

Role of Vocational Rehabilitation in Self-Employment

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Note: The slides will advance automatically, but you may move or pause them manually by using the arrow buttons below.

Overview of Lecture

1. Description of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)
2. Vocational Rehabilitation as a Resource for Self Employment
3. Suggestions for Partnering with VR in Developing Self Employment

Examples:

- Computer consulting
- Vending machines
- Kettle corn
- Handmade fishing supplies
- Management company
- Working with horses
- Wild-life photography

Overview of Vocational Rehabilitation

- Funded and Regulated by Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as Amended
- Cooperative effort of State and Federal Governments in All 50 States, DC, and Territories
- Services potentially available:
 - Case management & service coordination
 - Assessment for determining eligibility for VR services;
 - Vocational counseling, guidance, and referral services;
 - Vocational and other training;
 - Personal assistance services, including training in managing and directing a personal assistant;
 - Rehabilitation technology services; and
 - Self-employment services.
- National Directory can be found at: www.jan.vvu.edu

Accessing Vocational Rehabilitation Services

• Where to find an office

- State agencies
- National directory : <http://www.jan.vvu.edu/sbses/vocrehab.htm>
- Independent offices
- One stop centers

The Process

- Complete Application for VR Services
- Assigned a VR Counselor
- If Needed, Complete Diagnostic Testing to Substantiate Presence and Impact of Disability



Eligibility for Vocational Rehabilitation Services

- Services Are Eligibility Based
- Presumed Eligibility for SSI and SSDI Recipients
- Eligibility Criteria:
 - Presence of a Disability; Impairment to Employment
 - Expectation that VR Services Will Lead to Employment

Development of an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)

- Establish Employment Goal
- Identify Services Needed to Achieve Employment Goal
- Identify Funding and Resources to Support Needed
- Review and approval of plan

Vocational Rehabilitation and Self-Employment

- Completion of a Feasibility Study
 - Prescreening tools that help the individual assemble information on the self-employment idea in preparation for a detailed discussion
- Completion of a Business Plan
 - Technical assistance specialists
 - Community resources
- Potential Use of Training to Develop Needed Skills
 - VR can help arrange for and potentially help finance training and education
- Networking w/ Partners/Resources
 - VR can help identify potential partners and resources in the community
- Identifying Ongoing Supports
 - VR can help to identifying potential supports and assist in putting them in place

Vocational Rehabilitation Evaluation of the Feasibility Plan

- Description of Business Idea
- Management Skills
- Technical Skills/Work Experience
- Commitment/Desire/Persistence
- Market Demand
- Personal Credit/Financial Solvency
- Key considerations
 - Business experience
 - Support of friends & family
 - Articulated goals
 - Financial understanding
 - Market demand
 - Benefits impact

VR Community Partners in Developing Self-Employment

- Micro Enterprise Centers/Small Business Development Centers
- Local Community Service Boards; Medicaid Waiver
- Community Rehabilitation Programs
- Work Incentives through Social Security Administration
- One Stop Career Centers; Community Colleges

Vocational Rehabilitation Policy Areas Potentially Impacting Self-Employment

- Order of Selection
 - guidelines on the priority order of persons with a disability in that state
 - criteria is driven wholly by the nature and extent of the disability and impact on employment
- Financial Eligibility
 - income and resources determine if a person is fully, partially, or not at all financially eligible.
- Earnings Goals for Planned Business
 - Some VR agencies might set expectations for earnings
- Financial Participation in Business Plan Development
 - States have varying policies
 - VR Contribution Limits
 - become fully informed on the specific state guidelines

Partnering with Vocational Rehabilitation in Developing Self-Employment

- Be Well Prepared to Discuss Business Idea
- Approach VR as a Partner and a Resource
- Educate Yourself on VR Policies and Procedures
- Develop Associated Skills/Supports Needed to Manage Business
- Blend funding from various sources to accomplish goal
- Utilize Personal Social Capital