




Title:	Postsecondary Training
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Review/ Implementation	Begin Review – 05/01/20 Implement Revisions By – 11/04/20

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to provide direction for the provision of postsecondary training in accordance with appropriate federal (e.g. Code of Federal Regulations [CFR]) and state law (i.e. Ohio Revised Code [ORC], Ohio Administrative Code [OAC]) Governor Directives and executive orders, other governing agency (e.g. DAS, OBM) policy or guidance, and/or Executive Director expectations.

Refer to the AWARE Manual for more detailed instructions regarding the management of cases in AWARE.

II. APPLICABILITY

This procedure applies to VR Staff and VR Contractors.

III. DEFINITIONS

Refer to “Vocational Rehabilitation Definitions” (80-VR-99.A).

IV. PROCEDURES

A. General

1. OOD shall provide information to individuals and if applicable, their parent or legal guardian throughout the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) process as required by law (e.g. rights and duties). This information shall be provided, in writing, and when appropriate, in the individual’s native language or through an appropriate mode of communication.

2. AWARE shall be updated with pertinent conversations, recommendations, justifications, approvals and/or other actions taken in relation to this procedure.
 - a. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall obtain supervisory approval, if required, via an “Activity Due” in AWARE.
 - i. If supervisory or management approval is required during the VR process, the supervisor or manager shall document their approval in AWARE.
3. VR Staff or VR Contractors, who are a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC-certified) and will be directly involved with an individual’s case, shall complete the “Professional Disclosure Statement” (80-VR-01.E).
 - a. VR Staff or VR Contractors who are not a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) are exempt from this requirement.
 - b. Once completed, the “Professional Disclosure Statement” shall be reviewed and signed by the individual and, if applicable, his/her parent or legal guardian, and the CRC-certified VR Staff or VR Contractor.
 - i. Once signed, the statement shall be scanned into the AWARE Participant Module, as a Case Note, with the category “Professional Disclosure Statement” and summary title “Signed
4. For the purpose of this procedure, postsecondary training refers to the instruction and related expenses which are determined necessary after the receipt of a high school diploma or GED, in order for the individual to obtain a degree, including an advanced degree, or an industry-recognized certificate, license or certification from an accredited institution which is required to achieve his/her agreed upon employment outcome.
 - a. Program instruction and curriculums may include classroom style, on-line coursework, and other formats which result in earned credits which count towards completion of the postsecondary program (e.g. co-op, internship).
5. Comprehensive Transition Programs (CTPs) provided by postsecondary accredited institutions are outside of the scope of this procedure because in general they do not lead to a degree or recognized industry credential as required in 4.
 - a. VR Staff and VR Contractors may work with students participating in CTPs to provide vocational rehabilitation services as needed in accordance with VR policy and procedure and the VR Fee Schedule.
 - b. For additional guidance, review the “CTP Fact Sheet” (80-VR-11-05.A).
6. A postsecondary training program that does not participate in the federal financial aid program (i.e. FAFSA) would be covered under “Occupational Skills Training, Excluding On-the-Job Training” (80-VR-11-10) or “Job Readiness Training and Work Adjustment Services” (80-VR-11-13).

7. If at any point, it is determined postsecondary training is not appropriate, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall meet with the individual to explore alternative vocational options.

B. Postsecondary Training Considerations

1. When an individual expresses an interest in an employment outcome that may require postsecondary training, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall review the following with the individual:
 - a. the purpose of VR services which is to assist individuals in finding employment;
 - b. the consideration that postsecondary training shall occur only if it is required to achieve the appropriate and agreed upon employment outcome;
 - c. the types of accommodations that are typically available at an accredited institution (e.g. extended time on tests, tutoring);
 - d. the time commitment necessary to complete the training;
 - e. the requirements for postsecondary training as outlined in Section D; and
 - f. availability of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS), when working with a student with a disability, to determine the need for Counseling on Postsecondary Opportunities or other Pre-ETS as described in the "Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) Delivered by Contract Providers" procedure (80-VR-11-13).
2. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall determine if the intended employment outcome will result in self-employment. If self-employment is the intended outcome, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall follow "Self-Employment" (80-VR-16 and 80-VR-16-01) prior to including postsecondary training on the IPE.

