Vocational Rehabilitation Services can help you obtain and maintain employment that is based on your interests, strengths, priorities and abilities.

Application and Eligibility Determination
You are eligible for DVR/DBS services if you have a disability that can be documented, if that disability prevents you from getting or keeping a job and if you require rehabilitation services in order for you to go to work.

After orientation you will meet with a counselor to discuss eligibility and your rehabilitation needs. You may be asked to authorize DVR/DBS to get medical or other records on your behalf. You can speed up the eligibility process by bringing current medical, psychological and educational records or other information about your disability with you to the appointment. If additional information to determine eligibility, DVR/DBS will pay for the evaluations.

Eligibility and Order of Selection
DVR/DBS has 60 days from the time you apply to determine eligibility for services unless you and your counselor agree to a specific extension.

If you are eligible, you will be assigned to a category based on the significance of your disability. This will come to you in writing along with an explanation of the categories. When services are restricted during an order of selection, applicants in categories whose disabilities are less significant barriers to employment may have to wait until funds are available to pay for their services.

Even when you are not eligible for DVR/DBS services or when you are placed on a waiting list, DVR/DBS will provide vocational rehabilitation information and referral assistance to help you obtain services from other sources. DVR/DBS counselors will refer you to other federal or state programs which may help with your employment needs. If you disagree with the DVR/DBS’ eligibility and category determination, you may request a reconsideration.

You are presumed to be capable of employment, despite the severity of your disability, unless DVR/DBS shows by “clear and convincing” evidence that you cannot benefit from its services.

Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)
After eligibility is established, you and your counselor will develop a written IPE, listing the specific services to be provided by DVR/DBS to meet your goal. The plan is to be set forth on a
form provided by the DVR/DBS. Your IPE is based on your strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice, and must be mutually agreed upon by DVR/DBS and you per Rehabilitation Act requirements.

You may write the plan yourself, work with your DVR/DBS counselor or use the assistance of someone else who is willing to help. The plan must be in writing. Your plan must be completed within 90 days of the determination of eligibility unless you and your counselor agree to a specific extension.

In order to determine if you will need to share the cost of some services, your counselor will make a financial status determination based on your income and financial resources before any services are provided. If you receive disability benefits from the U.S. Social Security Administration, then you are exempt from financial participation.

After you and your counselor sign the IPE, you should request a copy. Upon your request, the plan must be provided in your native language or method of communication, or that of your family member or other person representing you.

Your financial status and the IPE will be reviewed annually to make sure that the plan continues to meet your needs. You may ask for a review of your plan at any time.

The IPE is like a road map of DVR/DBS services to help you prepare for, obtain, keep or return to suitable employment in a career. Please feel free to ask questions. Your participation in planning and carrying out your DVR/DBS program is critical to your success. You must maintain monthly communication with your counselor.

**Hearing and Appeal Rights**

If you are dissatisfied with any decision made by DVR/DBS, you have a right to request that decision in writing. You have the right to request an appeal. You have 21 days after receiving written decision from DVR and 30 days from receiving a written decision from DBS to file a written appeal.

You can contact the Client Assistance Program (CAP) at any time during the rehabilitation process. If you receive an adverse decision from DVR/DBS, it is vital that you contact CAP for assistance as soon as possible. CAP provides information to individuals concerning their rights in the DVR/DBS process and provides advocacy services in resolving disputes.

**Employment**

After you have been successfully rehabilitated and employed for at least 90/150 days, you and your counselor will discuss a case closure. Upon closure you will receive a letter announcing the closure of your case. During this discussion, you and your counselor must determine that you no longer require DVR/DBS services to maintain employment. If, at a later date, you need additional help to maintain your job, DVR/DBS may provide post-employment services without the need to reapply.

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