

Family Tip Sheets:

What Should I Know About Vocational Rehabilitation?

The Basics

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program helps people with disabilities get jobs. A VR counselor will decide if your child is eligible for VR services. The counselor will work with your child to help them come up with a career plan. They will also help figure out what services and supports they need to meet their career goals.

Myths

Myth #1: My child can't meet with vocational rehabilitation until they turn 18

Vocational rehabilitation should be involved before your child turns 18. Pre-Employment Transition

Services are offered beginning at age

14. Your

child doesn't need to be eligible for VR to get these transition services. They can also apply for VR before they turn 18. The VR counselor can attend IEP meetings and work with the student on developing an employment plan before they leave high school. Parents can request Vocational Rehabilitation to attend meetings when students are 14-16.

Myth #2: My child has too severe a disability to get vocational rehabilitation services

There is no disability considered too severe to receive VR services. VR must serve people with the most significant disabilities first.

Myth #3: I will have to pay for any services my child receives

Most people do not pay for their services through VR. You might be asked to pay for some of your services depending on how much money you have.

Who Can Help Me?

Call your local VR office to schedule an appointment with a VR counselor. Find the closest office to you:
(615) 313-4891

<https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/ds/office-locator-trc-ttap.html>

If you need additional information about vocational rehabilitation or have concerns about services provided/not provided, contact the Client Assistance Program:

<https://www.disabilityrightstn.org/get-help>

1(800) 342-1660

What Questions Should I Ask?

- What do I need to prepare before my first meeting with a counselor?
What items do I need to bring?
- Are Pre-Employment Transition Services in my child's school? If not, how can I get them in the school?
- Is there someone I can contact if I disagree with a decision by VR?
- Is there a waiting list for services?
- What types of services does VR provide?
- What will the process look like for developing my child's Individualized Plan for Employment (or IPE)?
- What are the assessment options VR can provide to help my child figure out what they want to do for a job?
- If my child finds a job, how long will VR provide assistance?

Myth #4: VR won't help my child with college

Vocation rehabilitation helps people with disabilities find a career, not just get a job. If your child's job goal requires education or training, VR might help fund college or training programs needed for that career.