C. Determination of the Need, Feasibility and Capacity for Postsecondary Training

1. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall determine whether postsecondary training is needed to achieve the employment outcome based on the items listed below.
 - a. A review which is to include, but not be limited to, previous training, degrees, certifications, and transferable skills gained from volunteer and/or work experience.
 - b. Industry requirements (i.e. minimum qualifications) for the selected employment outcome.
 - i. VR Staff or VR Contractor may utilize the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' "Occupational Outlook Handbook" and OhioMeansJobs for information regarding minimum qualifications.

- c. Labor market information that supports the employment outcome as a viable employment option.
 - i. In demand occupations identified by OhioMeansJobs and other labor market data shall be the first area of consideration for identification of an appropriate employment outcome as these occupations are most likely to result in employment.
 - d. A minimum of (2) informational interviews for the type of job (i.e. employment outcome) the individual has chosen shall be completed and submitted by the individual.
 - i. The informational interviews should be conducted with professionals who perform the work, or who manage professionals who perform the work.
 - ii. VR Staff or VR Contractor may refer the individual to the “Guide to Informational Interview” for direction on conducting informational interviews.
2. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall determine the feasibility for postsecondary training based on the individual’s:
- a. ability to delay employment to participate in postsecondary training;
 - b. ability to meet the financial obligations required for postsecondary training;
 - c. overall financial standing, which includes consideration of student loan history (e.g. default on previous student loans); and
 - d. personal circumstances and/or employment barriers that may impact an employment outcome (e.g. family dynamics, transportation, childcare, criminal record.).
3. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall determine the individual’s capacity to successfully complete the required postsecondary training curriculum.
- a. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall review his/her case record for this for this determination using the following:
 - i. unique strengths and abilities;
 - ii. ability to perform the essential duties of the occupation and successfully compete for employment opportunities;
 - iii. functional limitations;

- iv. high school records (including an IEP or ETR, if applicable);
 - v. past college transcripts;
 - vi. aptitude testing;
 - vii. information obtained through enrichment programs designed for summer youth (e.g. Upward Bound, Young Scholars); and/or
 - viii. ACT and/or SAT scores.
- b. In very limited circumstances and with supervisory justification and approval, when the individual's capacity to successfully complete the program is unclear, VR Staff or VR Contractor may authorize one (1) diagnostic term (e.g. semester).
- i. The diagnostic term shall be full-time, unless there is a disability related reason for part-time attendance. It may include developmental coursework and/or coursework meeting the requirements of the appropriate license or degree.
 - a) If the diagnostic term delays the development of the IPE beyond 90 days, a "Time Extension for IPE Development" (80-VR-08.01.A) shall be completed by following the directions in "Individualized Plan for Employment" (80-VR-08-01).
 - ii. When a diagnostic term is agreed upon, it shall be authorized as an "Assessment Non-Medical", and an AWARE Case Note, entitled "Diagnostic Term" shall be added to the case record.
 - a) In the case where the individual has a signed IPE, the service shall still be provided as an assessment.
 - iii. Since the diagnostic term is an assessment, it shall not count towards the requirement to complete one (1) academic year in 18 consecutive months.
 - iv. A minimum of a 2.0 Grade Point Average shall be considered satisfactory completion of the diagnostic term.
 - a) VR Staff or VR Contractor shall not consider audited coursework as part of the diagnostic term.
 - v. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall require that, the individual complete the "Free Application for Federal Student Aid" (FAFSA) prior to participating in a diagnostic term.

- a) VR Staff or VR Contractor shall require all grants obtained by the individual to be utilized prior to authorizing OOD funds for the diagnostic term.
- b) Costs for the diagnostic term shall not be based on financial need; therefore, the individual is not required to contribute their “Expected Family Contribution” (EFC) when participating in a diagnostic term.

D. Postsecondary Training Requirements

- 1. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall review the participation and financial requirements listed below with the individual prior to enrollment in a program.

a. Participation Requirements

- i. Timelines - 18 consecutive months for one [1] academic year and/or three [3] years for an associate’s degree and/or six [6] years for a bachelor’s degree.

