




Title:	Individualized Plan for Employment
Procedure #:	80-VR-08-01
Policy Reference:	80-VR-08 "Individualized Plan for Employment"
Legal Reference:	ORC 3304.15, 3304-2-54, 3304-2-56, 3304-2-59, 3304-2-60, 3304-2-61, 3304-2-62, 3304-2-66; 34 CFR 361.22, 361.43, 361.45, 361.46, 361.47, 361.52, 361.53
Effective Date:	February 19, 2018
Approved:	Kevin L. Miller, Executive Director 
Origin:	Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation and Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired
Supersedes:	80-VR-08-01 (10-23-17)
History:	80-VR-08-01 (02-01-16); VRP-0900 (01-05-07); VRP-320 Section 2 (9-30-2012)
Review/ Implementation	Begin Review – 04/23/19 Implement Revisions By – 10/23/19

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to provide guidance for VR Staff and VR Contractors developing and implementing an Individualized Plan for Employment in accordance with Section 102 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act and appropriate federal (e.g. Code of Federal Regulations [CFR]) and state law (i.e. Ohio Revised Code, Ohio Administrative Code), governor directives and executive orders, other governing agency (e.g. DAS, OBM) policy or guidance, and/or executive director expectations.

Refer to AWARE Manual for instructions relating to this procedure.

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. If supervisory or management approval is required during the VR process, the supervisor or manager shall document their approval in AWARE. If written approval is received from a supervisor or manager it shall be added to AWARE.
3. If any OOD Staff are a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC-certified) and will be directly involved with an individual's case, he/she 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. "Transition Services" (80-VR-11-12) shall be followed for additional guidance and direction regarding the comprehensive assessment (CA) and development of the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) for students with a disability enrolled in a secondary educational institution.
5. The decision to approve an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) is a non-delegable function that can only be performed by Qualified Rehabilitation Personnel (QRP) and shall be completed in a timely manner
6. An overview of the requirements for an IPE is provided in the "VR Program Overview" (80-VR-01.B).

B. Timeframes for the Development of the IPE

1. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall develop the IPE for all individuals, with active cases, as soon as possible, but no later than 90 days after the date of eligibility determination or the date released from a wait list, in the event that the individual is on a wait list.
 - a. An extension may be added to the 90-day timeframe in situations of exceptional and/or unforeseen circumstances beyond OOD's control provided the individual agrees.
 - i. In order to move forward with an extension VR Staff or VR Contractor shall complete the items below.
 - a) Contact the individual, prior to the end of the 90-day deadline, to obtain his/her agreement to a specific extension time period.
 - 1) If an extension is not completed prior to the 90-day deadline, VR Staff or VR Contractor should obtain supervisor approval to proceed with the extension.
 - b) Complete the "Plan Development Extension" page in AWARE.

c) Provide the "Time Extension for IPE" letter (80-VR-08-01.A) to the individual.

1) Only two (2) time extensions, which should not exceed 90 calendar days cumulatively, may be completed per IPE.

1.1 The reason for the extension should be clearly documented in the letter.

ii. If the case is out of compliance, due to the time extension not being agreed to by the individual and if applicable, his/her parent or legal guardian and he/she is unable to make progress, VR Staff or VR Contractor should follow direction in "Case Closure" (80-VR-02-01).

a) If the individual is unreachable after a minimum of 2 attempts, in the individual's preferred mode of communication, VR Staff or VR Contractor should follow direction in "Case Closure" (80-VR-02-01).

C. IPE Development

1. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall ensure an IPE is developed and implemented for each eligible individual.

a. Individuals may develop their IPE:

i. independently, without assistance from VR Staff or VR Contractor or other entity;

ii. with the assistance of a VR Staff or VR Contractor;

iii. with the assistance from his/her authorized representative as appropriate;

iv. with the assistance of a qualified vocational rehabilitation counselor who is not employed by OOD;

v. with assistance from a disability advocacy organization; and/or

vi. with the assistance of other resources.

b. Per "Comprehensive Assessment" (80-VR-04-01), VR Staff or VR Contractor shall conduct a comprehensive assessment, prior to the development of the IPE, to determine the nature and scope of the individual's VR needs and to assist with the selection of an employment outcome.

D. Required Contents of the IPE

1. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall complete the IPE page in AWARE and ensure that the items listed below are included.

a. A competitive integrated employment outcome, matching the outcome identified on the "Comprehensive Assessment" form (80-VR-04.A), consistent with the individual's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interest, and informed choice and is appropriate given the current local labor market.

