

Resources and Services Directory for Head Injury and Other Conditions

Section 8: Work and Employment, Vocational Rehabilitation

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O K L A H O M A S T A T E D E P A R T M E N T O F H E A L T H

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Work and Employment, Vocational Rehabilitation

Numerous state agencies and organizations in Oklahoma provide employment related services to persons with traumatic brain injury and other disabilities, and the general population. Although all of these services do not form a coordinated *system*, — e.g., an organized array of interrelated, interacting, or interdependent parts forming and working as a complex whole, — there exists distinct systems such as One-Stop Centers, selected patterns of referral, communication, and networks and channels, as well as direct collaboration between multiple employment-related entities. There are also more than two hundred private and non-profit employment companies who help people to find jobs, including persons with disabilities. Although the agencies provide special services for persons with disabilities, the unique needs and assistance required by persons with brain injury and other conditions are usually provided by Vocational Rehabilitation Services, which is described following this section.

The following agencies provide state employment services for Oklahomans.
(*Contact information subject to change*)

State of Oklahoma Office of Personnel Management (OPM)

Jim Thorpe Memorial Building
2101 North Lincoln Blvd.
Oklahoma City, OK 73105
Tel: 405/521-2177

The OPM administers the Merit System of Personnel Administration and acts in both a service and regulatory capacity. OPM is headed by an Administrator appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Oklahoma state Senate. The Mission is to serve the people of Oklahoma by delivering reliable and innovative human resources services to partner agencies to achieve their missions. OPM helps people to obtain jobs within the Merit System and Non-Merit System Agencies. The Merit System also includes a variety of outreach recruitment programs to help agencies meet the challenges of cultural diversity and the modern workforce. Merit System rules are not required for individuals with severe disabilities hired through the Persons with Severe Disabilities Employment Program. These individuals are linked to Vocational Rehabilitation Services to pursue job opportunities. The agency website provides links to various references, services, and programs (www.opm.state.ok.us). The Merit System also includes a variety of outreach recruitment programs to help agencies meet the challenges of cultural diversity and the modern workforce. Merit System rules are not required for individuals with severe disabilities hired through the Persons with Severe Disabilities Employment Program. These individuals are linked to Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

Office of Disability Concerns

2712 Villa Prom

Oklahoma City, OK 73107-2423

Tel: 405/521-3756; 800/522-8224

FAX: 405/522-6685

www.odc.ok.gov

Purpose: The Office of Disability Concerns (ODC) provides accurate and timely information, referral and advocacy, acts as an intermediary to persons with disabilities, and provides services for those with disabilities. The ODC helps state government to develop policies and services that meet the needs of Oklahomans with disabilities and has the following powers and duties:

1. To identify the needs of persons with disabilities on a continuing basis and to attempt to meet those needs.
2. To serve as a referral and information source for persons with disabilities seeking services, and for agencies seeking assistance in their provision of services.
3. To generate community awareness and support of programs for persons with disabilities.
4. To advise and assist the Governor and Legislature in developing policies to meet the needs of citizens with disabilities.
5. To assist agencies in complying with federal laws.
6. To enhance employment opportunities for handicapped persons.

Some of the areas the ODC helps those looking for information and referral on disability issues include:

Accessibility	Financial Assistance	Social Services
Adaptive Aids	Housing	Specific Disabilities
Awareness	Independent Living	Support Groups
Civil Rights	Transportation	Training
Disability Laws and Regulations	Recreation	

These areas are presented in other sections, listed under Office of Disability Concerns.

The ODC website <http://www.odc.ok.gov> includes agency information, public information, the ADA Act, training provided by ODC, employment, employment and training resources, answers to frequently asked questions, the Client Assistance Program, and announcement of state advances on employment of people with disabilities. For those who have access to a computer, a new method of connecting applicants and employers allows clients to place their information in a database that is matched to employers' needs for a specific job (www.okbln.jobfit.com).