- a) VR Staff or VR Contractor shall notify individuals that they must complete one (1) academic year within 18 consecutive months, regardless of a change in major, to continue to receive OOD support for training.

- 1) If the accredited institution determines developmental courses are needed, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall inform the individual that developmental coursework counts toward the requirement to complete an academic year within 18 consecutive months.

- 1.1 Courses that prepare students for college-level coursework or that have a course number less than 100 are generally considered developmental.

- 2) If the individual is unable to complete one (1) academic year within 18 consecutive months and/or will not graduate within three (3) years for an associate degree or six (6) years for a bachelor’s degree, VR Staff or VR Contractor may continue to support the individual’s postsecondary training with supervisor approval, when the individual demonstrates progress to stay on track with the completion of the degree.

- 2.1 VR Staff or VR Contractor shall obtain a curriculum plan or degree audit, at a minimum once per academic year, from the accredited institution that outlines the remaining coursework and timelines necessary to complete the program. The curriculum plan or degree audit shall be scanned into an AWARE Case Note.

2.1.1 The curriculum plan or degree audit shall be reviewed to determine if continuation of the postsecondary training will be approved.

2.1.1.1 If continuation is not approved, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall meet with the individual to determine whether the completed coursework still allows the individual to obtain his/her employment outcome.

2.1.1.1.1 If not, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall explore alternative employment outcomes with the individual.

ii. Attendance Requirements

a) VR Staff or VR Contractor shall only support full-time participation in a postsecondary program.

1) An exception may be granted if VR Staff or VR Contractor agrees that there is a disability related need or lack of course availability which warrants part-time attendance.

a) Prior to an exception being granted for part-time attendance, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall confirm that the individual can still meet OOD's 18-month rule requirements.

b) Justification for part-time attendance must be documented in an AWARE Case Note.

b) Summer School Consideration

1) When an individual expresses interest in summer school, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall help the individual determine the financial and programmatic implications of such attendance.

2) VR Staff or VR Contractor shall discuss summer school with the individual prior to the beginning of each academic year or as needed. During the discussion, the following shall be addressed:

2.1 the impact of summer school on graduation and a potential earlier entry into the workforce;

2.2 the need for work experience or work-related activities that could occur during summer break; and

2.3 the need to complete prerequisite courses prior to the subsequent term.

iii. Grade Requirements

- a) In order to continue to receive OOD support, students are required to meet all program standards and maintain a minimum cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.0 or the GPA standard established by the postsecondary program, whichever is higher.

b. Financial Requirements

i. FAFSA

- a) VR Staff or VR Contractor shall require that all individuals pursuing OOD financial support for postsecondary training apply for financial aid by completing and submitting the FAFSA on an annual basis.

- 1) Individuals must list the OOD identified closest, least cost, state-supported accredited institution in Ohio (herein referred to as "least cost accredited institution") as one of the institutions to which FAFSA information will be submitted.

1.1 If the individual has already submitted the FAFSA and the least cost accredited institution was not included, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall research the postsecondary training costs for the least cost school and use that information to calculate OOD's contribution (refer to Section F).

- 2) When determining the need for parent or legal guardian's financial information, individuals should refer to the FAFSA website for student dependency status.

2.1 If an individual's parent or legal guardian(s) is unwilling or unable to complete the FAFSA, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall advise the individual to work with the accredited institution regarding other financial aid options.

2.1.1 If financial arrangements cannot be agreed upon with the accredited institution, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall work with the individual to discuss employment outcome options that do not require postsecondary services.

- 3) If an individual's or their parent or legal guardian's financial situation unexpectedly changes or they need to add the least cost accredited institution after the completion of the FAFSA, VR Staff or VR Contractor may refer the individual to the accredited institution for assistance (e.g. to obtain an amended SAR).

