

Handbook of Services



Your Guide to Employment



Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Vision

We will be a high performing organization focused on excellence

We will focus on the needs of our customers

We will exemplify the best of public service

Mission

To achieve our vision to serve individuals with disabilities, we will:

Focus on results, employment and independence for individuals with disabilities and injured workers

Partner

Innovate

This handbook outlines the services offered by Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and provides an overview of the VR program. Keep this booklet handy so you can refer to it at any time. If you have questions, your counselor will be able to assist you.

Notes

What Is the Purpose of Vocational Rehabilitation?

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) provides services for eligible persons with physical or mental impairments. These services are designed to enable you to prepare for, obtain, keep, or regain employment.

Who Is Eligible for VR Services?

Eligibility for VR services, as determined below, is based upon the presence of a physical or mental impairment and a goal of employment.

- ◆ The physical or mental impairment constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment.
- ◆ The individual can benefit from vocational rehabilitation services in terms of an employment outcome.
- ◆ The individual requires vocational rehabilitation services to prepare for, obtain, keep, or regain employment.

If you are receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for your disability, you are presumed eligible for VR services if you intend to secure employment.

An eligibility decision will be made within 60 days after you apply for services, unless circumstances prevent such a decision or you are involved in trial work or an extended evaluation to help determine your eligibility.

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What is Financial Participation?

You may be required to participate in the cost of certain VR services. Your counselor will review your financial information to determine what percentage you may have to contribute toward the cost of your planned VR services.

If you meet the exemption status, you will not be required to participate in the cost of your VR services (for example, a SSDI or SSI recipient based on your disability or persons without an income). Your counselor will discuss other exemptions with you during your initial visit.

Financial participation criteria will apply to all services except:

- ◆ Assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs
- ◆ Vocational rehabilitation counseling and guidance
- ◆ Referral and other services to assist individuals in securing services from other agencies
- ◆ Job-related services including job search and placement assistance
- ◆ Personal assistance services
- ◆ Any auxiliary aid or service, such as interpreters for the deaf
- ◆ Supported employment services
- ◆ Trial work services
- ◆ On-the-job training
- ◆ Community-Based Work Experience for transition school to work

If you choose not to provide the appropriate financial information to your counselor, you waive the opportunity to receive many VR services. For additional information, you may contact your counselor.

What Are the Steps to Rehabilitation?

The rehabilitation process involves a series of steps that will assist you to prepare for, obtain, and keep a job which is based on your interests and abilities:

Step One: Applying for Services

Any person living in Florida who has a physical or mental impairment and is of working age or approaching working age may apply for rehabilitation services by contacting a VR office for an appointment. You may call 1-800-451-4327 to obtain the phone number and address of the VR office closest to you.

Step Two: Evaluation

Your counselor is interested in finding out what can be done to help you get work or determine what might be blocking your ability to get work. Any medical, educational, or other reports you have would be helpful in this process. If current information is not available, your VR counselor will help you choose the providers of any necessary evaluations at no cost to you. The evaluation will indicate whether there is treatment or other forms of assistance needed to help support your efforts to obtain employment. Upon completion of this phase, an eligibility determination will be made. If you are determined eligible for VR services, you will be placed in the appropriate Order of Selection category, and you will be automatically placed on the state waiting list.

Step Three: Rehabilitation Planning

When your case is ready to be processed from the waiting list, your counselor will work with you to develop a plan called the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). Your IPE will include your chosen goal, the VR services you will receive, and the amount of your financial participation in the IPE services, if any. A signed copy of the IPE will also be given to you for your records. If you choose to develop your own IPE, your counselor will provide you with written information. This

Notes

The types of services and the setting you choose will be two of the most important decisions you may make during your planned program. These are decisions made by you and your counselor based on your needs, abilities, and the types of services available in your community.

Step Five: Job Placement

When you are ready for employment, your VR counselor will assist with finding job openings in your community. He or she can give you ideas and advice on filling out applications and interviewing for particular jobs and, with your approval, work with an employer to modify the job site and provide assistive devices to meet your needs. Your active involvement in job placement is important to successful employment. After you begin work, your VR counselor will want to make sure that you and your employer are satisfied and may determine if other services are needed to help keep you working.