The website has an extensive and comprehensive listing (251 pages) of housing-related information, *Housing for People with Disabilities in Oklahoma: A Resource Guide*, prepared by ODC staff in response to many consumer inquiries over a long period of time, dealing with the subject of housing for people with disabilities in the state of Oklahoma. The six chapters include a range of 43 topic areas such as getting started, organizations providing assistance with housing issues, housing for people with disabilities in Oklahoma, financial aid and housing assistance programs, architectural modifications and housing repair, frequently asked questions, Section 504 complaint process, loans and assistance, homeless housing needs, and tribal housing programs.

Client Assistance Program

Tel: 405/521-3756

FAX: 405/522-6695 Hotline: 800/522-8224

Function. The Client Assistance Program (CAP) is an advocacy program established by Section 112 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Each State and Territory of the United States has a CAP to help individuals with disabilities get the services they need to prepare for, keep or obtain employment from programs funded under the Act. CAP provides clients, client-applicants and former clients of Rehabilitative and Visual Services federally funded centers and programs with assistance in obtaining services under the Rehabilitation Act. In Oklahoma CAP is administered through the Office of Disability Concerns

Services provided by CAP:

- Information about the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and amendments.
- Information about benefits available to clients and applicants through the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program.
- Mediation between counselors, facilities and clients to resolve problems.
- Assist clients and applicants in pursuing all available remedies to ensure the protection of their rights.
- Educate the public about the CAP program and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR).
- Provide outreach to traditionally unserved and underserved individuals with disabilities.
- Outreach to individuals with disabilities from diverse and cultural backgrounds.

CAP is an advocacy program for applicants and clients of VR, Centers for Independent Living (CIL) and other programs authorized under the Act. An individual with a disability who is not applying for or receiving services from a program funded under the Act is eligible only for information and referral services. Although CAP is not part of the Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS), staff can help a DRS client or applicant better understand the VR system. VR counselors typically have the training and expertise to help people with disabilities to work or return to work. The two organizations in DRS that serve people with disabilities seeking employment are the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and the Division of Visual Services (DVS). To initiate applying for assistance, a form must be completed and submitted. To contact CAP call 405/521-3756.

Oklahoma Employment Security Commission

Will Rogers Memorial Office Building

2401 Lincoln Boulevard

Oklahoma City, OK 73105

Tel: 405/557-7100

TDD Telecommunications Device for the Deaf: 405/557-7531

History and Function: A state agency created by the Legislature in 1941 and funded by The U.S. Department of Labor, the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission (OESC) governs the operation of local employment offices throughout the state. These offices provide testing, counseling and placement services for job seekers; solicit job orders from employers; refer

applicants to jobs; provide Computerized Job Banks for job information; and provide special services for veterans and disabled veterans, including job development, counseling and placement. OESC also collects Unemployment Insurance taxes from Oklahoma employers to finance payment of unemployment benefits to jobless workers. Some basic questions provided on the website <http://www.oesc.state.ok.us/> are:

- **Are you unemployed, underemployed or looking for a job?** Need to find a job, file for Unemployment, insurance benefits, learn about training opportunities, disability programs, community resources, careers or the job market?
- **Are you a business or an employer?** Need to find forms, qualified employees, file Unemployment insurance taxes, file New Hire reporting or learn about the job market?
- **Are you a researcher or policy maker?** Need information on regulations governing the Oklahoma Workforce Development System, reports and/or publications?
- **Are you a workforce development employee?** Need information about the Oklahoma Workforce Development System, request data or access to staff services?

Refer to the list of Workforce Oklahoma/One-Stop Career Centers' local offices near your residence.