- 4) If an individual or their parent or legal guardian's taxes are not yet complete, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall refer them to the "Using Your Tax Return" section on the FAFSA website for details on using estimated financial information, which would be corrected after taxes are filed.
- b) After submission of a completed FAFSA, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall obtain a copy of the individual's SAR that identifies their EFC which will be used in the calculation of OOD's contribution.
- 1) Only individuals who receive social security (i.e. SSI/SSDI [Title II and/or Title XVI]) benefits are exempt from having to apply their EFC towards their postsecondary training costs. This exemption does not exclude the individual from the requirement to complete the FAFSA or any other postsecondary requirements.
 - 1.1 VR Staff or VR Contractor shall confirm the SSI/SSDI status on the Application Screen in AWARE to ensure proper authorization for Title II/XVI recipients.
 - 1.2 In cases where the individual is unable to obtain a SAR, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall obtain an "Institutional Student Information Report" (ISIR), from the individual that is generated by the accredited institution's financial aid department.
 - 2) If an accredited institution does not participate in the Federal Financial Aid Program (e.g. they do not accept Pell Grants), VR Staff or VR Contractor shall:
 - 2.1 require the individual to submit a FAFSA so their SAR, which identifies the EFC, may be obtained; and
 - 2.2 apply the EFC towards postsecondary training costs prior to the calculation of OOD's contribution.

ii. Financial Aid Requirements

- a) VR Staff or VR Contractor shall verify that the individual has maintained eligibility for federal educational grants (e.g. Pell Grant) through information contained in the SAR, (regardless of whether or not a grant was awarded) prior to authorizing for postsecondary training expenses.
 - 1) An exception to the federal educational grants eligibility requirement may be approved on a case-by-case basis by a supervisor. Exceptions may be considered when the individual:
 - 1.1 is near completion of their postsecondary training; and/or
 - 1.2 must change their employment outcome/current profession, due to disability related needs, after federal educational grant eligibility has been exhausted.

- 2) If the individual has previously received federal educational grants they shall provide VR Staff or VR Contractor documentation from the accredited institution's financial aid office regarding the remaining terms of eligibility.
- 3) If an exception to the federal educational grants requirement was not approved or the individual does not have any remaining terms of eligibility, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall meet with the individual to:
 - 3.1 explore alternative vocational options; and/or
 - 3.2 discuss alternative funding options.

iii. Loan Default

- a) In cases where the individual is in default on student loans, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall not authorize financial support for postsecondary training.
 - 1) An exception may be approved when all three (3) conditions below are met and documented.
 - 1.1 An individual has a true hardship and has limited financial resources.
 - 1.1.1 Documentation that may be used to demonstrate financial hardship may include previous tax return documenting past earnings, rent receipts, medical expenses, car payment bills, and utility bills.
 - 1.2 The individual has provided documentation from the lender that they are unable to negotiate a repayment agreement.
 - 1.3 VR Staff or VR Contractor obtains supervisory approval.
 - 1.3.1 If approved, OOD shall explore comparable benefits (e.g. ODJFS, BWC) prior to authorizing for services.
 - 1.3.2 If supervisory approval is not granted, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall work with the individual to explore other vocational options.

iv. Application for Scholarships

- a) VR Staff or VR Contractor shall encourage individuals to explore the availability of scholarships and to apply for those appropriate.
- b) VR Staff or VR Contractor shall advise the individual that scholarship awards which are not specifically designated for tuition, books/supplies and/or fees (i.e. awards typically sent directly to the individual) will not be used to calculate the "net" postsecondary costs and therefore may be used to offset the individual's contribution toward these expenses. Therefore, it is in their best interest to apply for as many as possible.

