



Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

VR Programs

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Vocational Rehabilitation

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is a federal/state agency that assists individuals with disabilities who wish to be employed.

VR provides services to:

- **Prepare** for employment,
- **Obtain** employment, and
- **Keep** or **Regain** employment





Work, Work, and More Work

The VR Program is

- Employment-focused

Based on Eligibility Criteria

- have a goal/desire to become employed
- The physical or mental disability interferes with their ability to become employed

A Federal/State Partnership





Important Legislation

Governor Executive Order 2013-284

- Reaffirming Commitment to Employment for Floridians with Disabilities

Chapter 393.063 Florida Statute

- Employment First Initiative

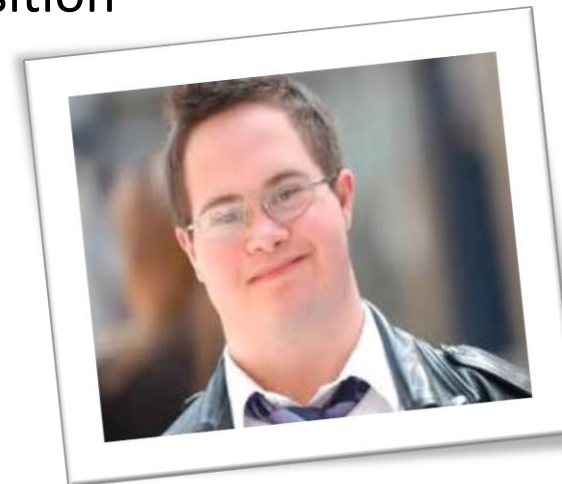
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

- Referred to as WIOA
- Federal Law passed July 2014 with updates July 2016



Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) - Youth

- Placed a focus on serving youth 14-21 in high school or enrolled in postsecondary education or training
- WIOA designated 15% of the VR budget to be spent on youth for Pre-ETS Services
- WIOA designated 50% of Federal SE Grant funds for youth
- Provided multiple pathways for youth to receive transition services
- Focused services on Pre-Employment Services (Pre-ETS)
- Allowed for VR to fund extended services for youth if services were not otherwise available





Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)



Job Exploration Counseling

Postsecondary Educational Counseling

Work Readiness Training

Work-Based Learning Experiences

Self-Advocacy Training - Youth Peer Mentoring*



Who Can Receive Pre-Employment Transition Services?

- Must be 14 – 21
- Must be a student (in middle school, high school, trade school, college, or university)
- Must have one of the following:
 - IEP
 - 504 plan
 - Other documentation identifying student is being served by the school as a student with a disability (e.g., Official letter from the school)





How can you get Pre-Employment Transition Services?



Pre-Employment Transition Services are delivered to two groups:

1. Students who have applied and been found eligible for VR services
2. Students who did not apply nor found eligible for VR services, but are considered to be **“Potentially Eligible”** because they meet certain criteria

Important note: referrals for both may come from any source (school, provider, agency, self, etc.)





Job Exploration Counseling

- Assessments or guidance that help youth identify their skills, interests, and abilities and explore options after high school.

- **Examples**

- Aptitude and Interest Psychological Assessments
- Vocational Evaluation
- Discovery





Work Readiness Training

Focuses on developing soft skills, employability skills, and independent living skills related to employment

- **Resume writing**
- **Interviewing**
- **Communication**
- **Teamwork**

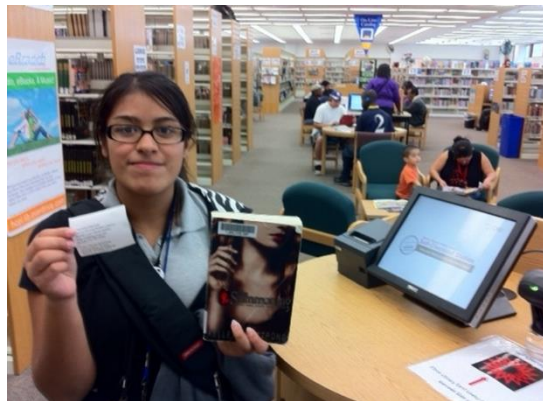
- **Professionalism**
- **Enthusiasm and attitude**
- **Navigating the community**



Work-Based Learning Experiences

Uses the workplace or real work to provide students with the knowledge and skills that will help them connect school experiences to real-life work activities and future career opportunities

- Job Shadowing
- Career Mentorship
- Informational Interviews



- Paid and Non-Paid Internships and Work Experiences
- Volunteering and Service Learning
- Workplace Tours/Field Trips



Self-Advocacy Training

- Teaches individuals how to speak up for themselves and make decisions about their own lives. Includes instruction on:
 - Self-awareness
 - Disability disclosure
 - Requesting accommodations
 - Understanding rights and responsibilities under IDEA and the Rehab Act
 - Self-determination





Youth Peer Mentoring

- An intensive, time-limited self-advocacy training service that uses like-aged peers to help youth learn how to self-advocate for the services and supports that they may need now and in the future.
- The Youth Mentor models and supports the youth in connecting activities for community-based organizations, social engagement activities, and employment-related networks until the youth can perform independently.





Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) - Youth

Section 511: Subminimum Wage





Additional WIOA Information for Youth

As of 7/22/16, youth with disabilities 24 and younger are not eligible for Subminimum Wage Employment unless the youth has completed the following three requirements:

1. Received Transition services under IDEA and/or Pre-ETS under WIOA
2. Applied to VR and was:
 - a) found ineligible or
 - b) found eligible
3. Participated in Career Counseling Information Services provided by a VR Counselor


Section 511- Limitations on Subminimum Wage



The Mystery of the Sought After 14 (C) Letter

A letter from VR documenting that a youth has met all of the required elements. This letter is required before a youth can be hired to participate in Subminimum Wage employment.

A 14 (c) employer is required to have a document or a letter containing the following information on file.

		DOCUMENTATION for YOUTH SEEKING SUBMINIMUM WAGE EMPLOYMENT	
FULL NAME: _____		DATE: _____	
		FIRST	MI
		LAST	
NOTE: <i>For a youth (24 years old and under) to participate in subminimum wage employment, they must have completed all three of the requirements listed below.</i>			
1st	<input type="checkbox"/>	Received pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) on _____	
		OR	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Received transition services on _____ (Additional documentation located in VR case notes)	
2nd	<input type="checkbox"/>	Found ineligible for VR services on _____	
		OR	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Found eligible for VR services; Case closed due to being unsuccessful in achieving employment outcome identified in IPE on _____ (Additional documentation located in case notes)	
3rd	<input type="checkbox"/>	Received Career Counseling and Information & Referral Services on _____ (Additional documentation located in case notes)	
Print name of VR staff making determination _____		PHONE: _____	
Signature of VR staff making determination _____		DATE _____	
Signature of VR staff transmitting documentation, if different from above _____		DATE _____	
This document was (circle only one):			
hand-delivered	faxed	mailed	emailed
other (specify) _____		DATE _____	
<u>Additional Notes:</u>			



Process for Individuals of any age currently in Subminimum Wage



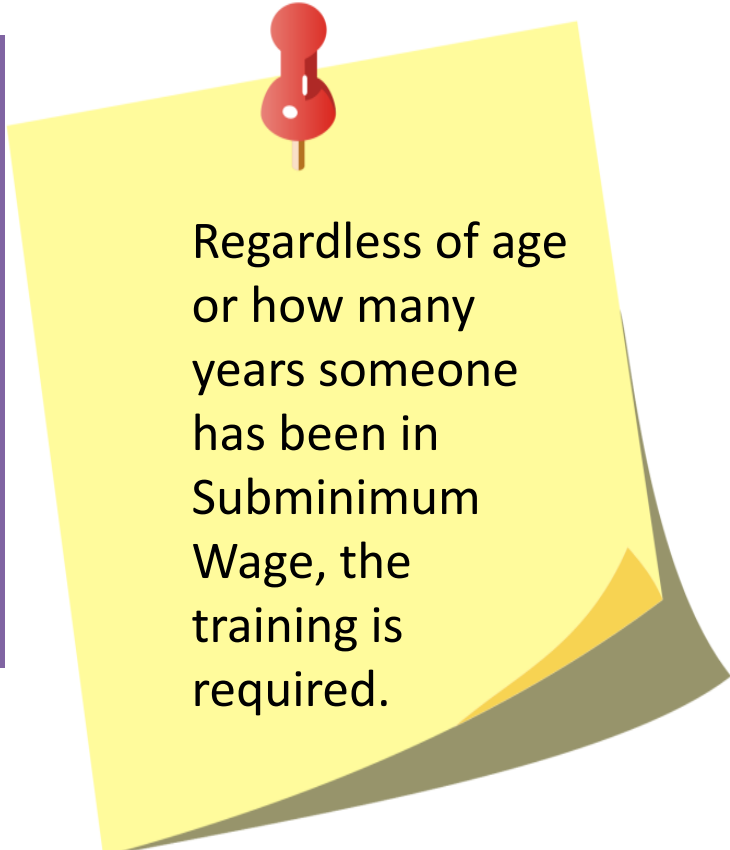
**WIOA Section 511: Limitations on Subminimum
Wage**



Career Counseling Information and Referral Service for Adults

WIOA requires delivery of
Career Counseling
Information
and Referral Services (CCIR)
for all individuals participating
in Subminimum Wage.

