

DSHS' DVR Guide to Services



*Washington State Department of
Social and Health Services
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation*

DVR's Purpose

Transforming lives by empowering people with disabilities to secure and maintain employment, and achieve a greater quality of life. DSHS' Division of Vocational Rehabilitation believes employment contributes to a person's ability to live independently and that everyone should have the opportunity to pursue meaningful work.

With offices located throughout Washington, DVR develops partnerships within local communities to help meet the employment goals of people with disabilities. For businesses that hire people with disabilities, DVR provides technical assistance, training and access to an untapped talent pool.



Cover Photo Description:

Jeremy poses for a photo outside his workplace. His Bioness L300 system, a functional electrical stimulation device, allows him to work without pain and move about freely. Jeremy is a DVR customer.

Contents

Accessibility & Confidentiality	2
Equal access to services	
Confidentiality	
Is DVR Right for You?	3
About DVR	
Who DVR serves	
DVR can help you go to work	
Getting started with DVR	
The Rehabilitation Process	4
Application	
Eligibility	
Waiting List	
Vocational Assessment	
Plan for Employment	
Successfully Employed	
Immediate Risk of Losing Employment	
Working in Partnership	6
The DVR team	
Your team members	
Your participation is important	
Elements of a successful partnership	
Developing your Individualized Plan for Employment	
Informed Choice	
The decisions you make	
Your team is there to support you	
Services Available from DVR	8
Paying for Services	9
Your role	
No-cost DVR services you can receive	
Enrolling in a college or training program	

Accessibility & Confidentiality

Equal access to services

Our policy is that no person shall be subjected to discrimination by the Department of Social and Health Services or its contractors because of race, color, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, creed, marital status, national origin, status as a veteran who is disabled, a Vietnam-era veteran, a recently separated veteran, or the presence of any physical, mental or sensory disability. If you have questions or concerns, please call 1-800-637-5627 or email DVRCSR@dshs.wa.gov.

If you are seeking program modifications or reasonable accommodations in order to participate in meetings or services with DVR, or to request this publication in an alternative format, such as large print, Braille or non-English language, please call 1-800-637-5627, email DVRCSR@dshs.wa.gov or ask your DVR counselor.

Confidentiality

Information you provide to DVR is kept confidential. Information is shared with others only with your written consent, except in rare circumstances. If your file includes mental health records, HIV/AIDS and/or STI test results, diagnosis or treatment, and/or chemical dependency services, specific consent is required for DVR to release the information.



*DVR creates new paths for people
to access job opportunities.*

Is DVR Right for You?

About DVR

DVR is a statewide resource assisting people with disabilities to prepare for, secure, maintain, advance in or regain employment. DVR partners with organizations and businesses to develop employment opportunities.

Who DVR serves

People who seek meaningful, secure employment but whose disabilities may result in one or more barriers to achieving an employment goal.

Informed Choice

You and your Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor will use a process called informed choice in the decision making process. Informed choice is the decision-making process that includes your values, interests, abilities, needs and strengths for your success.

DVR can help you go to work

DVR staff will help you get the information you need to make a good decision about:

- What type of job you want.
- Steps needed to reach your job goal.

With support from DVR, you will:

- Design and carry out a step-by-step plan to reach your employment goal.

Getting started with DVR

To learn more about how to get started, call DVR to select a time to meet. DVR has offices in many cities across Washington. Call 1-800-637-5627 or email DVRCSR@dshs.wa.gov to find the office nearest you. If you need an interpreter or translator, or if you need information in another format, such as large print, Braille or non-English language, please explain your needs when you call.



The Rehabilitation Process

Application

- DVR will provide you with information about vocational rehabilitation services.
- You must complete an application with DVR before services can begin.
- Your application will be reviewed by a DVR counselor to determine if you are eligible for DVR services.

Eligibility

You are eligible for DVR services if you:

- Have a physical, mental or sensory disability that results in a barrier to employment; and
- You require vocational rehabilitation services to get or keep a job; and
- You are capable of working as a result of receiving DVR services.