v. Least Cost

- a) VR Staff or VR Contractor shall follow OOD's least cost requirements as outlined in "Vocational Rehabilitation Purchases" (40-FIN-01-06) when calculating OOD's financial contribution.
- b) VR Staff or VR Contractor shall only authorize up to the amount it would cost to attend the OOD identified closest, least cost accredited institution that is able to meet the individual's VR and disability related needs in alignment with his/her employment outcome.
 - 1) If the least cost accredited institution is able to meet the VR and disability-related needs of the individual and they choose to attend a different accredited institution (e.g. out-of-state, in-state but higher cost, private), VR Staff or VR Contractor shall only authorize up to the amount it would cost to attend the least cost accredited institution.
 - 2) When VR Staff or VR Contractor determines that the OOD-identified least cost accredited institution is unable to meet the individual's disability related needs, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall document, in AWARE, the reason(s) why an exception to utilizing the OOD identified least cost accredited institution should be considered (e.g. educational history, pertinent disability related barrier, assessments, and the suitability of vocational goal).
 - 2.1 VR Staff or VR Contractor should also attempt to obtain written documentation from the least cost accredited institution that they are unable to meet the individual's disability related needs.
 - 2.2 Once it has been documented in the AWARE Case Record, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall request supervisory approval of the exception to attend the alternate accredited institution that will meet the disability related needs of the individual, still taking least cost into consideration for the maximum OOD will fund.
 - 2.2.1 VR Supervisor shall document approval or denial of the exception request in AWARE.
 - 2.2.1.1 If VR Supervisor has any concerns or needs additional guidance about approval or denial, he/she shall submit the case to the VR Area Manager for approval.
 - 2.3 If the exception is approved, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall proceed with using the postsecondary training costs of the alternate accredited institution to determine OOD's contribution (refer to Section F).
 - 2.4 If the exception is not approved, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall work with the individual to explore other vocational options.

E. Postsecondary Program and Training Site Selection

1. Once an employment outcome has been identified and a determination has been made that the individual needs postsecondary training, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall proceed as detailed below.
 - a. Provide vocational guidance and counseling to assist the individual in researching, evaluating and selecting an appropriate postsecondary program and accredited institution.
 - b. OOD's support shall only be for:
 - i. accredited institutions;
 - ii. postsecondary training programs that lead to a degree (or advanced degree), or an industry-recognized certificate, license or certification; and/or
 - iii. coursework that meets the industry recognized standard and state of Ohio's postsecondary training requirements for the individual's chosen vocation.
2. After an individual makes an informed choice and an appropriate postsecondary training program has been identified, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall provide additional vocational guidance and counseling as detailed below.
 - a. Assist the individual in completing the application for admission (refer to Section G.3.a. for guidance regarding payment of application fees).
 - b. Discuss the benefits of connecting with the accredited institution's supportive services for students such as:
 - i. Office of Disability Services;
 - ii. Tutoring Services;
 - iii. Academic Support Services; and/or
 - iv. Career Placement Office.

F. Calculation of OOD's Financial Contribution Using Least Cost Requirements

1. Once the SAR is obtained, in order to calculate OOD's "not to exceed" financial contribution to an individual's postsecondary training VR Staff or VR Contractor shall complete the "Postsecondary Training Contribution Worksheet" (80-VR-11-05.B), a copy of which shall be placed in the AWARE Case Record.
 - a. In order to complete the "Postsecondary Training Contribution Worksheet" VR Staff or VR Contractors shall need:
 - i. postsecondary training costs (i.e. tuition, books/supplies, fees and other allowable expenses) at the least cost accredited institution;

- ii. information on grants (e.g. Pell, Ohio College Opportunity), scholarships and other funds (e.g. BWC) which are specifically designated for tuition, books/supplies and/or fees (i.e. funds typically sent directly to the accredited institution) which are to be received; and
 - iii. the individual's expected family contribution (EFC) as designated on the SAR unless exempted due to the receipt of social security benefits.
 - a) If the individual is exempted from the EFC, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall discuss the individual's, or his/her parent or legal guardian's ability to contribute to postsecondary training costs.
 - iv. If agreement is made for the individual to contribute to these costs, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall include the amount on the "Postsecondary Training Contribution Worksheet" (80-VR-11-05.B).
- b. Other Considerations When Completing the "Postsecondary Training Contribution Worksheet"
- i. When a bachelor's degree (or equivalent) is required for the approved employment outcome, OOD's support, for the first two (2) academic years, shall be based upon the costs to attend the least cost two-year accredited institution that meets the postsecondary training and disability related needs of the individual.
 - a) After these two (2) academic years of support, VR Staff or VR Contractor may authorize continued coursework at the rate of the local least-cost, state supported four-year accredited institution, if necessary to meet the requirements of the approved employment outcome.
 - ii. If an advanced degree is required for the approved employment outcome, OOD support shall be based on the costs to attend the least cost accredited institution that meets the postsecondary training and disability related needs of the individual.

