

## **200.00 Referral and Applying for Services Policy**

(March 1998)

See corresponding procedure: 200.00 Referral and Application Procedure

### **Table of Contents**

- Description
- Referral for Services
- Applying for Services
- Working with Referral Sources
- Reference

### **Description**

Any individual who has a disability which results in a substantial impediment to employment can be referred to ACCES-VR and apply for services. Individuals with disabilities may:

1. seek ACCES-VR services directly, or
2. be referred by family members, guardians, friends, schools, independent living centers, Federal, State or local agencies, medical providers, and other sources.

ACCES-VR only requires information that directly relates to determining eligibility for services and planning and providing services leading to an employment goal. To the fullest extent possible, ACCES-VR will use existing information, including information from the individual requesting services and other agencies. ACCES-VR expects that individuals with disabilities will be active participants in obtaining the information required for an eligibility determination.

### **Referral for Services**

When a person is referred to ACCES-VR for services, ACCES-VR needs to know that the potential applicant is aware of and consents to the referral. The individual's involvement can be indicated by a signed release form from the referral source, an interagency referral form, a statement indicating knowledge of the referral signed by the individual, direct contact from the individual, or a similar method. When there is no indication that the person being referred has knowledge of the referral, the referral source should be contacted requesting confirmation of the consumer's consent and indicating that the case will not be opened without the consent.

Referral information must include the person's name, address and consent for referral and as much of the following information as is available:

1. Date of Birth
2. Social Security number, if available
3. Sex
4. Race

5. Referral Disability
6. Referral Source
7. Marital Status

## **Applying for Services**

An individual is considered to have submitted an application, which means that eligibility must be determined within 60 calendar days, when the individual or the individual's representative, as appropriate:

1. has completed and signed ACCES-VR's application form, submitted a letter with the necessary information or has requested services verbally, because he or she cannot sign a form or letter due to his/her disability; and
2. has provided available information (e.g., medical and school records; reports from psychologists, doctors, alcoholism counselors to substantiate the current status of their disability; or documentation that an alien can work) that is necessary to initiate an assessment to determine eligibility; and
3. is available to complete the assessment process (i.e., the person can directly participate in the assessment to determine eligibility).

Information about the application processes must be presented to the individual as soon as possible after the referral in a group orientation or individual counseling setting. The individual must provide as much information as possible including their name, address, telephone number, sex, race, marital status, social security number, information about the disability, and other information necessary to begin the eligibility assessment. An initial contact should not be delayed because of missing information.

When applying for services, the individual must provide any available information (such as employment history, medical information, alien work status or school records) necessary to assist in determining eligibility. This information is necessary to consider a person an applicant for vocational rehabilitation services. The person must also be available to meet with or otherwise communicate discuss with the counselor; to provide available information; and to participate in assessments as necessary.

## **Working with Referral Sources**

ACCES-VR's application booklet, which describes ACCES-VR's services, should be continually made available at referral sources, such as schools, independent living centers, community rehabilitation programs and other agencies, as well as the ACCES-VR District Offices. When referring an individual to ACCES-VR for services, the referral source should, at the time of the referral, provide all necessary information related to the individual's disability and employment needs to expedite eligibility decisions and planning for services. Lack of available information could delay the eligibility determination. Documentation from referral sources and consumers should contain available information about the nature, extent of the disability, the functional deficits resulting from the disability and the impact on the person's ability to become employed and to achieve a vocational goal.

1. When information received from referral sources does not include name, address, date of birth, disability, sex, marital status, race, or a statement of informed consent, ACCES-VR staff will request that the referral agency provide the data as well as other necessary information, including informed consent.
2. When referral information has been received from a referral source other than the individual without a signed application or a signed letter requesting services, but reflects that the referred person is aware of and consenting to the referral, ACCES-VR will send the individual:
  - A. a letter highlighting the available services (with a copy to the referral source);
  - B. a date for a group orientation or individual meeting and/or an application for services; and
  - C. information that indicates their referral will be closed in four weeks if he or she does not respond.
3. Cooperative agreements and memoranda of understanding have been established between ACCES-VR and other state agencies, such as the Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services and the Office of Mental Health, which include specific referral criteria and processes to promote referral. These referral criteria should be used as appropriate.

**Reference:**

Rehabilitation Act:

- Section 101; Section 102

Federal Regulations:

- 361.41

Cooperative Agreements :

- Statement of Agreement Regarding Referrals from the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS)
- Memorandum of Agreement with the Office of Mental Health Regarding Cooperative Efforts to Improve Access and Delivery of Services