

DIVISION OF VISUAL SERVICES

Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS)

PURPOSE

The Division of Visual Services (VS), helps Oklahomans who are blind or visually impaired. The primary vocational rehabilitation services are counseling and guidance with job placement. However, other services may also be provided as needed for an individual to compensate for, correct or prevent disability-based barriers to employment. AT is provided if determined necessary to meet the goals outlined in the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

CONTACT

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 Oklahoma Department of
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 Client Assistance Program
 (CAP)
 Office of Disability Concerns
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www.ok.gov/odc/C.A.P./index.html

FINANCIAL CRITERIA

- See "Eligibility"

ELIGIBILITY

- An individual:
 - must have a physical or mental impairment, which constitutes or results in an impediment to employment;
 - can benefit in terms of an employment outcome from VR services; and
 - requires VR services to prepare for, enter, engage in, or retain gainful employment.
- An individual who has a disability or is blind and is a Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) beneficiary or a Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipient is presumed to meet eligibility criteria if that individual intends to achieve an employment outcome.
- Legal blindness occurs when visual acuity with best correction is 20/200 or less or when side vision results in a central field restriction of 20 degrees or less.

AT SERVICES PROVIDED/COVERED

- Assessments & Evaluations
- Information & Referral
- Case Management
- Locating Alternate Funding
- Maintenance & Repairs
- Supporting Software
- Training for Consumer & Family

AT DEVICES PROVIDED/COVERED



Aids for Daily Living



Speech Communication



Aids for Hearing Impaired



Environmental Adaptations



Aids for Vision Impaired



Mobility/Seating & Positioning



Computers & Related

APPLICATION PROCESS

- Apply online at: <http://www.okdrs.org/drupal/app-for-service>
- Apply at your local DRS office, to find the nearest office call (800) 487-4024 or locate at the website: http://www.okdrs.org/drupal/office_locator

DIVISION OF VISUAL SERVICES, cont. . .

DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

1. If you are an applicant or client of the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services and have a concern and/or want to learn more about DRS, call the Client Assistance Program (CAP) at (405) 521-3756 #7. CAP serves as your advocate to get a resolution. With a release of information, CAP can contact DRS staff on your behalf.
2. CAP can request a Fair Hearing if resolution cannot be reached at lower levels. The Fair Hearing must be scheduled within 60 days of request. Mediation is available if the client desires and DRS consents.
3. DRS clients or applicants may request a Fair Hearing without CAP involvement. Call (405) 951-3552 to get a Request for Fair Hearing. A written decision of the Hearing Officer will be made within 30 days of the Fair Hearing.
4. It is possible to appeal an adverse decision from the Hearing Officer. The Hearing Officer's written decision will provide information. The appeal beyond the Fair Hearing is final unless you choose to hire an attorney. In such cases, litigation of your concern will be at your expense.

PIECES OF THE PUZZLE

- Under the rehabilitation counseling and employment program, consumers and counselors work together to develop an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).
- The IPE is an individualized program of services based around a core of comprehensive evaluation, vocational counseling, and job placement that are needed to assist the person in attaining his or her employment goal. Any AT that the person needs for employment must be included in this plan. However, AT devices and services may be essential to help the person demonstrate vocational capabilities and are an essential part of the comprehensive evaluation.
- Once a decision has been made to supply an eligible client with AT, it may be possible to provide a wide range of devices if they are vocationally relevant. However, DRS cannot buy devices that other sources can buy or that ADA requires other sources to provide.
- The cost of some services, such as medical examinations to determine if a person is eligible for vocational rehabilitation, counseling and job placement, are provided at no charge to the client. For some other services, a client may have to share in the cost, depending on his or her income and resources.
- The DRS State Plan has provisions, during times of limited resources, to serve clients under an order of selection which means some eligible applicants may be placed on waiting lists until funds are available to pay for services. Consumers are encouraged to apply for services during an order of selection because those on waiting lists will be served on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Visual Services provides a wide array of rehabilitation programs that include: rehabilitation counseling, employment, independent living services, Older Blind Program (page 54) Business Enterprise Program, special library services (page 53) and information access via telephone.
- Independent living services include rehabilitation teachers and mobility specialists that can provide adjustment counseling; instruction in personal and home management; communications; recreation or leisure activities; the community; and use of the white cane.
- The Business Enterprise Program trains and assists people who are blind in establishing and operating food service businesses in public and private facilities across the state.
- NEWSLINE® For the Blind gives free telephone access throughout the state to local and national newspapers for persons whose disabilities limit access to printed information. Visual Services also operates a telephone service, which provides community and job information.
- VS partners with Oklahoma ABLE Tech to provide an assistive technology device demonstration center and short-term equipment loan program. The demonstration center can assist a person or small group of individuals with the opportunity to explore one or more assistive technology devices to assist in the decision-making process about device purchase or utilization. The short-term loan program allows a person to "try before you buy" an assistive technology device. For more information on the devices available contact the AT Lab in Oklahoma City by calling (405) 522-3418 or the VS Center in Tulsa at (918) 551-4933.