

Who is served by the ACCES-VR program?

People with all types of disabilities – physical or mental impairments – who want to go to work.

Note: Individuals who are blind obtain VR services from the NYS Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped:
www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/cbvh/about.asp

ACCES-VR Makes a Difference!

"I was stressed out and very upset that I could no longer be a nurse's aide due to my injury. My counselor assured me I would be able to complete a computer class. She was RIGHT! Her compassion was unbelievable. I am working now. Thank you so much for your program."

KM, Holbrook, NY

"For me to be out of work for over ten years and then to go back to school made me feel good. Work is great! With help from ACCES-VR, I DID SUCCEED."

SN, Amityville, NY

"Your organization does a great job of aiding people who need a little help to make positive changes in their lives. Thank you for all your help."

SF, West Islip, NY

"I still do not know how to thank my counselor. She has been, and still is there for me. I have a job paying \$12/hour plus benefits."

DI, Bronx, NY

"I cannot say enough good about my counselor's professionalism, efficiency & effectiveness. She made it possible for me to be retrained for work that I love & that provides a good living."

JS, formerly of Ithaca, NY

How do I contact an ACCES-VR local office and start services?

- Go to www.acces.nysed.gov/vr/ or www.acces.nysed.gov/vr/do/doindex.htm
Click on the ACCES-VR District Office nearest you.
- or
- Call 1-800-222-JOBS (5627) and ask how to contact the office nearest you.
- Go to www.acces.nysed/vr/application/home.htm and download an application. Bring the completed application with you to an ACCES-VR group orientation.

An individual with a disability who applies for ACCES-VR services should be motivated to work and ready to participate in training or other efforts that will lead to employment.

If an individual with a disability is concerned about losing disability-related benefits by going to work, he/she should obtain information from the following resources:

- NY Statewide Work Incentives Technical Assistance Center or www.nls.org.
- For information on NYS's Medicaid Buy-In, visit: www.health.state.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/program/buy_in/
- New York Makes Work Pay
www.nymakesworkpay.org/my-benefits.cfm
or call 1-888-234-3272 or 1-877-671-6844 (TDD)
- Social Security Administration
www.ssa.gov/ny

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ACCES – VR

Adult Career and Continuing Education Services – Vocational Rehabilitation ...a basic guide



The University of the State of New York
The State Education Department
Adult Career and Continuing Education Services
Vocational Rehabilitation
Albany, NY 12234
www.acces.nysed.gov/vr/

Adult Career and Continuing Education Services – Vocational Rehabilitation

What is ACCES-VR?

ACCES-VR is part of the New York State Education Department.

What does ACCES-VR do?

ACCES-VR administers vocational rehabilitation and independent living programs. ACCES-VR provides services to assist eligible individuals with disabilities to obtain employment.

What is vocational rehabilitation?

Vocational Rehabilitation agencies, often referred to as “VR”, are in every state. VR helps people with disabilities prepare for and obtain a job. VR was created out of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended in 1998. VR programs are run by state agencies. They are designed to help people with disabilities meet their career goals. They help people with disabilities get jobs, whether the person is born with a disability, develops a disability or becomes a person with a disability while working.

How does the VR program work?

There are some set parameters for the program that are well-established in federal law and regulations. A few of the basics include:

- The person with a disability has to apply for services.
- The person must meet the eligibility requirements.
- The person must work with a qualified Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) employed by ACCES-VR to determine eligibility.

The more information a person has to verify a physical or mental impairment and describe how that impairment affects the ability to work, the faster the process will go.

What are the eligibility requirements?

- A) The person has a physical or mental impairment.
- B) The impairment is an impediment to employment.
- C) The person can benefit from VR services to achieve employment.
- D) The person requires VR services to achieve employment.

What's next?

If the person with a disability meets the eligibility requirements an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) will be developed. This plan outlines the work goal, the steps to achieve it and the necessary services to reach that goal.

What services can ACCES-VR provide?

- Assessment to help identify skills, abilities, interests and limitations
- Career counseling and guidance
- Rehabilitation and assistive technology
- Training at a vocational school, community college, or on the job
- Supported Employment
- Job placement and job retention
- Other services necessary to achieve the employment goal

ACCES-VR can pay for services depending on the financial need of the individual and family.

ACCES-VR must consider other benefits and services that are available to individuals. Certain services have reasonable spending or time limits.

When will ACCES-VR services end?

ACCES-VR services will end when the individual enters and maintains competitive employment for at least 90 days. Sometimes, for a variety of reasons, ACCES-VR “closes” an individual’s case if it seems that the employment goal is not going to be reached or if the individual becomes unavailable for ACCES-VR services. A person who chooses to participate in ACCES-VR services has to be serious about joining the workforce, whether it be part-time or full-time.

How does ACCES-VR fit in the community?

ACCES-VR works with school districts, community rehabilitation programs, NYSDOL, One-Stop Centers, Independent Living Centers, colleges and vocational schools, the business community and any other community resource that could provide goods and services that enable an individual with a disability to work.

What is Independent Living?

Independent Living Centers (ILC) provide a set of core services geared toward promoting self-help, equal access, peer role modeling, personal growth and empowerment. IL services may include: acquiring & maintaining Social Security benefits, housing assistance, assistive technology, registering to vote and more. Additional information is available at www.acces.nysed.gov/vr/lsn/ilc/about.htm.