

Vocational Rehabilitation

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) is the state agency that partners with Ohioans with disabilities to achieve quality employment, independence and Social Security disability determination outcomes. It is accomplished through its Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR), Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired (BSVI) and Division of Disability Determination (DDD). A fourth area is the Division of Employer and Innovation Services (EIS), which is responsible for establishing and maintaining partnerships with employers.

Vocational Rehabilitation - OOD's Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation and Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired provide vocational rehabilitation (VR) services to eligible individuals with disabilities to assist them to attain and maintain competitive integrated employment. OOD works with adults seeking to enter the workforce or retain a job, and with youth beginning at age 14 to assist them as they transition from high school into college and/or the workplace.

Applying for Services - An individual who is interested in applying for VR services can begin the process online by visiting OODWorks.com. This website provides information about OOD's services and includes a self-assessment designed to assist the individual to decide if VR services are the right fit. Individuals with disabilities can also contact any of OOD's field offices to begin the process.

Eligibility - Once an individual has applied, OOD will determine eligibility for services. In order to be eligible:

- The individual must have a physical, intellectual, sensory or mental impairment,
- The impairment must result in a substantial barrier to employment,
- The individual is presumed to benefit from VR services in terms of an employment outcome, and
- The individual must require VR services to gain or retain employment.

Planning for Employment - Once determined eligible, the individual is provided career counseling and guidance to help identify an employment goal, as well as the services needed. This process results in the development of an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

Services - OOD purchases services from providers in the community; closely monitoring to make sure they meet the needs of the individual. Services may include work experience, job training, job search assistance, rehabilitation technology and on the job supports. For information about approved providers go to <http://providersearch.ood.ohio.gov/>.

Employment - OOD, along with its network of providers, works with employers to match individuals who are job ready with available job openings. Once the individual has maintained stable employment for at least 90 days and is satisfied with their job, OOD will close the case. If the individual experiences difficulties on the job later, short-term post-employment services may be available or the individual can reapply for VR services.

The services described are funded, in part, with federal funds awarded by the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) under the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), Supported Employment Services, and the Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who are Blind (OIB) programs. For purposes of the VR program, the federal VR grant paid 78.7% of the total costs of the program. In federal fiscal year (FFY) 2018, the VR agency received \$100,336,097 in federal VR funds. Funds appropriated by the state paid 21.3% of the total costs \$27,155,767 under the VR program.

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities

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