Oklahoma Employment Security Commission Workforce Oklahoma/One-Stop Centers/Local Offices Directory

Workforce Oklahoma, or One-Stop Centers, is the generic term for a new workforce development system where business leaders, educators, and employment professionals are working together to achieve job growth, employee productivity, and employer satisfaction. Within this system is a network of statewide offices where employment, education, and training providers are integrating services to assist customers in finding jobs and qualified workers, making career decisions, and accessing training opportunities. The One-Stops are required to provide physical and programmatic access to all persons including persons with disabilities. People with disabilities are not segregated in One-Stop services but additional resources and referrals are provided for people with disabilities who need them. Cooperating Oklahoma agencies include the Department of Commerce, Department of Human Services, Employment Security Commission, and the Department of Rehabilitation Services. Each office serves two or more counties.

Individuals with disabilities who are interested in self employment have access to OK-SEED, The access point for this program is the (WIA) case manager located at the One-Stop Center.

*Satellite Office

★Out-stationed Veteran Representative

(Contact numbers subject to change. Information is monitored and updated as received.)

<p>Ada 1628 E Beverly St. PO Box 850, (zip) 74821 Tel: (580) 332-1533 Fax: (580) 421-9265 Counties Served: Garvin, Pontotoc</p>	<p>Pam Bridwell</p>	<p>Bartlesville 6101 S.E. Nowata (zip) 74006 PO Box 4039, (zip) 74006-4039 Tel: (918) 331-3400 Fax: (918) 331-0044 Counties Served: Nowata, Washington, Osage</p>
<p>Altus 1115 N Spurgeon St (zip) 73521 PO Box 551, (zip) 73522 Tel: (580) 482-3262 Fax: (580) 482-3284 Counties Served: Greer, Harmon, Jackson, Kiowa</p>	<p>Sharon Hesser</p>	<p>Chickasha 301 S. 2nd St. (zip) 73018 P.O. Box 398, (zip) 73023 Tel: (405) 224-3310 Fax: (405) 222-1215 Counties Served: Grady, McClain, Caddo</p>
<p>Ardmore 201 "A" St SW (zip) 73401 PO Box 1467 (zip) 73402 Tel: (580) 223-3291 (580) 226-2730 Counties Served: Carter, Love, Murray</p>	<p>Gilbert Jenkins</p>	<p>Claremore 1810 N Sioux Ave (zip) 74018 PO Box 908, (zip) 74017 Tel: (918) 341-6633 Fax: (918) 341-7723 County Served: Rogers</p>
		<p>Jo Richter</p>
		<p>Ron Mullen</p>

