only when existing documentation is insufficient, and the applicant/client has a history of sexual offense.
- M. Standard psychological evaluation with a psycho-sexual component must be performed by a psychologist or a psychiatrist who are licensed and familiar with the state's statutes regarding sexually violent individuals and sexual offender treatment programs, and who have experience and training in this specialized field.
- N. Neuropsychological evaluation is utilized when cognitive, behavioral or personality changes due to brain injury, disease or dysfunction is known or suspected, and consideration is being given for a comprehensive treatment and rehabilitation program.
- O. Psychiatric exam is used to assess an applicant/client's history, mental status and functioning, establish a psychiatric diagnosis, and/or recommend a course of psychiatric treatment
- P. Psychiatric pharmacologic exam is used to assess psychotropic medication including:
 - 1. Adjustment and monitoring services for prescriptions for psychotropic medications,
 - 2. Review of the effects and side effects, and
 - 3. Adjustment of the type and dosage of psychotropic medications prescribed that address the therapeutic goals outlined in the service plan.
- Q. Only one assessment is allowed per case.
- R. Refer to Section 9.5 Treatments-Psychology/Psychiatry/Mental Health regarding corresponding treatment services.

V. Procedure

- A. Refer to IV.A (1-2) above.
- B. Refer to Standard Work, if available.
- C. Refer to the RSA Allowable Services Spreadsheet, contracts (if available) and provider requirements. For a non-contracted service, refer to RSA Contracts Unit for guidance whether the service is to be procured via:
 - 1. Arizona Health Care Cost Containment (AHCCCS) Fee for Services, or
 - 2. Other procurement methods, or

3. Direct payment to the client via CPA.
- D. The VR Counselor must complete the agency Referral for Services form for psychology or psychiatry assessment service(s).
- E. The VR Counselor must task the Purchasing Technician to create RSA Purchase Authorization(s) for the service(s) listed in V. D.
- F. The Purchasing Technician must submit the RSA Purchase Authorization for each service listed in V. D along with the referral information to the provider(s).
- G. Upon receipt of the provider's assessment report, the VR Counselor must review the report for completeness, approve the provider's invoice and process for payment after confirming that the reporting documentation is complete.

VI. Documentation Requirements

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

- A. Referral information,
- B. RSA Purchase Authorization(s),
- C. Psychology and/or psychiatry assessment report.