

Working with Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation

Information for Students and Families: Choosing a Career and Finding a Job

We all go to work—some of us right out of high school, and some after further education and training. Need some support to do that? Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation may be able to help!



What is Vocational Rehabilitation?

VR is an employment services program for high school students and adults with disabilities. A VR counselor can help eligible students with an identified disability—those with an Individualized Education Program (IEP), a 504 plan, or with other physical, mental health, or learning concerns—gain skills, find a job, and start a career.



How does VR provide services?

There are two ways VR provides services to students with disabilities.

1. VR funds Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS), as a supplement to what a school provides.

Pre-ETS helps students with disabilities by providing services such as job exploration, work-based learning, workplace readiness, self-advocacy instruction, and information about postsecondary training options. Any student from 14–22 years old with an IEP or 504 plan can receive help from Pre-ETS, whether they have applied for or been found eligible for VR services.

VR works with schools and community service providers to offer Pre-ETS in every county across Indiana. You can find a list of county providers [on this website](#).

2. VR provides many individualized services for students *after high school*, including:
 - vocational guidance and counseling,
 - job placement assistance,
 - job training,
 - tutors and note-takers, and
 - rehabilitation technology.

These services require a referral to VR, after which you'll meet with a VR counselor to complete an application to see if you are eligible. If the counselor needs more information, they may ask you to participate in other assessments.

If VR determines you are eligible to receive services right now, you'll work with the VR counselor to develop an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). Your IPE will list a variety of VR-approved services and the steps you'll take to achieve your employment goal.





Who can receive services through VR?

Currently, Indiana VR operates under an “order of selection,” which means VR must first serve people who need help the most. Each person who applies to VR is assessed for eligibility and assigned to a priority category based on the information VR has about their disability. If VR cannot help you now, you will be “deferred for services,” which means you may need to wait for services. When VR is able, they will serve as many people as possible in the order of the date they applied. Even if you are not sure if you will get VR services, you should still apply. If you are not eligible for VR or are deferred for services, VR can connect you to other organizations that help people find work. They can also refer you to Pre-ETS, if appropriate.



How will VR know that I need services?

Anyone can refer you to VR (e.g., parent, teacher, case manager). You can even refer yourself by contacting your local VR office by visiting the [VR Office Directory](#).



What does VR do for me?

VR offers many different services, all designed to help you set and achieve your own employment goals. VR might help you understand your interests and abilities or help you explore a career. Your plan might call for a degree program at a two- or four-year college or other training opportunities. Depending on your needs and job requirements, VR can help you explore your options. VR provides the assistance you need to prepare for work and to find and keep a job.



How much does it cost?

There is no charge for VR. However, some services require VR to explore other funding options. For some postsecondary expenses, for example, students and their parents are first required to file a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). Students are expected to use any federal student aid to help pay for certain costs (e.g., tuition and books).



Do I have a choice?

VR will provide you with assistance, but the whole idea is for you to choose your own job goals, based on your interests and abilities. You can decide to develop a plan on your own, or with someone’s assistance. If you wish to receive services from VR, you and your counselor will need to agree on your plan.

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