

CHAPTER 3: COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE

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Counseling and Guidance and Referral Services

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SECTION 1: GENERAL GUIDANCE

Counseling and guidance are services which are applied throughout the VR process and are generally provided by DBVI staff to support the individual in:

1. Understanding his/her capacities, capabilities, aptitudes, and interests throughout the rehabilitation process;
2. Understanding health, personal, and social issues related to vocational rehabilitation;
3. Understanding the services available and how they may best be obtained and used for vocational rehabilitation;
4. Dealing with concerns regarding restoration services, appropriate study and work habits, personal appearance, finances, job interviews and tests, and effective interpersonal relationships;
5. Selecting suitable vocational goals;
6. Planning with others when necessary to develop an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), including assisting the individual to locate support for developing and writing the IPE;
7. Working with family members, relatives and community agencies to aid in the individual's vocational rehabilitation, including support and information on making informed choices throughout the process;
8. Continuing follow-up relationships with the individual, employer, and others when necessary to ensure a successful employment outcome; and
9. Supporting the individual in making the transition to the next step in his/her life.

Referral services are an integral part of counseling and guidance and must be available to all applicants and eligible individuals to secure needed services from other agencies. This helps assure that those seeking services receive all possible benefits and that DBVI is able to extend its own resources by securing all comparable services and benefits. Referral may be made to other entities for assessments, specific goods or supplies, consultation, and/or other services in support of an individual's vocational rehabilitation needs.

Referral services may occur at all stages of the rehabilitation process (from application through post-employment services), but are mandated in the following circumstances:

1. The individual must be made aware of the services of the Client Assistance Program at time of application, at initiation of the Individualized Plan for

Employment, and at case closure; and

2. In a situation in which vision is not the primary disability and a medical or psychological condition exists which imposes functional limitations, referral must be made to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

A DBVI staff person may not always be the agent making the referral unless the individual is unable to do so independently or specifically requests the service from the counselor. DBVI staff, if appropriate, shall encourage and assist individuals to explore, on their own, possible resources in order that they may make informed choices. Staff's role may be guidance and support of the person toward finding needed resources in order to develop and practice skills that will assist in successful integration into the community.

Examples of resources to which referral may be made are: the Department of Labor for current job market and job training information; the Department of Education for transition or adult education options; the Vermont Center for Independent Living for peer counseling and information/referral; the Vermont affiliate of the American Diabetes Association; local home health agencies; the Social Security Administration; the Disability Law Project; the Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired; and other partners in the Creative Workforce Solutions System as applicable, including the Vermont Association for Business, Industry and Rehabilitation for job development and job search assistance.

SECTION 2: SPECIFIC PLANNED SERVICES

Because counseling and guidance services are critical to the evaluation of rehabilitation potential, the development of an IPE, and the provision of other services, there are no specific criteria for the provision of these services other than all applicants or eligible individuals receive them.

Group work, including peer groups, where the objectives are personal adjustment, and education regarding disability or resource awareness, is permissible under this service.

Because of time factors and varying levels of expertise, vocational rehabilitation counselors should use judgement in assessing their own skills before providing counseling involving grief, substance abuse, or severe adjustment reaction situations.

SECTION 3: SPENDING AND RELATED GUIDELINES

If counseling and guidance services are provided outside of DBVI and the cost of these services is likely to exceed \$500.00, the Director or designee should be consulted.

This guideline will be reviewed by DBVI and the State Rehabilitation Council every three years.