Your DVR counseling team collects records to document your identity, disability and work status. If no records about your disability exist, you may need to complete medical examinations or tests to verify or support eligibility.

Waiting List

If DVR cannot serve every eligible individual because of funding limitations, it must establish a waiting list for services. By law, DVR must prioritize services to individuals with the most significant disabilities.

Individuals will be selected from the waiting list based on the significance of their disability and the date they applied for services. A DVR counselor will determine the significance of disability and priority category and notify you of this determination as part of the eligibility process.

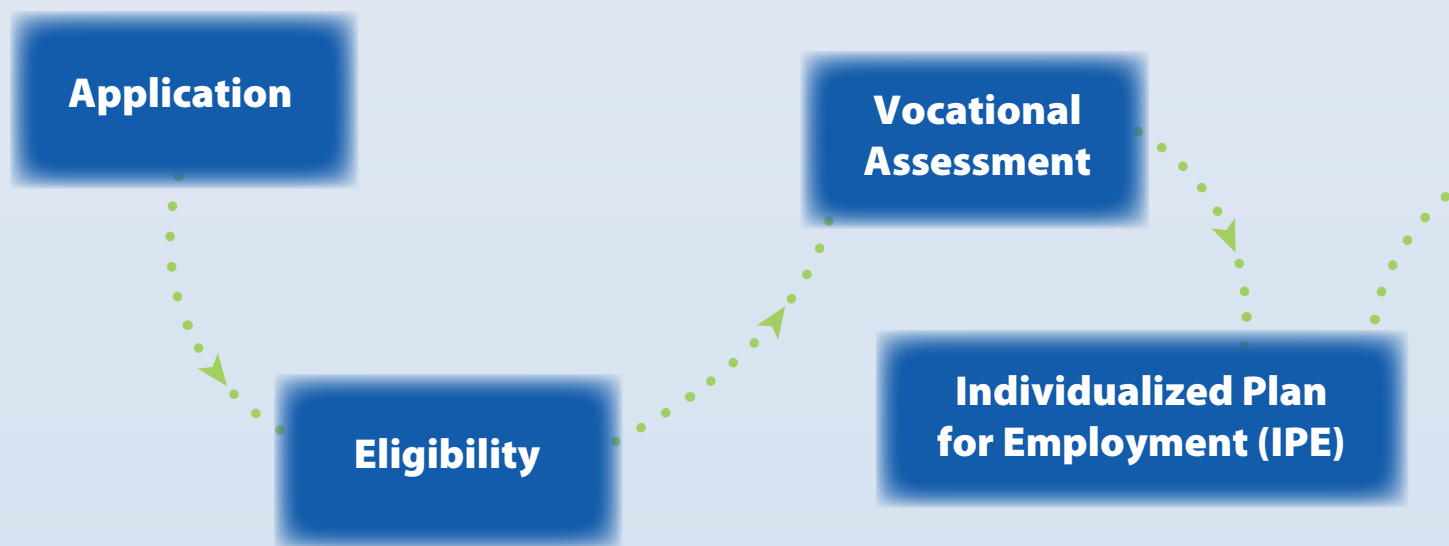
Vocational Assessment

You and your DVR counselor explore types of jobs that match your vocational assessment. You will review:

- Your strengths, abilities and interests.
- Your work history and skills.
- Information about local job-market trends.

Or you may complete:

- Interests and/or aptitude tests.
- Job tryouts.



Plan for Employment

Your DVR counselor offers ongoing counseling and guidance to support you in the development of your Individualized Plan for Employment.

This includes:

- Selecting a job goal. If you are a youth with a disability, the job goal may be a description of your projected post-school employment outcome.
- Outlining what steps and services you need to reach your job goal.
- Working on the activities outlined in your plan. These may include:
 - Training and education.
 - Conducting a job search.
 - Researching job-related resources and referrals.
 - Job-search training.
 - Resume and interview techniques.
 - Job-placement assistance.
 - Support in keeping a job.



