



Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program Manual Revisions 2023

ON-THE-JOB TRAINING, APPRENTICESHIPS, AND CUSTOMIZED TRAINING

Revision Summary – Revised VR policy regarding apprenticeships and to add customized training.

VR Policy

1. On-the-job training (OJT), apprenticeships, and customized training teaches the skills, knowledge, and competencies that are needed to perform a specific job within the normal workplace and work environment for the job.
2. The individual or, as appropriate, the individual's representative must be actively engaged in making decisions about assessments, the selection of an employment outcome, and the employer.
3. The provision of OJT, apprenticeships, and customized training is not subject to financial need.
4. OJT, apprenticeships, and customized training do not require a determination of comparable services and benefits.
5. Support services such as, books, supplies, materials, uniforms, transportation, single daily meal, etc. may be provided for OJT, an apprenticeship, or customized training, when warranted.
- 6. If it becomes apparent that OJT, apprenticeships, or customized training are not the right services for an individual because of the need for ongoing supports or customized employment, refer the individual to a CRP to provide supported or customized employment services. The individual must be disability priority most significantly disabled (1) for referral for SE services and disability priority significantly disabled (2) for referral for CE services. The IPE must be amended for SE or CE services.**

On-the-Job Training

1. On-the-job training uses the normal workplace tools, machines, documents, equipment, and other job information necessary for an employee to effectively learn the job duties.
2. On-the-job training (OJT) services require both placement and training services to accomplish the employment objective and can, therefore, be considered multiple services.
3. When it is agreed to by the customer and the VR Counselor that the specific employment objective is best achieved and successfully accomplished through OJT, locate an appropriate employer to discuss training and the OJT agreement.
4. Prior to any customer being placed into OJT, inform the employer that of the same legal responsibility to the customer while in training that is afforded to any other employee in



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training. For example, the customer may be entitled to Workers' Compensation Insurance, Social Security, and Wage and Hour provisions unless otherwise exempted.

5. Placement must result in competitive integrated employment. The case may be placed in Employed Status the day the customer begins OJT at the place of employment. If OJT is provided for SE, the case cannot be moved to Employed Status until SE stabilization.
6. An employee/employer relationship in accordance with U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division guidelines must exist at the beginning of the job site training period.
7. The employer is responsible for payment of wages and fringe benefits customarily paid to employees without disabilities performing the same or similar duties at the work site. Such benefits must include Workers' Compensation, if applicable.
8. An employer, regular supervisor, or an employee of a company may be reimbursed for extraordinary costs associated with training and supervising a customer with appropriate documentation. Such extraordinary costs must be associated with the provision of training and/or supervision conducted outside the employer's or employer's staff's normal hours of employment. Such extraordinary training and supervision will be considered as the provision of job coaching services by the employer and must be included in the customer's IPE as job coaching services with explanation in the IPE Planned Service "Description".

Apprenticeships

1. **An apprenticeship is a method of training individuals through an employer where an individual participates in structured on-the-job learning and related technical training and instruction in order to learn a trade or profession that enables the individual to gain a license, certification, or experience to work in a regulated profession. Apprenticeship programs are available for adults and youth, including pre-apprenticeship programs that include classroom and work based training. An individual may participate in a pre-apprenticeship prior to apprenticeship training. Refer to Apprenticeship Information for more information.**
2. Apprenticeships must be registered and may be independently developed and managed by employers or cooperatively developed and managed by educational institutions or other entities and employers. Refer to Registered Apprenticeships for approved apprenticeships in TN by county and employer. Assistance may be sought regarding apprenticeships from an AJC, by contacting the employer directly to inquire about applying for employment and



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an apprenticeship, through assistance of a BEC or the CSU, or career services at community colleges. For registered apprenticeships on a national level go to Apprenticeship.gov.

- 3. Classroom training other than for a pre-apprenticeship program may be required prior to beginning an apprenticeship.**
4. Apprenticeship training must be provided in accordance with the managing program's and/or employer's requirements and standards for measuring achievement.
5. On-the-job training services may be provided for an apprenticeship depending on funding requirements and in accordance with VR requirements.
- 6. Verification of participation in an apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship training must be documented in the case file by periodic reports obtained from the individual, the managing program, or the employer.**
- 7. Placement must result in competitive integrated employment. The case may be placed in Employed Status when the individual has secured employment with an apprenticeship.**

Customized Training

- 1. Customized training is a work site training program designed to meet the special job requirements and staffing needs of an employer as well as an appropriate career match for the VR customer's aptitudes, abilities, capabilities, and interests.**
- 2. Prior to participating in customized training, customers must be assessed to ensure that they have the abilities and capabilities to meet the occupation-specific requirements for the position. VR may provide pre-requisite knowledge or skills training, job-readiness training geared to particular industry settings, basic education training, and support services, when warranted and in accordance with VRPM requirements.**
- 3. Customized training requires entering into an agreement with an employer to develop the training requirements, the provisions necessary for the training, and the location of the training. The training may occur at the employer's work site or at a site able to meet the employer's training requirements. Any costs for the training should be negotiated with the employer and may be shared by VR.**
- 4. Customized training may be provided for one individual or for a group of individuals and may lead to, as appropriate, an industry-recognized credential or certificate that**



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demonstrates the quality of work or advanced ability necessary to obtain, retain or advance in employment in the industry.

5. An employer may agree to hire one or more individuals who attain a specified skill level or credential through customized training or VR may provide employment services for individuals who are not hired by the employer.
6. Verification of participation in training must be documented in the case file by periodic reports obtained from the managing entity or the employer.
7. The case may be placed in Employed Status when the customer has been hired by the employer or has secured employment at another location. If post-employment services are needed, refer to Post-employment Services.
8. Customized training agreements may be developed with an employer by the VR Business Services Unit (BSU), by Community Services Unit (CSU) staff, or by a CRP, if appropriate.
9. An employer may approach VR with a customized training proposal. If this occurs, appropriate BSU to CSU staff will be assigned to work with the employer to develop the training program and an agreement.
10. Customized Training includes any approved training with a host employer with specialized training requirements that occur at the employer's work site or at a site able to meet the employer's training requirements such as but not limited to Project Search®, warehouse training, etc.
11. Project SEARCH® services must be provided by an approved Community Rehabilitation Provider (CRP) with the appropriate training certification and licensing agreement required by VR. Go to the CRP Web Site for the CRP Listing to verify that the CRP is approved for Project SEARCH®. Referral to a CRP for Project SEARCH® services is made by a Vendor Authorization. Responsibilities of the VR Counselor and the CRP include:
 - a. It is the VR Counselor's responsibility to ensure that the CRP strictly follows the service's established procedures and reporting requirements outlined in the CRP Manual.
 - b. It is the CRPs responsibility to provide appropriate services for individuals through qualified staff in accordance with the CRP Manual for the Project SEARCH® model and to work with the individual or, as appropriate, the



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individual's representative to have an integral part in directing, planning and participating in career exploration activities. This is demonstrated by documenting and reporting in accordance with the CRP Manual the provision of Project SEARCH® services which may include:

- 1) Preparing interns to complete the essential tasks/duties/core employability skills at the worksites.**
- 2) Providing expertise in adaptations and job accommodations.**
- 3) Providing education and training to the host business site managers and co-workers that encompasses supporting, mentoring, and working with people with disabilities in the workplace.**

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