CCIR services are required
every six months for the first
year of employment and
annually thereafter.

A yellow sticky note with a red pushpin at the top center. The note is slightly curled at the bottom right corner and has a shadow underneath it. The text on the note is black and reads: "Regardless of age or how many years someone has been in Subminimum Wage, the training is required." A purple vertical bar is positioned to the left of the sticky note.

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or how many
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CCIR Course

Required for all individuals participating in Subminimum Wage employment

Four-hour Interactive Course includes:

Career Exploration	Introduction to VR Services
Introduction to Labor Market - potential jobs of interest	A Review of Benefit Information
Transportation Options	Positive Impacts of Working
Accommodations and Supports Available	Self-Advocacy
Community Resources	



Supported Employment Recent Updates

1. The definition of SE was changed to include customized employment.
2. The Rehab. Act was amended to increase allowable SE services time frame from 18 months to 24 months of service.
3. New regulations state that extended services may be provided by VR for youth with Most Significant Disabilities for a period of up to four years or until such time as a youth reaches the age of 25.
4. The Definition of SE Employment Outcome was amended in the Rehab. Act. It mandates that to obtain a successful employment outcome an individual must have a minimum of **90 days of stabilized employment after transition to extended services.**





SE Definition

Competitive integrated employment, including customized employment; or employment in an integrated work setting in which an individual with a most significant disability is working on a short-term basis toward competitive integrated employment (CIE)





Supported Employment...

Employment that is individualized and customized, consistent with the individual's unique strengths, abilities, interests, and informed choice, including ongoing supports for individuals with the most significant disabilities.





Supported Employment - A Collaborative Process

- Intensive Time Limited Services
 - VR funds services for eligible individuals
 - The intense and initial phase of obtaining and stabilizing employment opportunities for an individual with most significant disabilities
- Extended Services– Follow-Along
 - Has to be funded by a source other than VR, per Federal Regulations with the exception of youth 24 and under in certain circumstances
 - Ongoing supports or services required to maintain long-term employment. May be provided from a variety of sources
 - New focus is on Natural Supports and developing those supports within the setting of the job site



Discovery

- **Step 1: Understand**
 - Who is this person?
 - What are the ideal conditions for employment?
- **Step 2: Provide individuals the opportunity to show:**
 - Who they really are, and
 - What they can do
 - In the right environments
- **Step 3: Learn valuable information to assist in developing an employment plan**





How is Discovery Different from Traditional Assessment Procedures?

Discovery

- Seeks to discover already-existing information obtained from the person's entire life
- Uses information uncovered in the process as a guide for matching an individual to an appropriate job
- Is an optimistic process that is focused on the strengths of a person

Traditional Assessment

- Use information developed solely within an evaluation (short instances of evaluation performance)
- May exclude a person from a certain job or from employment in general
- May exclude applicants and their families and friends while relying solely on professional judgment and diagnosis in employment planning



Individuals Who May Benefit from Discovery Services

- Individuals with most significant or complex disabilities
- Individuals who may have tried SE services but not been successful
- Individuals who have been on a provider's caseload for an extended period of time and have not yet located appropriate employment
- Youth/adults who do have experiences to draw upon
- May not perform well using traditional evaluations that are comparative in nature
- Require an individualized approach to employment and who may require Supported Employment Services



Discovery Information

- On average 24-30 hours of direct service time
- Requires an average of 6-12 weeks
- Takes place in a variety of settings (home, neighborhood, and various community settings)





VR has Many Additional Services

- Medical and Psychological Assessment
- Vocational Evaluation and Planning
- Job-Site Assessment and Accommodations
- Assistive Technology and Devices
- Time-Limited Medical and/or Psychological Treatment
- Job Placement, Job Coaching
- Discovery
- On-the-Job Training
- Supported Employment
- Career Counseling and Guidance
- Training and Education After High School
- Additional Services are determined based on the individual IPE goals.



New Workers' Compensation Coverage

Workers' Compensation coverage for all adults or students participating in Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) work experience activities, who *"shall be deemed an employee of the state for purposes of workers' compensation coverage"* (s.413.209, F.S.)

As of July 1, 2018, adults and students who participate in a Work Experience Activity (WEA) are now covered under the State of Florida, Department of Education, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Workers' Compensation (WC). WEAs may include (**Note: this list is not all-inclusive**):

- Trial Work,
- On-the-Job Training,
- Apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships,
- Internships,
- Project SEARCH, or
- Pre-ETS WEA (work-based learning experiences)



Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much.





You have questions, we have answers:

Additional Contacts

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