McAlester

1201 E. Wade Watts Ave
(zip) 74501

PO Box 1108

(zip) 74502

Tel: (918) 423-6830

Fax: (918) 429-1175

Counties Served: Haskell, Latimer, Pittsburg

Cody Cox**Oklahoma City**

Counties Served: Logan, Oklahoma and Canadian

Central

One N Walker

(zip) 73102

Tel: (405) 235-5627

Fax: (405) 297-2940

Donna Wilkins**Miami**

121 N. Main

(zip) 74354

PO Box 670

(zip) 74355

Tel: (918) 542-5561

Fax: (918) 542-7505

Counties Served: Delaware, Ottawa

Cathy Spencer***Redlands Community College**

1300 S. Country Club Rd.

Student Ctr., Rm 4A

El Reno

(zip) 73036

Tel: (405) 422-1249

Fax: (405) 422-1200

Muskogee

717 S. 32nd

(zip) 74401

PO Box 1688

(zip) 74402

Tel: (918) 682-3364

Fax: (918) 682-4311

Counties Served: McIntosh, Muskogee,
Wagoner

Patricia A. Garner**★OKC VA Medical Center**

V.A. Medical Center / Room 3A - 165

921 N.E. 13th St.

Oklahoma City, OK

(zip) 73104

Tel: (405) 270-0501, ext. 5030

Fax: (405) 270-5131

Eastside

7401 NE 23rd

(zip) 73141

Tel: (405) 713-1890

Fax: (405) 713-1898

Brenda Orange**★ VA Regional Office**

VARO

125 South Main * Suite 1A20

Muskogee, OK

(zip) 74401

Tel: (918) 781-7535

Fax: (918) 781-7538

*** Springlake Campus**

1600 Springlake Dr - Rm C48

Tel: (405) 424-8324, ext 314

Fax: (405) 424-4010

Norman

1141 E. Main

(zip) 73071

Tel: (405) 701-2000

Fax: (405) 701-2042

County Served: Cleveland

Lisa Graven**★ Tinker AFB**

Family Support Center, Bldg.1

72 MSS/DPF

D Ave., Room 105B

Tinker AFB, OK

(zip) 73145-9186

Tel: (405) 734-2273

Fax: (405) 739-8464

Rockwell Center **Sandy Payne**
Francis Tuttle Technology Center
Campus Center Building
12777 N. Rockwell
(zip) 73142
Tel: (405) 470-3200
Fax: (405) 470-3206
Counties Served: Logan, Oklahoma and
Canadian

Southside **Elfreda Fields**
4509 S I-35 Service Rd
(zip) 73129
Tel: (405) 670-9100
Fax: (405) 670-9292

Okmulgee **Charley Farley**
1801 E. 4th
(zip) 74447
PO Box 2218
(zip) 74447
Tel: (918) 756-5791
Fax: (918) 756-0937
County Served: Okmulgee

* **Sallisaw**
1502 W. Chickasaw St.
(zip) 74955
PO Box 868
(zip) 74955
Tel: (918) 775-5541
Fax: (918) 775-6385

* **Stilwell**
219 W Oak
PO Box 428
(zip) 74960
Tel: (918) 696-6608
Fax: (918) 696-5983

Ponca City **Steve Crank**
1201 W Grand Ave
(zip) 74601
PO Box 309
(zip) 74602
Tel: (580) 765-3372 637
Fax: (580) 765-6145
Counties Served: Kay, Noble and Osage

Poteau **Ron Gates**
106 Rogers Ave
PO Box 9
(zip) 74953
Tel: (918) 647-3124
Fax: (918) 647-8939
County Served: LeFlore

Pryor **Larry Waggoner**
219 NE 1st St
(zip) 74361
PO Box 427
(zip) 74362
Tel: (918) 825-2582
Fax: (918) 825-6494
Counties Served: Craig, Mayes

Sand Springs
11 E. Broadway, Suite 204
(zip) 74063
Tel: (918) 245-9544
Fax: (918) 245-9566
Counties Served: Osage, Tulsa

Sapulpa **Carla Hight**
1700 S. Main
(zip) 74066
Tel: (918) 224-9430
Fax: (918) 227-2859
County Served: Creek

Seminole **Susan Duff**
229 N 2nd St
(zip) 74868
Tel: (405) 382-4670
Fax: (405) 382-0104
County Served: Seminole

Shawnee **Cheryl Cook**
2 John C. Bruton Blvd.
(zip) 74804
Tel: (405) 275-7800
Fax: (405) 878-9742
Counties Served: Lincoln and Pottawatomie

Stillwater
711 E. Krayler Ave.
(zip) 74075
PO Box 1987
(zip) 74076
Tel: (405) 624-1450
Fax: (405) 372-0295
County Served: Payne

Michelle Kitzman

***Temporary Labor**
415 W Archer 74103
Tel: (918) 582-3558
Fax: (918) 583-6745

Tahlequah
1755 S. Muskogee
(zip) 74464
PO Box 689
(zip) 74465
Tel: (918) 456-8846
Fax: (918) 456-3256
Counties Served: Cherokee, Sequoyah,
Adair

Opal Teague

Skyline
6128 E. 38th * Suite 405
(zip) 74135
Tel: (918) 384-2300
Fax: (918) 384-2310

