

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS)

PURPOSE

Supported employment is a service which provides competitive work within an integrated employment setting for individuals with the most severe disabilities. Supported employment assists consumers to choose, secure and retain competitive full or part-time jobs. Extensive on-the-job support services are provided by supported employment staff working with the employee with a disability. Other services may include supplemental evaluation services specific to supported employment, job development and placement, off-the-job supports related to employment retention, and ongoing support services to assist the individual to keep his/her job. DRS funds may be used to purchase assistive technology when it is needed by an individual to get a job or to do a job.

CONTACT

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<http://okrehab.org/ses.htm>

For area offices, call the State Office.
(405) 951-3508
(800) 845-8476 (TDD)

FINANCIAL CRITERIA

- None

ELIGIBILITY

- Individuals with severe disabilities ages 16 and older who;
 - have not worked or have worked only intermittently in competitive employment;
 - have been determined eligible for services; and
 - have a need for on-going support services in order to perform competitive work.

AT SERVICES PROVIDED/COVERED

- Information & Referral
- Fabrication of Devices
- Assessments & Evaluations
- Maintenance & Repairs
- Locating Alternate Funding
- Supporting Software
- Training for Consumer & Family
- Advocacy/Other

AT DEVICES PROVIDED/COVERED

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Aids for Daily Living | Environmental Controls |
| Aids for Hearing Impaired | Home Modifications |
| Aids for Vision Impaired | Seating & Positioning Equipment |
| Augmentative Communication | Wheelchairs & Mobility Aids |
| Computer Applications | Worksite & Office Modifications |
| Educational Devices & Adaptations | Vehicle Modifications |

APPLICATION PROCESS

- DRS has Rehabilitation Counselors located in offices throughout the state. Contact the DRS office nearest you to apply for services. Signing your name to an application starts your evaluation.
- In the initial interview, the counselor will obtain background information from the person.
- The counselor will then collect needed diagnostic reports to establish eligibility. This may include gathering existing information or sending the person for new examinations and evaluations. The results of a physical examination, an assistive technology evaluation, or other evaluation of vocational potential, if required, are used to determine potential for gainful employment.
- Unless extended evaluation is required, the counselor will make the eligibility determination decision within 60 days of application.
- Once eligibility for services is established, the counselor will work with the individual to develop an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) that is designed to result in competitive employment for the individual.



Supported Employment Program, cont. . .

APPEALS PROCESS

1. Consumers who disagree with a VR Program decision are encouraged to contact the local District Supervisor to attempt an effective resolution of the issue. In the event of a reduction, suspension or cessation of VR services, individuals have a right to a case review by an impartial hearing officer, mediation, and/or assistance from the Client Assistance Program (CAP).
2. A request for a fair hearing should be made in writing to your VR Counselor within 30 days of DRS informing you of the decision with which you disagree. The fair hearing will be conducted by a hearing officer within 45 days of the written "Request for a Fair Hearing" by the consumer.
3. Individuals filing a "Request for a Fair Hearing" may request a confidential mediation session to resolve grievances. In the event mediation sessions do not resolve the grievance, individuals retain their right to a fair hearing.
4. After filing a "Request for a Fair Hearing," the administrative review must be conducted by the district supervisor and concluded within the same 45 days, with the results of the review provided in a written letter. If the review resolves the grievance, the "Withdrawal of Request for Hearing" form must be completed; otherwise, the hearing will continue.
5. The written decision of the hearing officer including findings and grounds for the decision will be made to the consumer, hearings coordinator, and the director of DRS within 30 days of the completion of the hearing.
6. Individuals may request a review of the hearing officer's decision by the Cabinet Secretary within 20 days of the decision.
7. In the event an individual brings civil action regarding the decision, the final decision either by the hearing officer or the Cabinet Secretary will be implemented pending court review.

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED FOR APPEALS

- The Client Assistance Program (CAP) assists persons with disabilities who are seeking or receiving services from any program funded by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. CAP can:
 - a) advise clients of their rights and responsibilities under the Rehabilitation Act;
 - b) assist clients in communicating their concerns to DRS; and
 - c) represent the individual in the fair hearing process when appropriate and/or needed.
- Additional information concerning vocational rehabilitation and the appeals process can be obtained from the CAP at (405) 521-3756 or (800) 522-8224 statewide.

PIECES OF THE PUZZLE

- To provide supported employment services, DRS contracts with Supported Employment Providers. The provision of services by these providers is limited by a number of factors:
 - The number of providers and the geographic area they serve. Many areas of the state have no local provider.
 - Some providers contract to serve persons with specific disabilities.
 - Some providers have long waiting lists due to limited resources.