- i. For an employment outcome for a student with a disability, VR Staff or VR Contractor should follow additional direction and guidance provided in “Transition Services” (80-VR-11-12) and may list “Vocational Exploration of [*name of employment outcome*]” indicating a projected employment outcome.
- ii. For an employment outcome of Self-Employment, VR Staff or VR Contractor should follow direction and guidance provided in “Self-Employment” (80-VR-16-01) prior to the completion of the IPE.
 - a) VR Staff or VR Contractor shall check the box indicating Self-Employment on the Plan page in AWARE.
- iii. For individuals only interested in homemaker services, VR Staff or VR Contractor:
 - a) should close the case and follow guidance and direction in “Case Closure” (80-VR-02-01); and
 - b) refer the individual to appropriate federal, state or local programs and providers as outlined in “Information and Referral Services” (80-VR-11-07).
 - 1) As of September 19, 2016, an employment outcome of “Homemaker” is no longer permissible, regardless of the individual’s disabling condition.
- b. Current local labor market information shall be documented in the IPE to support the viability of the individual’s selected employment outcome.
 - i. Labor market information could come from O*NET, Ohio Labor Market Information, OhioMeansJobs, My LMI, or other reputable resources.
- c. Services necessary for the individual to reach or maintain his/her employment outcome.
 - i. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall include necessary services on the IPE grid, in Section 2, which include:
 - a) services provided through comparable benefit(s) and/or individual contribution (e.g. medical/psychological treatment, medication, etc.);
 - b) auxiliary services needed for the individual to participate in services;
 - c) on-going support services for persons in supported employment; and
 - d) assistive technology, and/or personal assistance services, and training in the management of these services, if appropriate.
 - ii. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall ensure that services listed on the CA and IPE match.
 - iii. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall also document they have informed individuals that services will be delivered in an integrated setting and will be consistent with the informed choice of the individual, unless a specific justification otherwise is provided.

- d. Timeline for the achievement of the employment outcome.
- e. Timelines indicating when each service is expected to begin and end.
- f. Providers/suppliers, for each service, shall be selected by the individual and, if applicable, his/her parent or legal guardian, in collaboration with the VR Staff or VR Contractor.
 - i. For services subject to the VR fee schedules, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall only use approved service providers identified in the Provider Management Program (PMP), and only for services the provider/supplier is approved to provide, as applicable.
 - a) In limited circumstances, where the nature of the service provided may require a variety of service providers (e.g. interpreting services), the IPE may be written to indicate “various vendors.”
 - 1) With the exception of interpreting services, once a provider has been selected, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall clone the plan as directed in section H. below.
 - ii. In limited circumstances, where the service providers are not yet known (e.g. summer youth work experience), the IPE may be written to indicate “to be determined (TBD)”
 - a) Once a provider has been selected, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall clone the plan as directed in section H. below.
- g. The methods used to procure services.
- h. Estimated costs for services to be provided and the parties responsible for payment.
 - i. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall document the estimated cost for each service and who is financially responsible. This will include services:
 - a) being purchased by OOD;
 - b) provided by VR Staff or VR Contractors;
 - c) provided through comparable services and benefits; and/or
 - d) provided through the individual’s contribution.
 - ii. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall follow (40-FIN-01-06) “Vocational Rehabilitation Purchases” for the authorization and payment of all services.
- i. A description of the criteria that will be used to evaluate progress toward achievement of the employment outcome.
- j. Responsibilities of each party involved with the implementation of the IPE.

- i. VR Staff or VR Contractors shall check the appropriate boxes in the “Participation Responsibilities” sections of AWARE and document his/her responsibilities, in addition to the roles/responsibilities of:
 - a) each service provider/supplier;
 - b) the individual and, if applicable, his/her parent or legal guardian;
 - c) parties responsible for payment; and
 - d) any other entity that will assist the individual in achieving his/her employment outcome.
 - k. Assurance that the services are being offered in the most appropriate integrated setting.
 - l. Confirmation of informed choice of employment outcome, services, timelines, parties responsible for payment, and service providers/suppliers.
 - i. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall provide the “Selection of a Provider Information Sheet” (80-VR-07-01.A) and document how the individual was provided informed choice as required in “Informed Choice” (80-VR-07 and 80-VR-07-01).
 - ii. To document the confirmation, VR Staff or VR Contractor should check the informed choice boxes located on the IPE page in AWARE titled “Consumer Choice and Involvement.”
 - m. Confirmation of measureable skill gains.
 - i. To document measureable skill gain on the IPE, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall check the “I am and will continue working to obtain my high school diploma or its equivalent” box in the “Participant Responsibilities Options” section on the IPE page in AWARE, when appropriate.
 - n. A statement of the individual’s rights, methods of appeal, and availability of the Client Assistance Program (CAP).
 - o. The need for Extended Services for Supported Employment. If applicable, refer to “Supported Employment” (VRP-1900, to be revised to 80-VR-18-01).
 - p. The projected need for Post-Employment services.
2. For students with a disability, the IPE must be coordinated with the individualized education program or 504 service as applicable. Refer to “Transition Services” (80-VR-11-12, to be revised to 80-VR-19 and 80-VR-19-01).