Sharon Norris

Tulsa
Counties Served: Tulsa, Osage, Pawnee

Woodward
1117 11th Street
PO 608
(zip) 73801
Tel: (580) 256-3308
Fax: (580) 254-3093
Counties Served: Dewey, Ellis, Harper,
Woods, Woodward

Vicky Downey

Tulsa Downtown
2 N. Elgin
(zip) 74120
Tel: (918) 596-7200
Fax: (918) 596-9999

Mike Tillotson

WORKFORCE OKLAHOMA:
1-888-980-WORK

Disability Program “Navigator” Initiative

Department of Labor And Social Security Administration

The Department of Labor (DOL) and the Social Security Administration (SSA) jointly established a new position, the Disability Program Navigator, within DOL’s One-Stop Career Centers (Workforce Oklahoma Offices). The Disability Program Navigator helps people with disabilities “navigate” through the enormous challenges of seeking work. Complex rules surrounding entitlement programs, along with fear of losing cash assistance and health benefits, can often discourage people with disabilities from working. DOL and SSA have established the Disability Program Navigator initiative to better inform beneficiaries and other individuals with disabilities about the work support programs now available at DOL-funded One-Stop Career Centers. These centers provide information, training and other employment-related services at a single customer-friendly location. DOL’s Employment and Training Administration and SSA’s Office of Program Development and Research signed an Interagency Agreement in September 2002 to jointly fund, implement, pilot, and evaluate the Navigator initiative with the on-going collaboration of DOL’s Office of Disability Employment Policy.

As the project has progressed, the emphasis has been to assure the One-Stop system is able to serve people with disabilities. The navigators work to connect all of the various agencies that work with people with disabilities and help them to coordinate services, thus making it easier for a person with a disability to obtain the supports they need in order to ensure a successful employment outcome. They aim to provide appropriate referrals and to educate the One-Stop staff about the resources that are available to assist them in working with clients with disabilities. The navigators also educate One-Stop staff about the Ticket-to-Work Program and the Benefits Planning and Assistance Organization (BPAO) so that clients with disabilities understand how work will affect their benefits. The BPAO staff are trained to provide information to clients on how work will affect their disability benefits and their medical coverage.

Three levels of services are available through the One-Stop system:

- *Core services* include registration, job search, resume building, etc.
- *Intensive services*, including case management, career planning, job search networks, etc. are provided when needed
- *Training services* are provided by the WIA programs whose staff help clients obtain training in high demand/high growth jobs in their area.

Every Workforce Oklahoma One-Stop Office has a Workforce Investment Act (WIA) staff member who can help with certain training programs. The local Workforce Investment Act Board decides on what occupations are “in demand” in their area and, based on this, they decide what training WIA will provide. The WIA staff work in conjunction with OESC staff.

Disability Program Navigator responsibilities are to:

- Assist people with disabilities to access and navigate the complex provisions of various programs that impact their ability to gain, return to, or retain employment.

- Develop linkages and collaborate on an ongoing basis with employers to facilitate job placements for persons with disabilities.
- Facilitate the transition of in- or out-of-school youth with disabilities to secure employment and economic self-sufficiency.
- Conduct outreach to agencies and organizations that serve people with disabilities.
- Serve as a resource on the Social Security Administration’s (SSA) work incentive and employment support programs and the provision of services through Benefits Planning, Assistance and Outreach organizations (BPAOs); Protection and Advocacy systems (P&As); and SSA’s employment-related demonstration projects.
- Educate the One-Stop staff about the Ticket-to-Work Program and the BPAO staff so that customers with disabilities are able to understand how work will affect their benefits. The BOAO staff are trained to provide information to clients on how work will affect their disability benefits and their medical coverage.
- Serve as a resource to the workforce investment community to ensure the availability of comprehensive knowledge of Federal, State, local and private programs that impact the ability of persons with disabilities to enter and remain in the workforce.
- The Navigator Initiative OESC is currently reaching out to high school students with disabilities; a Youth-in-Transition planning conference is underway to improve the outcomes of youth with disabilities.
- Navigators are presenting information about the resources available through the One-Stop Centers to students with disabilities at the Tech Centers.