G. IPE Development

1. During IPE development, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall follow "Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) (80-VR-08 and 80-VR-08-01) and other related policies and procedures that provide guidelines and direction with items such as purchasing, least cost, and other goods and services.
2. VR Staff or VR Contractors shall include the items detailed below in the IPE about postsecondary training.
 - a. Identify the postsecondary training necessary to assist the individual in obtaining their employment outcome.

- b. Identify who will be responsible for the payment of postsecondary training expenses.
 - i. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall notify the individual that any refund they receive for postsecondary training paid for by OOD shall be returned to OOD.
 - a) The funds shall be returned, via check, to Division of Fiscal Management (DFM), Finance (refer to "Accounts Receivable" [40-FIN-04] for direction).
 - c. Identify the individual's responsibilities.
 - d. Complete the "TRN" checkboxes along with any other applicable responsibilities on the "Participant Responsibility Check Box List" in AWARE.
3. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall determine the extent in which other postsecondary training related costs shall be included in the IPE that may be necessary due to a financial or disability related need. These may include the items listed below.
- a. Application fee exclusively for the least cost school.
 - b. Specialized disability services and/or programs.
 - i. Two (2) and four (4) year accredited institutions are required to provide disability related services to individuals with a documented disability.
 - ii. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall not authorize for disability services and/or programs without supervisory approval. This includes programming for specialized disability populations with a separate fee associated.
 - c. Orientation and mobility training, if not provided by the accredited institution.
 - d. Auxiliary services (e.g. interpreting services), if not provided by the accredited institution.
 - i. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall negotiate the cost of auxiliary services when not offered by the accredited institution.
 - e. Transportation, Maintenance and Personal Care Assistance.
 - i. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall follow "Vocational Rehabilitation Transportation Services" (80-VR-11-11), "Maintenance Services" (80-VR-11-02) and "Interpreter Reader and PAS" (80-VR-11-16), procedures as appropriate.
 - f. Computer and adaptive technology.
 - i. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall work with the individual to determine if the accredited institution has the necessary adaptive equipment available for use.

- ii. VR Staff or VR Contractor may authorize disability-related adaptive equipment or software for the individual's computer if other options are not available.
 - iii. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall refer to the "Vocational Rehabilitation Purchases" (40-FIN-01-06) prior to authorizing computer and/or adaptive technology purchases.
- g. Books and Supplies.
 - i. VR Staff or VR Contractor may authorize books and supplies for postsecondary training when required by the training program or when needed to overcome limitations imposed by a disability.
 - ii. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall request documentation that demonstrates the need for books and supplies. This may include a course syllabus or other course related information.
 - iii. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall refer to the "Vocational Rehabilitation Purchases" (40-FIN-01-06) prior to authorizing supplies.
- h. Health insurance.
 - i. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall not authorize health insurance fees for an individual even when required by the accredited institution.
 - ii. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall not consider these fees as part of an individual's EFC.
 - iii. Most accredited institutions exempt student health insurance costs if the student can provide documentation of personal coverage.
 - iv. An individual missing the deadline to provide proof of their personal healthcare insurance is not an excuse to pay these fees.
- i. Room and Board.
 - i. Under limited circumstances, and with supervisory approval, OOD may pay for an individual's room and board if there is a disability and/or program related need for an individual to live on-campus.
 - a) Prior to approval, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall explore other options to determine the least cost option (e.g. para transit or other public transportation).
 - b) If it is determined that the individual needs room and board, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall only pay room and board at the amount of the least cost accredited institution which meets the individual's need regardless of where the individual chooses to attend.