E. Approval of the IPE

- 1. If an individual is working directly with VR Staff to develop the IPE, the steps below shall be completed to obtain approval.
 - a. VR Staff shall review the draft with the individual and, if applicable, his/her parent or legal guardian.

- b. Upon completion of the review, VR Staff shall obtain the individual's and, if applicable, his/her parent's or legal guardian's signature(s) (including the date) on the draft IPE to indicate their approval.
 - i. If VR Staff needs to send the IPE (via mail, fax, e-mail) to the individual and, if applicable, his/her legal guardian, for signature(s) (including dates); VR Staff shall send an unsigned copy
 - c. After the individual and if applicable, his/her parent or legal guardian, sign and date the IPE; Qualified Rehabilitation Professional (QRP) shall then sign and date the IPE indicating OOD's approval of the plan.
 - i. The QRP shall be the final person to sign and date the IPE.
 - d. After the appropriate signatures and approvals have been obtained, the QRP shall enter the signature/start date into the AWARE Plan page and save the entire signed IPE in an AWARE case note using the category "IPE-Signed."
2. If the individual is working with a VR Contractor to develop his/her IPE, the following steps shall be completed.
- a. The VR Contractor shall:
 - i. draft IPE in AWARE
 - ii. create an activity due, titled "IPE Draft Review";
 - iii. assign the activity due to the Contracts Liaison Task List.
 - a) VR Contractor shall not sign or date the draft IPE at this time.
 - b. OOD Liaison Counselor (i.e. QRP) shall review the submitted draft IPE
 - i. If approved, the OOD Liaison Counselor shall and save as a PDF in an AWARE Case Note and then complete the task.
 - ii. If not approved, the OOD Liaison Counselor should identify the items to be corrected within the task comments section (beginning the section with "Action Needed") and then complete the task.
 - a) The VR Contractor shall correct the identified items and re-task the draft IPE to Contracts Liaison Task List.
 - b) Next, the OOD Liaison Counselor shall follow the steps outlined in E.2.b. to approve the draft IPE.
 - c. Once the initial approval of the draft IPE is obtained from the OOD Liaison Counselor, the VR Contractor shall complete the items below.
 - i. Review the draft IPE with the individual and, if applicable, his/her parent or legal guardian.

- ii. Obtain the individual's and, if applicable, his/her legal guardian's signature, (including the date) on the draft IPE.
 - a) If the VR Contractor needs to send the IPE (via mail, fax, e-mail) to the individual and, if applicable, his/her parent or legal guardian, for signature(s) (including dates); the Contractor shall send an unsigned copy.
 - iii. Sign and date the draft IPE.
 - a) The Contractor shall not sign and date before the individual and/or, if applicable, his/her parent or legal guardian.
 - iv. Attach the signed and dated draft IPE to AWARE with the case note category "IPE Worksheet" and summary titled, "Final signed IPE."
 - v. Create an activity due with the title "IPE Approval" and assign it to the Contract Liaison Task List.
- d. Next, the OOD Liaison Counselor shall complete the following steps
- i. Review and compare the originally-submitted IPE with the IPE draft signed by the VR Contractor, individual, and, if applicable, his/her parent or legal guardian and, if in agreement:
 - a) sign and date the IPE;
 - 1) the OOD Liaison Counselor shall be the last person to sign/approve the IPE.
 - b) attach the signed copy into an AWARE case note with the category of "IPE-Signed;"
 - c) enter the signature/start date into the AWARE Plan page.
 - ii. If not approved, the OOD Liaison Counselor shall identify the items to be corrected within the task comments section "Action Needed" and follow the steps outlined in E.2.b.ii.
3. The IPE shall be considered valid when all required individuals have signed and dated the IPE.
- a. The date the QRP signs the IPE should match the plan start date entered into AWARE.
 - b. Copies of an IPE shall be provided to an individual and/or, if applicable, his/her parent or legal guardian after all required signatures and dates are present.

F. Implementation of the IPE

- 1. Once all approvals, required signatures, and dates are obtained on the IPE, implementation may begin.
 - a. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall only authorize services listed on the IPE, with the exception of assessment services as referred to in "Assessment Services" (80-VR-11-01) and the needed auxiliary services to support the assessment services.

