

What is OVR?

The Pennsylvania Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) serves people with disabilities that present a substantial impediment to their employment. Services are provided to individuals who can benefit from and who need assistance to prepare for, enter, engage in, or retain employment.

Vocational Rehabilitation is a direct service program provided through 21 District Offices located throughout the Commonwealth. The Federal and State Governments work in partnership to fund the Vocational Rehabilitation Program. Since 1919, Pennsylvania has provided rehabilitation services to thousands of people with disabilities as a legal right and a public service.

Disabilities include but are not limited to:

- Alcoholism
- Developmental Disabilities
- Amputation
- Hearing Impairment
- Learning Disabilities
- Diabetes
- Drug Addiction
- Mental Retardation
- Epilepsy
- Head Trauma
- Respiratory Disease
- Skeletal & Joint Disease
- Mental Illness
- Speech Impairment
- Muscular Disease
- Spinal Cord Injury
- Visual Impairments

Who is Eligible For Services?

Important factors determining eligibility are:

1. A physical or mental disability causes an impediment to employment and there exists an ability to benefit from services.

2. The need for services to prepare for, enter, engage in, or retain gainful employment.

Eligibility for services will be determined by a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor after gaining a thorough understanding of an individual's abilities, limitations, interests, and aptitudes. Services are provided on a nondiscriminatory basis.

What Services Can OVR Offer?

Rehabilitation services are provided in an individualized manner. Eligible persons receive the particular services they need to become employable.

Services may include:

DIAGNOSIS - evaluating medical, psychological, occupational and educational abilities, and limitations.

COUNSELING & GUIDANCE - helping individuals select vocational goals and making plans to attain them.

RESTORATION - providing comprehensive medical, psychological, and allied services to minimize the effect of the impairment on a person's ability to work.

TRAINING - developing job skills through vocational and technical schools, universities, on-the-job training, or job coaching.

HIRAM G. ANDREWS CENTER - offering comprehensive rehabilitation services including: vocational assessment, training, and medical services on a residential or commuting basis.

PLACEMENT - developing job seeking skills and locating employment opportunities.

POST EMPLOYMENT SERVICES - aiding in job adjustment.

Together, the customer and Counselor develop an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). The IPE states exactly what services will be provided and what is expected of both the customer and the agency, including responsibilities and costs.

The Rehabilitation Plan

OVR Counselors are aware of many resources that might be of assistance to persons with impairments and will help customers in learning about other programs available to them. During the rehabilitation process, OVR can also be of assistance by providing attendant care, interpreters for the deaf, and similar support services.

The Vocational Rehabilitation Program is an individualized process. Each individual has unique problems which require understanding, imagination, patience, and ingenuity for their solution. Services are offered with respect for the freedom and dignity of the individual.

Who Pays For Services?

There is no charge for diagnostic services, counseling, and job placement assistance. However, a customer may be required to share the cost of other services after a financial needs assessment is completed. Any financial obligations will be discussed with the customer before the initiation of services.

Confidentiality of Information

The information shared with the Counselor is confidential. A customer's written permission must be obtained before any information can be released to others.

How To Apply

Referrals to OVR can be made by agencies, schools, clergy, hospitals, families or any interested individuals. To apply for services, contact the District Office (listed on the back page) nearest you.

OVR's Non-Discrimination Policy

An applicant or customer of OVR may not be discriminated against by reason of religious creed, age, race, sex, color, national origin, ancestry or disability.

Any applicant or customer of OVR that believes he or she is being discriminated against may contact OVR at the following address:

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
1521 North Sixth Street
Harrisburg, PA 17102
1-800-442-6351 Voice
1-866-830-7327 TTY