Navigator Staff in Oklahoma

Tulsa Metro

Carolyn S. Dubie, MHR
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Oklahoma City-Rockwell

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Native American Navigators

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Idabel

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(580) 286-6667
becky.parsons@oesc.state.ok.us

Chickasha

Marie Sawyer
301 S. 2nd Street
(405) 224-3310
marie.sawyer@oesc.state.ok.us

OTHER WORK-RELATED PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Ticket to Work Program. The program has evolved with modifications over time into a useful alternative for persons with disabilities seeking work. Although the process had been lengthy in the past with people losing interest in getting a job, getting a job is aided with the VR system becoming involved at the outset. Recent Federal legislation combines employment and employment benefits. The unemployed are now getting employment and then moving on to obtain benefits or retraining. Staff with agencies involved in Ticket to Work must know where jobs are available in the state to help persons in the work environment. VR's role in the system involves working with employers – sometimes as case managers, developing possible solutions, forming linkages with agencies, training through workshops, transitioning from school to work, and identifying support for pre/post issues.

Ticket-To-Work regulations have been modified in recent years to help people with disabilities keep their health care coverage. A person on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) can earn up to \$22,399 per year and still keep their Medicaid; they do have to request a 1619(b) waiver. If a person is on Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) they can keep their Medicare for 9 ½ years after returning to work Other work incentives are also available.

Sheltered Workshops. Available in several counties, the purpose of sheltered workshops is to empower adults with developmental disabilities to make a significant contribution to their communities through a variety of employment, community living, and recreational services.

The *supported employment program* provides individual and crew placements with employers seeking quality work at a fair price.

The *center-based services program* provides sheltered employment through contracts with local businesses.

Eligibility. For employment services, individuals must be 16 years of age or older and have the ability to handle basic self-care skills. Funding sources vary based on an individual's disability and need for services.

Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services

3535 NW 58th Street, Suite 500
Oklahoma City, OK 73112-4815
Tel: 405/951-3400 or 1-800/487-4042
FAX: 405.951-3529
www.okrehab.org

Mission Statement: To provide opportunities for individuals with disabilities to achieve productivity, independence, and enriched quality of life.

History and Function: To provide assistance to Oklahomans with disabilities through Vocational Rehabilitation, employment, independent living, and residential and outreach education programs. The agency also determines medical eligibility for disability benefits.

Oklahoma Career Planning Center

5813 South Robinson
Oklahoma City, OK 73109
Tel: 405/635-2750

Oklahoma School for the Blind

3300 Gibson Street
Muskogee, OK 74403
Tel: 918/781-8200 877/229-7136

Oklahoma School for the Deaf

1100 E Oklahoma
Sulphur, OK 73086
Tel: 580/622-4900 877/229-7136

Oklahoma Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

300 Northeast 18th
Oklahoma City, OK 73105
Tel: 405/521-3514 800/523-0288 www.library.state.ok.us

The agency provides employment assistance to Oklahomans with disabilities through two Divisions: Vocational Rehabilitation, and Visual Services

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION DIVISION

2401 NW 23rd Street, Suite 47
Shepherd Mall
Oklahoma City, OK 73107-2431
Tel: 405/951-3491

Vocational rehabilitation (VR) helps people who have physical or mental impairments get jobs in appropriate careers of their choice.

Visual Services (VS) assists people who are blind or have visual impairments in getting jobs in appropriate careers of their choice.

The primary services for VR and VS are counseling and guidance with job placement. Other services compensate for, correct, or prevent disability-based barriers to employment. Some of the services provided by VR and Vs include:

- Evaluations and tests;
- Medical services;
- Counseling and guidance;
- Work training (including college, technical schools, on-the-job training, etc.);
- Assistive technology services and devices;
- Interpreter services (for people with a hearing impairment);
- Orientation and mobility training (for persons with a visual disability);
- Supported employment (job coaches and other supports on a job);
- Transportation (To get to services);
- Personal assistance services (on-or off-the-job); and
- Other services to reach a work goal.

