

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY

Program Name: Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

Policy Number: VR-12.7-v3

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CHAPTER 12: Support Services

Section 12.7: Information and Referral

I. Policy Statement

This policy provides guidelines regarding information and referral services for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program applicants and 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 CFR §§:
 - 361.37, Information and referral programs,
 - 361.48 (b)(4), Scope of vocational rehabilitation services for individuals with disabilities,
 - 361.53 (b)(3), Comparable services and benefits, and
 - 361.54 (b)(1-2), Participation of individuals in cost of services based on financial need.
- Arizona Revised Statutes:
 - § 23-502, and
 - § 23-503.
- Arizona Administrative Code, Title 6, Chapter 4:
 - R6-4-201 (A)(1)(b), General considerations, and
 - R-6-4-403 (A)(1)(b)(iii) and (B)(2)(b)(v), Economic need and similar benefits.

III. Applicability

This policy applies to VR staff who are required to provide information and referral to applicable applicants/clients.

IV. Standards

- A. VR must provide information and guidance to applicants/clients, regardless of eligibility determination, to assist them in preparing for, securing, retaining, advancing in, or regaining employment.
- B. Economic need does not apply.
- C. Comparable benefits do not apply.
- D. If an applicant/client makes an informed choice not to pursue an employment outcome under the VR program, VR must refer the applicant/client to the appropriate programs and/or service providers that can assist the applicant/client with their unique rehabilitation, independent living, and employment needs. Before completing a referral, VR must:
 - 1. Explain to the applicant/client that the purpose of the vocational rehabilitation program is to assist an individual to achieve a competitive integrated employment outcome,
 - 2. Provide the applicant/client with information on employment options, and vocational rehabilitation services, to assist the individual in achieving an appropriate employment outcome,
 - 3. As applicable, inform the applicant/client that services can be provided to eligible individuals in an extended employment setting, if necessary, for purposes of training or otherwise preparing for employment in an integrated setting,
 - 4. Inform the applicant/client who chooses not to pursue a competitive integrated employment outcome that they can seek and apply for VR services at a future time when they choose to pursue a competitive integrated employment outcome, and
 - 5. As applicable, refer the individual to the Social Security Administration to obtain information concerning the ability to work while receiving Social Security benefits.
- E. The VR Counselor must provide individualized information, and referral services to access other resources, to all clients who are required to wait for VR services due to the following:
 - 1. Order of Selection, or
 - 2. Lack of long-term employment services.
- F. VR Counselors must inform all clients who are recipients of Social Security benefits, such as Social Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), of the availability of benefits counseling and work incentive planning resources.
- G. VR Counselors must provide basic information about the impact of work wages on benefits.

- H. VR must provide information and assistance with benefits counseling through any or all of the following:
 - 1. Use of the Disability Benefits 101,
 - 2. Referral to certified work incentive specialists, and
 - 3. Referral to Social Security Administration directly.
- I. The VR Counselor must complete a written notice of the referral to the agency carrying out the program that may assist the applicant/client, including the following:
 - 1. The name of the program to which the applicant/client is referred and information about the services provided, and
 - 2. Contact information for the program (address, contact person, phone number, and other relevant information).
- J. When the applicant/client requires assistance with contacting community resources, the VR Counselor must send the written notice of referral to the selected program/agency upon securing the applicant's/client's signed Release of RSA Information form.
- K. When referring applicants/clients to other federal or State programs, VR must provide the applicant/client with the following:
 - 1. A copy of the referral,
 - 2. Information identifying a specific point of contact for the program the applicant/client is being referred to, and
 - 3. As applicable, information and guidance about the most suitable services to assist the applicant/client in, but not limited to, preparing for, securing, retaining, or regaining employment.
- L. The VR Counselor must document the information and referral provided to the applicant/client in a case note, and save the written notice of referral in the electronic case file (ECF).

V. Procedure

- A. Refer to IV. A, E-I, and K-L above.
- B. Refer to Standard Work, if available.

VI. Documentation Requirements

- A. The client's ECF must include documentation about providing information or referral to community resources or benefits counseling.