



**DirectEmployers  
Association**

# Vocational Rehabilitation: Your Untapped Resource in Diversity & Inclusion

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# Vocational Rehabilitation? What's Voc Rehab? VR?

## Purpose

To empower individuals with disabilities to:

Maximize employment

Achieve economic self-sufficiency & independence

Realize full inclusion & integration into society

# Vocational Rehabilitation (Voc Rehab/VR)

## Persons with disabilities have the right to:

Live independently

Enjoy self-determination and self-sufficiency

Make choices and have autonomy

Contribute to society

Pursue meaningful careers and relationships

# Vocational Rehabilitation (Voc Rehab/VR)

## Full inclusion and integration in American society:

Economically

Politically

Socially

Culturally

Educationally

# Vocational Rehabilitation (Voc Rehab/VR)

## VR's Veteran Rooted History

**1917**: Smith-Hughes Act established vocational rehabilitation of disabled WWI Veterans

**1918**: Smith-Sears Veterans Rehabilitation Act (Soldier's Rehabilitation Act)

**1920**: Smith-Fess Act (Civilian Rehabilitation Act) Federal/State, 50/50

**1935**: The Social Security Act gave the VR program permanency

# American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services (AIVRS)

**1947**: The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Bureau of Indian Affairs signed a Cooperative Relationship Memorandum 21 (revised 1962) in resolving to focus their efforts to serve Indians with disabilities. Federal/Tribe, 90/10, Section 121 Program

## **Purpose**

“To assist tribal governments to develop or to increase their capacity to provide a program of vocational rehabilitation services, in a culturally relevant manner, to American Indians with disabilities residing on or near federal or state reservations.”

## **Goal**

“To enable these individuals...to prepare for and engage in gainful employment. Program services are provided under an individualized plan for employment and may include native healing services.”

# Vocational Rehabilitation (Voc Rehab/VR)

## Eligibility

- 1) Individual with a disability
  - 2) Resulting in a significant barrier to employment
  - 3) Must require VR services to achieve an employment outcome
- \*Social Security beneficiaries (SSI/SSDI recipients) presumed eligible

## Outcomes

- 1) Competitive Integrated Employment
- 2) Supported/Customized Employment
- 3) Self-Employment
- 4) Employment Retention

# Vocational Rehabilitation (Voc Rehab/VR)

VR services are consistent with an individual's:

Strengths

Resources

Priorities

Concerns

Abilities

Capabilities

Interests

&

Informed Choice



# Vocational Rehabilitation (Voc Rehab/VR)

## Process

- 1) Client referral
- 2) Meet with VR counselor
- 3) Collect existing and acquire new information
- 4) Consider results, determine eligibility, initiate joint planning
- 5) Specify rehabilitation needs utilizing an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)

# 2014 Work Opportunity Innovation Act (WIOA)

## WIOA Core Partners

**Vocational Rehabilitation (Title IV, DOE) must strategically coordinate with:**

Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs (Title I, DOL)

Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (Title II, DOE)

Employment Service program (Title III, DOL, Wagner-Peyser Act)

VR is an integral part of the state workforce development system!

# Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)

**15% of VR funding is dedicated for transitioning age youth (14-22)**

Students that have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and/or Section 504 plan, as well as potentially eligible students

## **5 Core Pre-ETS**

- 1) Self-Advocacy
- 2) Workplace Readiness Training
- 3) Post-Secondary Education
- 4) Work-Based Learning Experiences
- 5) Job Exploration

# VR Client Services: Individuals with Disabilities

Assessment

Counseling & Guidance

Referral

Restoration

College/Vocational Training

Maintenance & Transportation

Interpreter Services

Reader Services

# VR Client Services: Individuals with Disabilities

Pre-ETS

Transition Services

Personal Assistance

Rehabilitation Technology

Supported/Customized Employment

Tools & Equipment

Job Placement & Job Readiness

# VR Client Services: Employers

Recruiting, Employing, and Retaining Individuals with Disabilities

Customized Staff Trainings:

- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

- Disability Awareness & Etiquette

- Unconscious Bias

Financial Benefits and Work Incentives:

- Internships & On-the-Job Training (OJT)

- Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)

- Lower costs in recruiting, hiring, and training new employees

# VR Client Services: Employers

Providing ADA Compliant Reasonable Accommodations Solutions

Job Task & Workplace Analysis

Accessibility Checklist

Job & Work Site Adjustments

Technical Assistance & Consultation

On-Site Support & Follow-Up Services

Referring Pre-Screened, Qualified Applicants while minimizing turnover with a “good fit”



**There is NO Diversity & Inclusion effort that cannot include individuals with disabilities!**

If your recruitment, hiring, application, onboarding, advancement, and other employment processes are NOT accessible; then they are NOT inclusive!

Need help with your Career Site's accessibility?

Contact Ruth Toombs! [Ruth@RecruitRooster.com](mailto:Ruth@RecruitRooster.com)







Directly reaches VR staff in all 50 states, DC, & US Territories including Guam, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands!

State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies  
State Agencies for the Blind and Visually Impaired  
American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Automated Job Delivery, Documentation, & Reporting!





Why?

**BECAUSE IT WORKS!**

(and because Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973)

Let's drive your Diversity & Inclusion efforts  
to help more individuals with disabilities  
enter the workforce or return to work  
by instantly expanding your outreach!

# Let's Connect!



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Let's Add



to Your DE Member Services Today!



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