Persons may apply for services in offices throughout Oklahoma. The offices are listed below. They can also be located by checking the “blue pages” in your local phone book or by calling the toll free number 1-800/487-4042. Enter your zip code, and you will be connected to the Vocational Rehabilitation office that serves your area.

Division Vocational Rehabilitation Offices in Oklahoma

*Cities that also have Visual Services Office
(Numbers subject to change)

***Ada**

Tel: 580/332-2785;
580/332-0178;
580/436-2430

Altus

Tel: 580/477-2240;
580/482-8600

Alva

Tel: 580/327-1214

Ardmore

Tel: 580/226-1808

Bartlesville

Tel: 918/333-0760

***Chickasha**

Tel: 405/222-0685;
405/224-0709

Claremore

Tel: 918/341-8122

Duncan

Tel: 580/255-1115

Durant

Tel: 580/924-2677

Edmond

Tel: 405/340-4017;
405/341-1400

El Reno

Tel: 405/262-1033 or 1034

***Enid**

Tel: 580/233-0244;
580/233-6535

Guymon

Tel: 580/338-2043

***Idabel**

Tel: 580/286-3389 or 3789

***Lawton**

Tel: 580/355-0127 or 0008;
580/353-8300

***McAlester**

Tel: 918/423-1296 or 8890

Miami

Tel: 918/542-4716

Midwest City

Tel: 405/737-4897;
405/732-7693

Moore

Tel: 405/692-8643

***Muskogee**

Tel: 918/686-0484 or 0488

Norman

Tel: 405/329-6096 or 6160;
405/447-0295;
405/447-7801 or 7802

***Oklahoma City**

Tel: 405/440-0727;
405/424-1435;
405/616-0464; 405/945-3284;
405/670-5292 or 5293;
405/636-0140; 405/271-6632;
405/532-4582

Okmulgee

Tel: 918/756-6435

Ponca City

Tel: 580/762-9035

Poteau

Tel: 918/647-8121

Seminole

Tel: 405/382-2330 or 2332

Shawnee

Tel: 405/273-9922

Spencer

Tel: 405/771-3939 or 3031

***Stillwater**

Tel: 405/372-1995 or 2017

Tahlequah

Tel: 918/456-6193

***Tulsa**

Tel: 918/581-2366
918/581-2301
918/836-5556
918/382-7700

***Vinita**

Tel: 918/256-5509

***Weatherford**

Tel: 580/772-5805

Wilburton

Tel: 918/465-2119

***Woodward**

Tel: 580/256-6738

Indian Nation/Tribes Offices

DRS Tribal Liaison
Tel: 580/332-5796

Apache Tribe VR

Tel: 405/247-7494

Cherokee Nation VR

Tel: 918/458-4415

Cheyenne and Arapaho VR

Tel: 405/422-1178

Chickasaw Nation VR

Tel: 580/436-0830

Choctaw Nation VR

Tel: 580/326-8304

Muscogee Creek Nation VR

Tel: 918/623-1197

Delaware Tribe of Western Oklahoma VR

Tel: 405/632-3749

Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma VR

Tel: 405/547-5721

Eligibility Requirements

A person is eligible for VR or VS if they:

- Have a physical or mental impairment that keeps them from working,
- Can benefit in terms of an employment outcome from VR services, and
- Require VR services to prepare for, find, keep, or return to employment.

