

**Family Tip Sheet:  
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 at least 18-24 months before your child graduates high school. Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) 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 school meetings.

**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.

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

Most people do not pay for their services through Vocational Rehabilitation. VR services are free based on a combination of eligibility factors including economic factors. Some services may require customers to contribute to the cost of the service depending on financial guidelines.

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

Vocational 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.

**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?
- 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?

**Need more information?**

Call your local Vocational Rehabilitation office to schedule an appointment with a VR counselor.  
Find the closest office to you: 833-772-TDHS (8347).

**Website:** <https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/ds/vocational-rehabilitation.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>

800- 342-1660