Step Six: Closure

After you have worked successfully at your job for at least 90 days, you and your VR counselor will discuss ending the counselor's active participation in your rehabilitation. Before doing that, however, it must be determined that you no longer need VR services. If you need additional assistance to maintain your job, VR can provide post-employment services without the need to reapply.

Who Is the Ombudsman?

You have the option to discuss your individual case with an Ombudsman. The VR Ombudsman will assist you in resolving your client-services needs. This is an impartial service available to VR applicants and eligible individuals who have questions, concerns, or feel they may have been treated unfairly. The Ombudsman receives, investigates, and assists in resolving complaints. You may contact the Ombudsman at 1-800-451-4327 (Voice/TDD).

Notes

What Is the Client Assistance Program (CAP)?

The CAP, Advocacy Center for Persons with Disabilities, Inc., was established to help with any problems related to services provided by VR.

Client Assistance Program
2728 Centerview Drive, Suite 102
Tallahassee, Florida 32301
PHONE: 850-488-9071
FAX: 850-488-8640
Toll-Free: 800-342-0823 (Voice)
800-346-4127 (TTY)

For further information on CAP services, you may visit their web site at www.advocacycenter.org

Non-Discrimination

It is against the law for the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) of the Florida Department of Education, as a recipient of Federal financial assistance, to discriminate against any individual in the United States on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief.

The application process used by VR to determine eligibility for services, any subsequent services, and the entire VR process are subject to these non-discrimination requirements.

Notes

What Are VR State Plan Public Forums?

Annually, Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) updates its plan for providing services to people with disabilities. This State Plan is submitted to the federal government. VR conducts public forums throughout the state each year to give VR customers and others an opportunity to comment on its policies and procedures contained in the plan.

The goal of the VR State Plan Forums is to obtain input from VR customers, staff, and the public about:

- ◆ What are the vocational rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities in regard to employment, and
- ◆ How VR can provide quality services to help individuals with disabilities obtain and retain employment.

Your input is very important to help the division provide quality VR services to individuals with disabilities. To obtain dates and locations of VR State Plan Forums, please contact your counselor, or call 1-800-451-4327, or visit the VR web site at www.RehabWorks.org. Your participation is important and encouraged.



This Handbook of Services informs you about vocational rehabilitation. You and your VR counselor will review the information in the handbook when you apply for services. After review and discussion of the information in the handbook, your VR counselor will ask you to sign this form and return it to acknowledge that you have received and understand the information provided. Please ask any questions you may have during this discussion.

Acknowledgment

I have received a copy of the Handbook of Services from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and have reviewed it with my VR counselor. I understand my rights of confidentiality, of appeal of decisions made by my VR counselor, and of rights to make informed choices about my vocational rehabilitation process. I also understand I have the responsibility to actively participate in my vocational rehabilitation process.

Customer's Signature

Date

Thank you.

Customer Copy

Acknowledgment

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Customer's Signature

Date

File Copy

Vocational Rehabilitation Area Administrative Offices

Area I

Brenda Moorer
Area Director
4700 Bayou Blvd, Bldg. 2C
Pensacola, Florida 32503
Phone: 850-494-7200
Fax: 850-494-7227

Area II

Lydia Bush, Area Director
1389 US Hwy 90 West
Lake City, Florida 32055
Phone: 386-754-1675
Fax: 386-754-1269

Area III

Wayne Olson, Area Director
3555 Maguire Boulevard
Bennington Bldg., Suite 205
Orlando, Florida 32803
Phone: 407-897-2725
Fax: 407-897-2752