Many people with brain injury are eligible for VR and VS services if they want to work. When people apply for services, the counselor will determine their eligibility for services by assessing problems they have in thinking, sensory, behavior, or physical abilities since the injury. If a person is eligible, the counselor will provide information about choices they have for developing an Individualized Plan for Employment. A range of different services is available and the counselor will review them with the individual. They include: vocational evaluation, counseling and guidance; medical and psychological assessments; physical and mental restoration; training (vocational, academic, job search, job coaching, etc); rehabilitation equipment, assistive technology, and rehabilitation engineering services; job placement, and specialized programs which assist with sensory deficits and severe disabilities, and those who need supported employment. The plan guides the individual to prepare for, find, or return to employment in a career of his/her choice.

There have been many changes in the Social Security law that help people keep their medical benefits for several years. Sometimes people can retain their cash benefits as well, at least for several months while they try working again. A new program called “EZ Back On” makes it easier to again receive benefits if a person loses a job because of a medical condition. The Oklahoma Benefits Planning and Assistance Project should be contacted for more information (1-888/801-3203).

Young people who are being served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act should have a transition plan under development beginning at age 14 years. This plan is designed to prepare for life once school is completed. The VR or VS counselor can be involved in assisting the person and family to begin career planning when the school’s transition plan is initiated.

Special Education and Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) Vocational Rehabilitation – Transition for Students

The transition of a student receiving special education services is an important process that will help the child progress through life; communication and discussion among students, parents and teachers are essential. Successful transition involves specific activities of Special Education (SE) and DRS-VR staff. When a student is referred by a special education teacher to DRS at age sixteen or younger the DRS information packet should be provided to the student and/or parent. The instruction sheet for the referral form and packet explains the process and use of materials. A brief description of the process is given below. For complete information, contact Special Education Services at 405/522-1461 or 405/521-3351.

Description of Process.

1. The SE teacher:
 - a. Completes the DRS referral form;
 - b. Requests the parent or student (if 18 years of age) to sign a consent form for release of information to DRS;
 - c. Provides information packet to parent and student including a DRS brochure and information sheet and contact information for DRS offices statewide.
 - d. Sends referral form to Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) or Visual Services (VS) of local school district.

2. Parents and Student:
 - a. Need to contact the DRS VR/VS Counselor to set an appointment to complete application.
3. The DRS VR/VS Counselor:
 - a. Determines eligibility of student for DRS services after application and referral received.
 - b. Will contact student once eligibility as been determined.
 - c. If eligible, student and parent will meet with VR counselor to develop an Individual Plan of Employment (IPE)
 - d. When IPE is completed, the referral form is completed and a copy of the IPE and referral form sent to the special education teacher.
 - e. Participates in transition planning by attending the IEP meeting, prior conversations, other communications/information exchange.
 - f. Provides expertise in the following areas:
 - i. Vocational and prevocational job training
 - ii. Agency linkages for transition services
 - iii. DRS services
 - iv. Vocational goals
 - v. Needed transition service
 - vi. Integrated employment
 - vii. Postsecondary education

Participation of the VR/VS Counselor in IEP meetings for transition planning is facilitated by the SE teacher and the district.

The four main groups of employment support services provided through contracts by VR with other agencies and organizations include: job placement, employment and retention, support services for employment, and supported employment. The employment and retention and placement services contract with businesses which have employment services for people with disabilities. They assist clients in finding a job suitable for their education, experience, abilities and interests. They provide some additional services that a person who doesn't have a disability might not need. These additional services vary with the client's needs. The types of jobs they assist mutual clients in finding will also vary, are decided on by the client and DRS specialist, and are identified in the client's IEP. These are regular jobs that anyone else might apply for. The new employee is paid by the employer at the same rate as anyone else newly hired for that position would be paid. VR pays the employment service based on the contract. These organizations are shown in the work and employment section.

VR Employment Support Services Job Placement Contracts

Gateways Foundation

1217 East College
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vrcoach@gatesway.org

Gateways Foundation

712 Eastgate
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Orlando Williams, Program Manager
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VR Employment Support Services Employment & Retention Contracts

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VR Employment Support Services Supported Employment Contracts

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Green Country Mental Health Services

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