**Successful
Employment**



Successfully Employed

- After you get a job, DVR will maintain contact with you for at least 90 days to ensure the job is a good match.
- After 90 days, if you are doing well on the job and no other services are needed, you and your DVR counselor will decide when to close your case.

Immediate Risk of Losing Employment

If you are at immediate risk of losing your job due to your disability, DVR might be able to assist you with specific services in order to help you keep your job.

Working in Partnership

If you are eligible for DVR services, you will be working in partnership with your DVR counselor. Other VR professionals may provide additional support as needed.

The DVR team

- Assists you in determining your vocational options.
- Provides the tools and resources you need to help you choose and achieve your job goal.
- Supports you in maintaining employment and advancing in your chosen job.
- Shares honest feedback to help you succeed.

Your team members

You direct where you are headed on your path to employment. Please invite anyone you would like to be part of your team.

Your participation is important

- Be an active and engaged participant in your journey to achieving your employment goal. It's important for developing and carrying out a rehabilitation plan that will lead you to successful employment.

Elements of a successful partnership

Several steps you can take will help create a successful partnership:

- Maintain close contact with your DVR counselor. Let DVR know if you move or have a new phone number.
- Let DVR know your ideas, feelings and concerns.
- Follow through with activities and agreements.
- Talk to your counselor about any big changes in your life that might affect your plan to go to work.



*You are the key
to your success!*

Developing your Individualized Plan for Employment

Once you qualify for VR services, you'll do a job assessment. We'll make a personalized work plan for you within 90 days of being eligible or getting off a waiting list. This is called an Individualized Plan for Employment, or IPE. If more time is needed to determine a job goal or services, you can take extra time beyond the initial 90 days to develop and sign an IPE.

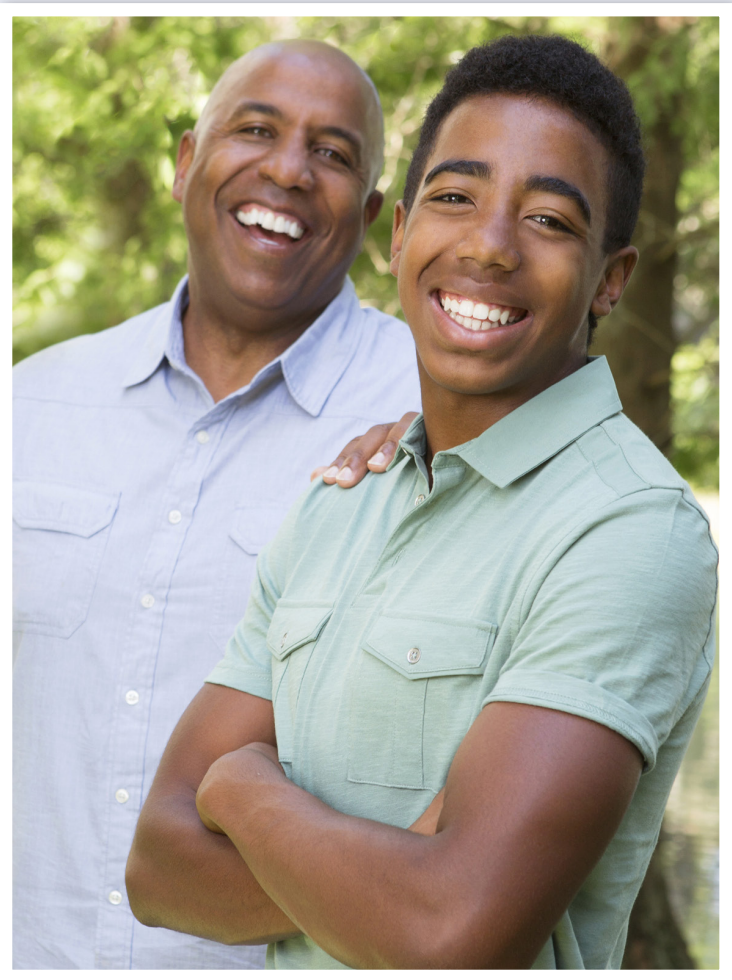
The decisions you make

In collaboration with your Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, you will make many important decisions throughout your journey to employment, including:

- What type of job you want.
- The steps you need to take to prepare for the job.
- What services you need to go to work.
- Where to get the services.

