

205.00P Significance of Disability Procedure

April 2003

See corresponding policy: 205.00 Significance of Disability Policy

Note: Vocational Rehabilitation procedures provide internal guidance for ACCES-VR staff only and create no procedural or substantive rights for any individual or group.

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Overview

It is important that ACCES-VR appropriately identify individuals eligible for ACCES-VR services as having a most significant, significant or less significant disability.

The significance of an individual's disability is based on:

1. the number, type and the extent of functional capacities, related to identified impairments, that result in significant barriers to employment, and
2. the extent and duration of disability related services that will be required for the individual to achieve employment.

Criteria for Determining Significance of Disability

Only factors that measure the significance of disability can be used. Level of education and employment history, while of importance in goal planning as described below, are not included in the determination of significance of disability. This determination is based on existing assessments/information available and is to be made by the time eligibility is determined. Assessments may be obtained when additional information is needed to make the determination. The counselor needs to identify:

1. serious limitations to functional capacity

AND

2. the number of vocational rehabilitation services required to reduce the impact of limitations on employment

AND

3. the anticipated length of time that services will be necessary.

If additional information becomes available that impacts the significance of disability, the determination may be changed at any time during the life of the case.

Typically, significance of disability is determined when there is sufficient information to determine eligibility. However, determination must be made prior to placing individuals into extended evaluation/trial work experience (06). Only individuals with a most significant disability are eligible for these services.

There is no significance of disability determination requirement for individuals going from Status 02 to 08 for intervening reasons.

1. Serious Limitations to Functional Capacity

The ACCES-VR counselor must identify which functional capacities are affected as a result of the individual's disability. When doing so, consideration of all the functional capacities (mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, or work skills) should be made in terms of an employment outcome. This can generally be done at the time the counselor is reviewing information to determine if the individual requires ACCES-VR services.

2. Multiple Rehabilitation Services Required to Reduce Impact of Limitations on Employment

When determining significance of disability, a counselor needs to determine what services are necessary to reduce the impact of functional limitations on employability. The individual may also require other services to reach a specific employment outcome. For determining significance of disability, however, only services that directly impact functional limitations are considered.

Services to be considered in determining significance of disability may include:

- A. physical and mental restoration services
- B. ongoing assessment other than for determining eligibility
- C. rehabilitation technology service
- D. specialized vocational or other training unique to individuals with disabilities
- E. job-related services, including job search and placement assistance, job retention services, follow-up services, and follow-along services not provided by the counselor
- F. special transportation
- G. personal assistance services
- H. post employment services
- I. other vocational rehabilitation services that directly address the individual's functional limitations.

Services not included in determining significance of disability:

- J. assessments to determine eligibility
- K. counseling and guidance and placement services provided to all consumers by ACCES-VR staff
- L. generic vocational training and education that may be required to meet an employment outcome.

3. Duration of Services for an Extended Period of Time

The counselor must estimate the length of time that the individual will require the disability-related services, and determine whether the individual will need those services for an extended period of time, of six months or more. The time to be considered begins at eligibility determination and will continue for as long as it is

anticipated that the individual will require and receive disability-related services, up to the projected Status 26 closure date.

Recipients of Social Security

An individual who receives benefits from Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and/or Social Security Disability Insurance benefits (SSDI) due to a disability is automatically considered to have at least a significant disability at eligibility. If information becomes available that indicates the individual is limited in three or more functional capacities, the counselor must document this and make sure the coding reflects a most significant disability. Changes may be made any time information becomes available.

Documentation

1. Record of Service (General)

- A. When significance of disability is determined at eligibility the Information for Certification of Eligibility/Significance of Disability Case Note must be completed. This case note has the following headers: Impairment, Functional Limitations/Impediments to Employment, Services Required, Service Duration, Expectation of Benefit, Significant Disability Determination, and Rehabilitation Technology. All headers are mandatory except Rehabilitation Technology.
- B. The significant disability classification can be updated via the Significant Disability Case Note at any time during the case process. The data folder will need to be updated at that time.

2. Record of Service (SSI/SSDI)

The determination of the significance of an individual's disability for individuals who are SSI/SSDI recipients will be recorded in the Information for Certification of Eligibility SSI/SSDI / Significance of Disability Case Note. The headers in this case note are the same as in the other case note, except that the Significant Disability Determination and Social Security Verification for Eligibility are mandatory. The other headers are to be used when a determination of Most Significant Disability has been made.

3. Coding

ACCES-VR must insure that the correct coding is used to properly identify our consumers:

- A. Less significantly disabled
- B. Significantly disabled
- C. Most significantly disabled

The coding field should be left blank for individuals who are closed Status 08 for intervening reasons where there is not enough information to make a significance of disability determination.

The coding is to be completed in the Disability Tab within the Data Folder. Use the label "Significance of Disability" from the drop down list.

Reference

Other:

- Significance of Disability Training Questions