Vocational Rehabilitation

Our mission is to prepare and assist eligible South Carolinians with disabilities to achieve and maintain competitive employment.

We serve:
- People with disabilities
- Businesses

This includes people with more than 130 different types of medical, physical or psychiatric disabilities, including hidden disabilities like ADHD, diabetes, brain injuries, and alcohol or other substance abuse.

People with disabilities have overcome barriers and accomplished amazing things in virtually every human endeavor.

VR’s involvement with these individuals begins by establishing eligibility of individuals with physical and/or mental impairments, seeking work, who need our help to get there. Once eligibility is established, VR can begin to assist the person with disabilities, whom we refer to as a “client”, to prepare for their new career.

Our services for people with disabilities fall within four major categories, which are the steps in the vocational rehabilitation process:
- Assessment
- Disability management
- Training
- Job search assistance leading to placement
Assessment determines a client’s strengths and abilities, and leads to career exploration with the help of local labor market information. An individualized plan for employment (IPE) is created that details all of the services the client will need to become competively employed.

At our 25 work training centers we provide clients with demand-driven and soft-skills training through job preparedness classes and hands-on job readiness training. This training is provided by partnering with over 400 businesses statewide. This gives businesses an outsource resource, and helps clients gain valuable real work experience.

VR also provides business or information technology training, which prepares clients for computer-related fields such as programming, AutoCAD, networking, server support and business applications.

In addition, VR operates a 4-week residential substance abuse treatment center that focuses on the emotional, physical, and medical aspects of confronting an addiction and replacing it with a rewarding lifestyle. VR counselors follow up with clients after their treatment to focus on their employment. This is also a vital resource for employers and VR partners throughout the state. Many individuals referred haven’t lost their jobs and are able to maintain them utilizing these services.

Our Youth Services prepare and assist students and youth with disabilities to make the transition to post-secondary educational opportunities or employment. All high schools have VR counselors assigned to them to assist students and parents who may benefit from VR services.

We work with our technical college partners to provide certifications that lead to stackable credentials for VR clients.

VR’s Business Services fall within five major categories:

- Job Matching
- Training
- Rehabilitation Technology
- Post – Employment
- Job Retention

Job Matching
We work with employers to match potential employees by cross-referencing the details from the job posting with the education, skills and abilities of VR clients, allowing us to present the employer with several viable options. Our business partners like this because it saves them a lot of time and money compared to posting on websites and wading through applicants.
Training
We partner with businesses to provide a variety of work-based learning experiences, including job try-outs, internships, and on-the-job training, for up to three months. This training gives the client a chance to experience their chosen workplace, and to see if the trainee is a good fit for their organization, often at little or no cost to the business.

Rehabilitation Technology
We provide rehabilitation technology to overcome barriers that may exist at home, at school or in the workplace. Our rehabilitation engineers provide consultation, assessment, and design of solutions for VR clients who are referred by their local counselors. A rehabilitation technology specialist is on hand if fabrication is needed.

Job Retention
These services help businesses retain valuable employees who need help due to a disability that might be jeopardizing their employment. Whether it’s anxiety, depression, alcohol or other substance abuse, or physical impairments, our goal is to help a person minimize or eliminate what is interfering with their job performance.

Post-Employment
These services are available to clients hired who may require services to maintain employment. VR can also assist businesses in securing their Work Opportunity Tax Credit if applicable. This provides up to $2,800 for each client hired, $4,800 for a veteran.

More about Vocational Rehabilitation Services and Locations
These partnerships between individuals, communities, government and the private sector resulted in more than 6,500 clients securing competitive employment last year. That makes South Carolina’s VR system 4th in nation in rehabilitations per population. Not only that, but these results were accomplished efficiently. The average total cost per rehabilitation was under $13,000, making our system the 6th most cost-effective in the country. In fact, employed clients repay $4.00 in taxes for every dollar spent on their rehabilitation, paying back everything in approximately five years.

Our services are offered through a network of 32 offices across the state. Each serves from one to four counties, and is the primary entry point for people with disabilities to receive services. We also have 25 work training centers that conduct the classroom and hands-on training. VR counselors are also available at some SC Works locations.
When should you refer someone to VR?
If that individual indicates that they have any physical or mental issues that may affect their ability to get or keep a job, then offering to refer them to VR is the right move.

Ways to make a referral:
- In-Person: Connecting an individual with VR staff located at the SC Works center (if applicable) or local VR area office is the best method.
- VR website http://scvrd.net
- By phone 1-800-832-7526

For more information, consult our *VR Overview* publication