H. Service Authorization

1. Once the IPE is developed and approved, as required in the “Individualized Plan for Employment” (80-VR-08 and 80-VR-08-01), VR Staff or VR Contractor shall:
 - a. utilize the “Vocational Rehabilitation Purchases” (40-FIN-01-06) when drafting authorizations for postsecondary training expenses;
 - b. authorize at the rate of the least cost accredited institution, regardless of which postsecondary school or institution an individual chooses to attend;
 - c. authorize for tuition one (1) term at a time;
 - d. not submit authorizations to the accredited institution until the documentation listed in Section H. 3. has been received;
 - e. only authorize for coursework counted toward meeting the requirements of the postsecondary training program; and
 - f. not authorize payment for additional courses, once the level of OOD’s support has been determined for an academic year.
2. OOD shall not pay for an individual to retake or audit classes.
 - a. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall not authorize payment for coursework in which the individual retakes a class in an effort to obtain a higher grade.
 - b. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall not authorize payment for coursework in which the individual failed or received a below average grade (i.e. less than a 2.0 or an equivalent).
 - i. Under extenuating circumstances, which will be determined on a case-by-case basis, VR Staff or VR Contractor may make an exception with supervisor approval.
 - c. If the individual withdraws from a class after the date for which a full refund can be received, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall not authorize payment for the individual to retake a class. Deadline dates are determined by each accredited institution.
 - i. Under extenuating circumstances, which will be determined on a case-by-case basis, VR Staff or VR Contractor may make an exception with supervisor approval (e.g. withdrawing from a class due to a disability related reason, major surgery required).
3. After acceptance and prior to authorization at the start of each new term, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall require that the individual provide the items listed below.

- a. Per academic year:
 - i. the curriculum plan or updated degree audit information from the accredited institution;
 - ii. a copy of the entire SAR or Institutional Student Information Report (ISIR) when the SAR is not available; and
 - iii. an award letter, detailing the amount of financial aid the individual will be receiving, from the designated institution.

- b. Per term:
 - i. a grade report from previous term (except when authorizing for first term);
 - ii. a copy of schedule for the upcoming term;
 - iii. a copy of the bill for the upcoming term; and
 - iv. the list of required books and supplies including estimated costs for the upcoming term.

I. Monitoring progress

1. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall contact the individual, regardless of OOD financial contribution at least three (3) times within an academic year, which shall include a minimum of one (1) contact per term (e.g. semester) for monitoring progress and to provide additional vocational guidance and counseling.
 - a. VR Staff or VR Contractor may utilize the "Trainee Report" (80-VR-11-05.B) if needed to help gather information from a student.
2. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall review the documentation listed in Section H. 3. during the monitoring process to ensure appropriate progress is being made in the individual's program.
3. When notification that the individual is dropping a course is received, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall document the reason in AWARE and discuss the following with the individual:
 - a. the impact dropping the course may have on the satisfactory progress in the postsecondary training program;
 - b. the impact dropping the course will have on the ability to meet OOD's 18 month requirement;

- c. the financial responsibilities of re-taking a dropped course if withdrawal is after the deadline for a full refund.
4. Postsecondary Training Progress Requirement
- a. In cases where the individual has not made “Satisfactory Academic Progress” (SAP),(as defined by the accredited institution), towards completion of their program, they may be denied further eligibility for federal financial aid and if so, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall not authorize additional assistance with postsecondary training.
 - b. In most cases, the individual must pay for classes using their own resources until they regain eligibility for federal financial aid.
5. If the individual changes their major, VR Staff or VR Contractor may support the change and amend the IPE as necessary.
- a. The change to their major must:
 - i. Complete and submit two (2) informational interviews with people who manage or perform that type of job (i.e. employment outcome) the individual has chosen.
 - ii. be supported through labor market information;
 - iii. be appropriate given the individual’s abilities and limitations; and
 - iv. not significantly impact the timelines for program completion as outlined in section D.1.a.i.
 - b. To make this determination VR Staff or VR Contractor shall request the individual provide the following:
 - i. program of study and/or curriculum plan from the accredited institution; and
 - ii. documentation from the accredited institution outlining the expected completion date.

