



School/VR Partnerships: An Overview of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

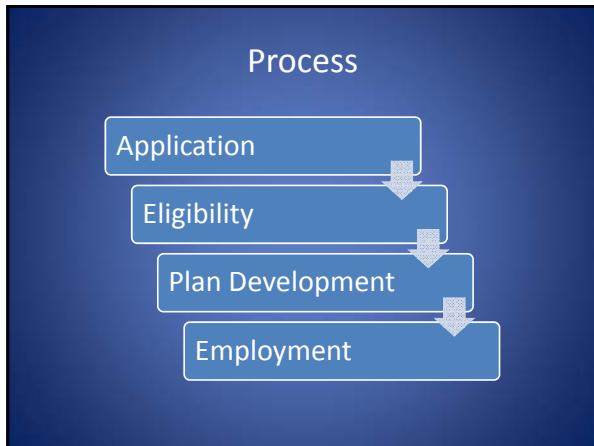
OVRs Overview

- Federal program
- Mandated in all states
- Goal is to help individuals with disabilities gain and sustain employment in their goal area
- Started around WWI helping injured soldiers return to work
- Due to amendments in the 1990's VR increased the role of the consumer which resulted in consumer options for high quality jobs

Outcomes

- Provision of vocational guidance and counseling
- Identification of employment goals
- Attainment of employment
- Retention of employment






Young people with disabilities face many barriers to employment, including:

- Specific nature of disability and health conditions
- Poor access to employment-related services and supports
- Lack of access to work experiences
- Lack of linkages, collaboration/ coordination among various systems (child and adult)



What VR Can Do

- Outreach to educate individuals about the VR process and services
- Processing referrals and applications
- Conducting preliminary assessment interviews
- Securing preliminary eligibility documentation/ student records
- Case note documentation



What VR Can Do – cont.

- Attending Transition IEP meetings as the VR agency representative when invited by the school
- Providing guidance about informed choice, disability issues, and employment
- Follow up
- Networking activities that contribute to successful employment outcomes

Defined Outline of Services

- Assist eligible students with disabilities to transition from HS to postsecondary training, education, or directly into employment upon exit
- Vocational Guidance and Counseling occurs while the student is still in HS
- The Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) is coordinated with the student's Individual Educational Plan (IEP) and in place prior to the student's exit

Schools: Who Should Be Referred to VR?

- Students that have a Documented Disability
 - IEP
 - 504 Plan
- Students or Youth that don't need academic or physical accommodations can still be provided information about VR Transition
- Students or Youth that have disabilities should be encouraged to apply for VR services

Schools: When Should a Student Apply ?

- At least two years prior to HS exit
- Referral should be made at the end of the Sophomore or early in the Junior year... or
- Two to three years before graduation or exit for those students staying until age 22
- At age 16 and older if the student is or will be involved in a community work experience



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Schools: How Can the School Help VR?

- Copies of school records & releases of information
- Opportunities for VR presentations
- Aid distributing VR info to staff, parents, & students
- Scheduled meeting space & time for school visits
- Invitations to IEP meetings at start of school year or alternate input
- Student referrals at the start of the school year
- Time to speak with teachers, guidance counselors, nurses and students

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Schools: What Documents Does VR Need?

- Current IEP or 504 Plan
- Medical and/or psychological records or new evaluations that document disability
- Transcript or academic reports
- Attendance and tardiness reports
- Behavioral reports, if applicable
- Vocational training records and/or career assessments, if available
- Involvement with any other agencies

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