Area IV

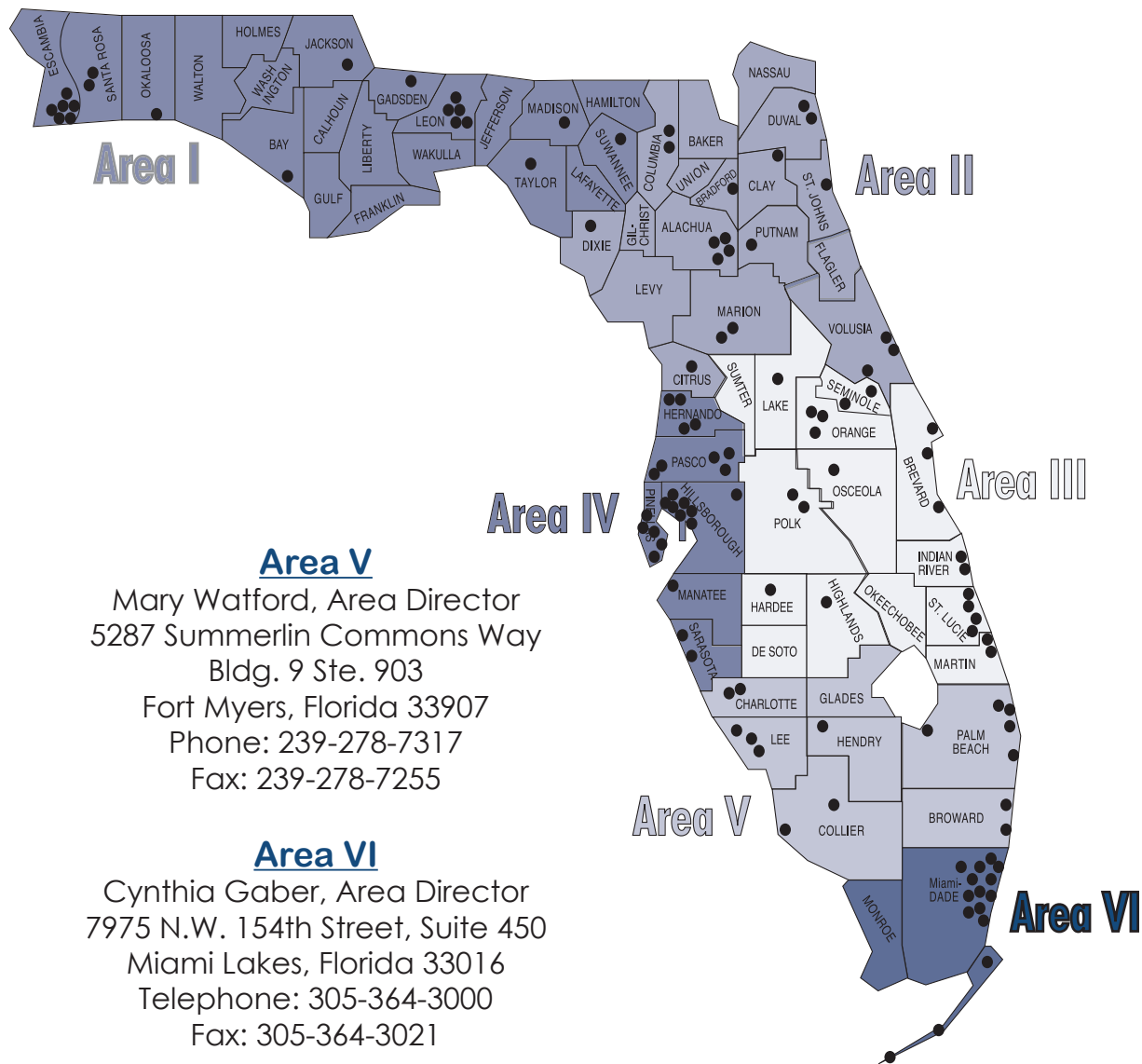
Mary Pierce, Area Director
1313 North Tampa Street
Suite 801
Tampa, Florida 33602
Phone: 866-903-3610
Fax: 813-233-3646

Area V

Mary Watford, Area Director
5287 Summerlin Commons Way
Bldg. 9 Ste. 903
Fort Myers, Florida 33907
Phone: 239-278-7317
Fax: 239-278-7255

Area VI

Cynthia Gaber, Area Director
7975 N.W. 154th Street, Suite 450
Miami Lakes, Florida 33016
Telephone: 305-364-3000
Fax: 305-364-3021





**Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
2002-A Old Saint Augustine Road
Tallahassee, Florida 32301-4862
800-451-4327 (Voice/TDD)**

**Visit VR Online at
www.RehabWorks.org
www.FLJobConnections.com**

An equal opportunity employer/program. It is against the law for the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) of the Florida Department of Education, as a recipient of Federal financial assistance, to discriminate against any individual in the United States on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief.

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. All voice telephone numbers on this document may be reached by persons using TTY/TDD equipment via the Florida Relay Service at 711.

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