



# VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION HANDBOOK







## SPIPA VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

This book is about the South Puget Intertribal Planning Agency's Vocational Rehabilitation Program. We call it "VR" for short.

*SPIPA member tribes include:*

Chehalis, Nisqually, Skokomish, Shoalwater Bay and Squaxin Island. Each tribe has a Vocational Rehabilitation office set up to serve their tribal members. Their telephone numbers and addresses are on the back page of this brochure.

Tribal VR programs are set up to help eligible persons with disabilities prepare for, find, or keep work.

YOUR COUNSELOR IS:

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We can't tell right away if VR will be able to help you. We will be able to determine after we find out some things about you and what you need.

## WHO CAN VR HELP?

*VR can help any person who is old enough to work and:*

1. Has a physical or mental disability, and
2. The disability results in a substantial barrier to employment, and
3. There is a need for VR services so that you can prepare for, enter, engage in, or retain gainful employment.

## LET'S LOOK AT HOW VR WORKS

*The five steps of obtaining VR services are:*

1. Determine eligibility.
2. Document your disability. If no records exist, you will need to complete medical exams or tests to verify a disability.
3. Assess the skills you have so VR can help you match your interests and strengths.
4. You and your counselor will jointly develop an Individual Plan for Employment (IPE).
5. Determine how VR services will help you achieve your goals.



## **1 DETERMINE ELIGIBILITY**

*An interviewer or counselor will ask you:*

- About your disability
- The kind of work you have done before
- What kind of work you would like to do
- How the disability affects your employment
- About your family



## **2 DOCUMENT YOUR DISABILITY**

- You must provide written documentation supporting your disability.
- If no documentation exists, VR can arrange for an examination. This exam may be done by a specialist.
- You will be asked to be patient while the documentation is gathered.

### 3

## VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENT

*These assessments will help us find out what kinds of jobs you would like and what would work best for you.*

- These assessments will show your strengths.
- They will be very useful to you in choosing a job.

### 4

## DEVELOP A PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT

*If VR can help, you and your counselor together will develop an Individual Plan for Employment, or IPE.*

The plan will show you exactly what you will need to do in order to get a job.



## **5** **DECIDE ON SERVICES THAT WILL HELP YOU REACH YOUR GOAL**



*There are several services, such as:*

- Rehabilitation counseling
- Job training
- Help with special rehabilitation costs
- Physical restoration services
- Interpreters for the deaf
- Mental health services
- Job placement services
- Job retention services

### **LET'S LOOK AT EACH ONE OF THESE A LITTLE CLOSER**

- **REHABILITATION COUNSELING**  
This is to help you understand what services may be available for you. Then you can choose the kind of work that you do best.
- **JOB TRAINING**  
VR will help with training for a job if you need it. This may happen at a trade school, business school, college, on-the-job training, or at a special rehabilitation center.

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- **HELP WITH SPECIAL REHABILITATION COSTS**

If you need help going somewhere for services, VR may help pay for transportation (i.e., bus tokens or gas/mileage for someone to transport you). VR may be able to assist you in purchasing specialized work-related items.

- **PHYSICAL RESTORATION SERVICES**

If you do not have enough insurance to pay for things that will make it easier for you to work, VR may help pay for them. This could be a wheelchair, a hearing aid, crutch or an artificial limb. VR will work with your medical insurance provider, Contract Health and other resources to help you acquire needed items.

- **INTERPRETERS FOR THE DEAF**

If you are deaf, VR may help arrange for an interpreter to help you talk with other people as you look for work.

- **JOB PLACEMENT / JOB RETENTION**

Finding the right job for you is an important part of VR services. We look carefully at the things you are able to do and try to find a job that needs you. Your counselor will talk with you about ways to find a job and keep it.



◆◆◆ **TIP** ◆◆◆

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT ANY PART OF THE VR PROCESS, YOU SHOULD CALL YOUR VR COUNSELOR RIGHT AWAY. WHEN YOU HELP US, YOU HELP YOURSELF.

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◆◆◆ **YOUR RIGHTS** ◆◆◆

*As a participant in a VR program, you are entitled to rights:*

THE RIGHT TO DECISIONS AND SERVICES WITHOUT DELAY.

THE RIGHT TO SHARE IN ALL DECISIONS ABOUT YOUR PROGRAM OR SERVICES.

THE RIGHT TO APPEAL IF YOU DISAGREE WITH SERVICES, OR IF THERE IS A LONG DELAY.

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## HOW LONG WILL THE VR PROCESS TAKE?

*It all depends on what you need and what we can do about it.  
We promise to move as quickly as we can. You can help:*

- Contact your VR counselor when you have a change of address or telephone number.
- Agree to go to any medical examinations, tests or evaluation your counselor may need.
- Be on time for appointments and check-ups.  
Call the VR counselor if you cannot keep an appointment.
- Call the doctor yourself if you are asked to do so.
- Tell your VR counselor about any changes that might affect your VR program.
- Ask questions when you don't understand.



HERE ARE JUST SOME OF THE  
DOCUMENTED DISABILITIES  
THAT QUALIFY FOR VR  
SERVICES



- Visual impairment
- Allergies
- Arthritis
- Carpel Tunnel Syndrome
- Diabetes
- Hearing impairments
- Learning disabilities
- Personality disorders
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Traumatic brain injury
- Alcohol/Drug addiction
- Eating disorders
- Fibromyalgia

♦ ♦ ♦ **TIP** ♦ ♦ ♦

REMEMBER, YOU CAME HERE FOR HELP AND TO  
PREPARE FOR WORK. ASK QUESTIONS.  
VR IS HERE TO HELP YOU.

♦ ♦ ♦



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