



ELIGIBILITY FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (VR) SERVICES

Basic Eligibility Criteria

To receive services, an individual must have a disability, which results in a substantial impediment (barrier) to employment and requires VR services to prepare for, secure, retain or regain employment. Any service an individual receives from the VR system must be connected to their employment goal.

Disability Criteria

- Must have a mental, physical, or learning disability that interferes with the ability to work.
- Need not be so severe as to qualify for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI).
- Recipients of SSDI or SSI are presumed eligible, as individuals with a significant disability.

Potential Employment Outcomes

- Full or part-time competitive employment in an integrated setting
- Supported employment
- Other employment in an integrated setting such as self-employment, customized employment, telecommuting and business ownership
- Must be consistent with person's strengths, abilities, and informed choice

Presumption of Eligibility

All individuals are presumed capable of employment, despite the severity of a disability, if provided the proper services and supports. VR agencies must explore the individual's work potential through a variety of trial work experiences, with appropriate supports. VR services may be denied if a person cannot benefit, but VR must show by clear and convincing evidence that they cannot benefit.

Order of Selection

If a state lacks resources to serve all eligible individuals who apply, it must:

- Specify the order for selecting who will receive services.
- Ensure that individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected first.
- Not include cost of services as selection criteria.

If a state goes to Order of Selection, it must continue to provide all necessary services to anyone who started receiving services prior to the effective date, regardless of the severity of an individual's disability.

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