

Working with Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation

Information for Teachers About Student Referrals



What is Vocational Rehabilitation?

Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is a state agency that assists individuals with disabilities in obtaining or maintaining their employment goals. Individuals may be eligible if they 1) have a physical or mental impairment that makes it difficult to work and 2) require VR services to help them prepare for, find, or keep a job.



What is the VR process?

Below is an overview of the VR process used to identify who is eligible for services and what services a person might need to prepare for, find, and keep a job.

- Referral
- Application
- Eligibility Determination
- Development of Individual Plan for Employment
- Service Implementation
- Employment Case Closure

Teachers can participate in and enhance this process for individual students by:

- communicating regularly or annually at a minimum with the VR counselor assigned to your school about students you are considering for referral.
- working with the VR counselor to develop a process for the referral and application as well as a follow-up process that works for the student, counselor, and the school.
- providing detailed information about the student's strengths, interests, support needs, work experiences, goals for the future, etc.



What is a VR referral?

“Referral” is the process of contacting the local VR office or VR counselor assigned to the school to let them know that a student is interested in and potentially needs assistance with education/job training, finding a job, and/or keeping a job. Anyone, including the student with a disability or their family, can refer a person to VR by contacting the VR counselor assigned to the school or their local VR office. You can find a VR Office Directory at https://www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs/files/VRS_Area_Offices.pdf



Does the student need to give written consent before I refer them to VR?

Yes, per Article 7, the school must first obtain written consent from parents or students of legal age before contacting VR and disclosing confidential educational records and before inviting a VR counselor to a case conference.



Which students should I refer to VR?

Teachers should refer any student they think might need VR services to help the student prepare for, find, and keep a job. It is the VR counselor's job to determine whether or not a student is eligible. Students do not necessarily need to be receiving special education services to be eligible. For example, a student with a 504 plan or a student with a physical disability might be eligible even though they are not receiving any special education services.



When should I contact VR about a student who may be eligible?

Teachers should contact VR as early as is appropriate and it is recommended during the year before leaving high school. Once consent is obtained, the school and the VR counselor must confer at least once a year to review the status of transition-age students. During that annual meeting, teachers should also make any new referrals to VR.



What information should I send to VR?

Teachers should send information along with the referral that will help the VR counselor get to know the individual student and help the VR counselor and student make informed decisions during the eligibility, application, assessment, and planning processes.

As a teacher, you have a wealth of information about students that can be very useful to the counselor. It is important to gather any information that would be helpful to VR in determining eligibility. Information about who the student is (e.g., strengths, interests, and support needs) and documents such as the student's Individualized Education Program, recent educational evaluations, and transition assessments can aid in eligibility determination.

Even if you don't have all this information, school personnel can refer a student to VR by providing their:

- Name
- Date of birth
- Address
- Phone number
- Identified disability (if known)

Educator Resources: Student Referrals



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