Your team is there to support you

DVR gives you the help you need to make good decisions. You may also ask any member of your VR team, or someone important in your life, to help you at anytime.



Services Available from DVR

DVR offers a variety of services to help you prepare for, get and keep a job. The services you use depend on your individual needs and circumstances. DVR will provide you with information on services. A DVR counselor will help you choose which services you need to reach your job goal. These include:

Assessment services to measure your strengths, capabilities, work skills, and interests and assist you in selecting a job goal and the DVR support services you need to reach that goal.

Benefit planning services to help you understand how working could impact disability cash or medical benefits (e.g. Supplemental Security Income or Social Security Disability Insurance) that you receive.

Counseling and guidance services provided throughout the rehabilitation process to help you make good decisions about how to reach your goal.

Independent living services to help you understand disability challenges that prevent you from working. These include, but are not limited to:

- Training in time management.
- Training in understanding disability limitations.
- Accessing community resources.

Student and youth transition services to help you prepare to transition from high school to the workplace.

Assistive technology services that help you overcome communication and physical challenges that could make it hard for you to get and keep a job. These services include things like hearing aids, visual aids or special computer software. You and your DVR counselor can talk about how technology can assist you in reaching your job goals.

Training or education to help you build skills and meet job qualifications.

Job placement services to help you carry out your job search, including:

- Assistance completing job applications.
- Developing a resume.
- Practicing interview skills and identifying job leads.



Paying for Services

Your role

DVR recognizes that each person's financial situation is different. Before finishing an IPE, you are required to share information about your finances. Though we look at all resources available to help you pay for services, you may be asked to complete a financial statement to find out if you qualify for financial assistance from DVR.

While DVR offers a wide range of services, we cannot pay for routine living expenses like rent or food.

If you are receiving Supplemental Security Income, Social Security Disability Insurance, or Department of Social and Health Services Public Assistance, you are not expected to pay for DVR services. However, you must verify the assistance you receive.



No-cost DVR services you can receive

DVR provides some services regardless of your financial status, including:

- Assessment services needed to determine eligibility or to develop an Individualized Plan for Employment.
- Vocational Rehabilitation counseling, guidance and referral services.
- Job placement and retention services.
- Interpreter services.

Enrolling in a college or training program

When the career goal identified on your approved IPE requires college education or training, you must apply for financial aid before DVR will pay for education expenses at a college or training program. Ask your DVR counselor for more details about postsecondary options.

We appreciate you taking the time to review this Guide to Services. Our goal is to help you gain and maintain employment in a job that will be a good match with your strengths, abilities and interests. We want to help you find a job that is supported by a strong labor market. It will take your time and active involvement in the services provided to you to explore and discover an ideal job match. We look forward to working with you and providing services that can help remove barriers to your job goal.

Welcome to DVR!

Mission

Transforming lives by assisting individuals with disabilities to fully participate in their communities through meaningful employment.

Vision

Students, youth and adults with disabilities are empowered to dream big and achieve their employment goals.

Values

- **Transparency** through clear, honest communication with customers, staff and partners.
- Acting with **Integrity**, upholding the ethics and values of our profession.
- Promoting a culture of **Empowerment** for customers and staff.
- Advancing rehabilitation practices through **Innovation**.
- **Collaboration** with customers, staff and partners that produces results.
- Committed to **Equity, Diversity, Access** and **Inclusion** in all its forms to achieve excellence.

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Providing DVR Services Since 1933

State and federal funds are used to deliver DVR services. The VR program receives approximately 78 percent in federal funds and 22 percent in state funds. For detailed information on the dollar amount of federal funds for the program, please visit <https://rsa.ed.gov/fiscal/grant-awards>.