J. Work Experience

1. Non-Permanent Work Experience

- a. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall encourage and/or assist the individual in obtaining at least one (1) work experience, preferably related to the employment outcome, prior to completion of programming. This may include the following types of experiences:
 - i. Internship or Co-op;
 - ii. Independent job search; and

- iii. utilization of other available resources (e.g. OhioMeansJobs Centers, accredited institution career services); and/or Non-Permanent - Job Development services.
 - a) “Non-Permanent - Job Development” services may be utilized for individuals enrolled in a postsecondary training program who have limited community based work experience.
 - b) VR Staff or VR Contractor shall:
 - 1) document non-permanent job development as a service in the IPE; and
 - 2) follow additional guidance on “Non-Permanent- Job Development” services located in “Transition Services” (80-VR-11-12).
 - 3) VR Staff or VR Contractor shall document the need for this service in AWARE.
 - 4) If possible, the non-permanent job should be related to the individual’s employment outcome listed on the IPE.
 - 5) The individual shall remain in “Service” status during their non-permanent job.
 - c) On-the-job supports should be short term and fade within the first several weeks. May be authorized for individuals who are placed in a non-permanent job or internship, when necessary.

K. Post-Graduation Services

1. Certification Testing

- a. VR Staff or VR Contractor may authorize for one attempt at a state required or an industry recognized credential, licensure and/or testing when necessary to achieve an employment outcome.
 - i. Prior to the authorization, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall work with the individual to explore the possibility for fees to be included in the individual’s contribution.

2. Placement Services

- a. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall provide vocational guidance and counseling and follow “Job Related Services” (80-VR-11-14).
 - i. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall assist the individual with identifying and implementing job search strategies that may include linkage to the accredited institution’s career services/placement office, utilizing Ohio Means Jobs, and attending job fairs.

b. Self-directed job search.

- i. VR Staff or VR Contractor may authorize Job Seeking Skills Training to assist the individual with their self-directed job search at any time it is determined appropriate.
- ii. If the individual has not obtained employment after 90 days post-graduation VR Staff or VR Contractor shall follow the direction in “Job Related Services” (80-VR-11-14).

L. Violation

An employee who violates this procedure may be subject to discipline up to and including removal.

FORMS AND ATTACHMENTS

- 80-VR-11-05.A – CTP Fact Sheet
- 80-VR-11-05.B Postsecondary Training Contribution Worksheet

RESOURCES

- AWARE Manual
- VR Definitions (80-VR-99.A)
- Professional Disclosure Statement (80-VR-01.E)
- Comprehensive Transition and Programs (CTP) Fact Sheet (80-VR-11-05.A)
- Occupational Skills Training, Excluding On-the-Job Training (80-VR-11-10)
- Job Readiness Training and Work Adjustment Services (80-VR-11-13)
- Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) Delivered by Contract Providers” (80-VR-11-13)
- Self-Employment (80-VR-16 and 80-VR-16-01)
- Guide to Informational Interviewing
- Time Extension for IPE Development (80-VR-08-01.A)
- Vocational Rehabilitation Purchases (40-FIN-01-06)
- Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) (80-VR-08 and 80-VR-08-01)
- Vocational Rehabilitation Transportation Services (80-VR-11-03)
- Maintenance Services (80-VR-11-02)
- Interpreter Reader and PAS (80-VR-11-16)
- Trainee Report (80-VR-11-05.B)
- Transition Services (80-VR-11-12)
- Job Related Services (80-VR-11-14)
- OOD Guide to Postsecondary Training

FUNDING

Programs provided by the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities are funded, in whole or in part, with federal grants awarded by the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

For purposes of the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program, including Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS), OOD received 78.7% of its funding through the DOE VR grant. In Federal fiscal year (FFY) 2018, OOD received \$100,336,097 in federal funds. Funds appropriated by the State covered 21.3 % of the total costs, or \$27,155,767. Of these federal funds, \$15,050,415 is set aside for Pre-ETS.

For purposes of the Supported Employment Program, the DOE VR grant funded 100% of the costs for the Supported Employment for Youth with a Disability Program. In FFY 2018, OOD received \$303,725. The grant also funded 95% of the Supported Employment Program (non-Youth). In FFY 2018, OOD received \$303,725 and the State appropriated funds paid the remaining 5% or \$33,747 of the total costs.

REVIEW

It is the responsibility of the Deputy Director, or designee, to review this procedure, on or before, the date listed in the header and if applicable, make any necessary revisions. The Deputy Director or designee shall document the annual review as required in "Policy and Procedure Development, Review, Dissemination and Acknowledgement" (10-ADM-01).