

What is ACCES?

The Office of Adult Career and Continuing Education Services (ACCES) is part of the New York State Education Department and is comprised of three primary areas: Vocational Rehabilitation (including Independent Living Program Administration), Adult Education, and the Bureau of Proprietary School Supervision.

ACCES-VR:

- ★ Administers vocational rehabilitation and independent living programs
- ★ Provides a wide array of services to assist eligible individuals with disabilities in obtaining employment
- ★ Provides services to students, beginning up to 2 years prior to exiting high school
- ★ Provides individual consultation, recommendations and training to assist with maintaining a job
- ★ Provides information and support to employers

What is vocational rehabilitation?

Vocational Rehabilitation agencies, often referred to as “VR”, are managed by every state, but are overseen by the federal government. VR is designed to help people with disabilities meet career goals, from entry-level to professional. It helps people with disabilities get jobs, whether the person is born with a disability, develops a disability or becomes a person with a disability while working.



How does the VR program work?

There are some rules for the program that are established in federal and State law and regulations. A few of the basics include:

- ★ The person with a disability has to apply for services
- ★ The person must be legally able to work in the United States
- ★ The person must meet the eligibility requirements
- ★ The person must work with a qualified Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) employed by ACCES-VR to determine eligibility

The more information a person has to verify a physical or mental impairment and describe how that impairment affects the ability to work, the faster the process will go.

What are the eligibility requirements?

- ★ The person has a physical or mental impairment
- ★ The impairment makes it difficult for the person to work
- ★ The person can benefit from VR services to achieve employment
- ★ The person requires VR services to prepare for, secure, retain, or regain employment

What's next?

If the person with a disability meets the eligibility requirements an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) will be developed. This process will involve reviewing career choices, discussing responsibilities and identifying a vocational goal, with consideration of labor market trends.

What services can ACCES-VR provide?

- ★ Assessment to help identify skills, abilities, interests and limitations
- ★ Career counseling and guidance
- ★ Benefits Advisement
- ★ Rehabilitation and assistive technology
- ★ Training at a vocational school, community college, or on the job

- ★ Supported Employment
- ★ Information on the Americans with Disabilities Act and reasonable accommodations
- ★ Job placement and job retention
- ★ Other services necessary to achieve the employment goal

Some ACCES-VR services are based upon a review of financial need.

ACCES-VR must consider other benefits and services that are available to individuals. Certain services have spending or time limits.

How does ACCES-VR fit into the community?

ACCES-VR works with school districts, community rehabilitation programs, NYS Department of Labor, One-Stop Centers, Independent Living Centers, colleges and vocational schools, the business community and any other community resource that could provide goods and services that enable an individual with a disability to work.

What is Independent Living?

A network of 39 Independent Living Centers across the State provide peer counseling, independent living skills training, information and referral, individual and systems advocacy, benefits assistance, housing assistance and many other services that support and advance life in the community. Services are based on local availability.

To find the ILC in your area or to learn more about independent living go to:
www.acces.nysed.gov/vr/lisn/ilc/about.htm