G. IPE Evaluation

1. VR Staff or VR Contractor should evaluate the individual's IPE progress monthly to ensure satisfactory progress towards their employment outcome.
 - a. If areas of concern are identified during the monthly evaluation, VR Staff or VR Contractor should contact, via telephone or in person, the individual in order to discuss further and then document the discussion in an AWARE case note.
2. In the instance that the individual is not making satisfactory progress toward his/her employment outcome (i.e. disability-related issues), VR Staff or VR Contractor should consider whether case closure is warranted as outlined in "Case Closure" (80-VR-02-01).
3. If it is anticipated that an individual will be unable to participate in IPE services for a period of up to 90 calendar days, VR Staff or VR Contractor should place the individual in an interrupted status ("Service-I") if the following criteria are met:
 - a. Interruption is due to specific unforeseen circumstances;
 - b. The individual has a plan to resolve the reason for the interruption;
 - c. The individual has a timeframe for resuming VR services, not to exceed 90 calendar days;
 - d. The individual intends to resume VR services following the interruption.
4. If it is anticipated that the individual is unable to participate in services VR Staff or VR Contractor should consider closing the case and follow the direction provided in "Closure" (80-VR-02-01).
5. In cases where another procedure addresses IPE evaluation, the direction provided in the applicable procedure should take precedence.

H. Amending (Cloning) the IPE

1. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall work with the individual and, if applicable, his/her parent or legal guardian, to jointly amend (i.e. clone) the IPE when there are substantive changes to any of the following.
 - a. The employment outcome.
 - i. Specifically when there is a change in the first two digits of the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC), differentiating it from the first two digits of SOC that identifies the employment goal indicated on the IPE.
 - ii. When completing a clone due to a change in the employment outcome, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall ensure that the clone is signed and dated by all required parties (including the individual and, if applicable, his/her parent or legal guardian) prior to closing the case.
 - b. Expected plan end date.

- i. If the employment outcome is not achieved prior to the expected plan end date, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall clone the plan to extend the expected plan end date and, as appropriate, individual service dates.
 - a) Modifying the expected plan end date does not circumvent the requirement to clone the plan.
 - b) The clone shall be considered valid when all required individuals have signed and dated the clone, which must occur before plan expiration.
 - c. Vocational rehabilitation services as defined in OAC 3304-2-59; including the removal of services that have not been or will not be provided.
 - d. Service providers/suppliers.
 - e. The need for Post-Employment services
 - f. Financial responsibility of OOD and/or the individual.
 - i. A change is considered substantive when OOD's and/or the individual's actual contribution has a variance of \$500.00 from what is documented in the most current approved plan.
 - g. Supported Employment services as required in "Supported Employment" (VRP-1900, to be revised to 80-VR-18-01).
2. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall complete an IPE clone when closing a case "Rehabilitated", when there are substantive changes as described above and as required in "Case Closure" (80-VR-02-02).
 - a. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall not remove services that were previously provided.
 - b. VR Staff or VR Contractor should always select the "Clone Previous Plan" option in AWARE to make additions and/or corrections and to keep previously-provided services intact.
 3. VR Staff or VR Contractor should follow Section E. to approve an IPE clone prior to any changes being implemented.
 - a. Justification for any IPE clones should be documented in a case note in AWARE and titled "Clone Plan Justification" in the Summary field.
 - b. In rare circumstances, exceptions may be made to the approval process for an IPE clone under an emergency (e.g. immediate job-related need). In such a case, the clone shall be agreed upon verbally with the individual and, if applicable, his/her parent or legal guardian, documented in AWARE, and signed as soon as reasonably possible.
- I. Annual Review of the IPE
1. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall review the IPE at least annually with the individual and, if applicable, his/her parent or legal guardian, in order to determine the individual's progress toward achieving the identified employment outcome.

- a. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall complete the annual review within 30 days before or after the anniversary date of the implementation of the original IPE, preferably in a face-to-face meeting with the individual and, if applicable, his/her parent or legal guardian.
 - i. Clones to the IPE and the date of the last annual review do not alter the timeframes for completion of the annual review.
2. During the annual review VR Staff or VR Contractor should complete a written narrative in AWARE on the “Plan Review Layout Page” that includes the items below.
 - a. A brief summary of the services completed and progress made towards the employment outcome during the past year.
 - i. VR Staff or VR Contractor should clone the IPE during the annual review if there are substantive changes as listed above in H.1.a.- e.
 - b. The individual’s and, if applicable, his/her parent or legal guardian’s opinion(s) and the VR Staff or VR Contractor’s observations regarding whether progress is sufficient and/or if there needs to be any changes.
 - c. Next steps and incremental goals for the remainder of services and/or the upcoming year.
3. Once the Annual Review has been completed, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall send the “Annual Review Letter” (80-VR-08-01.B) to the individual.

J. Violation

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

FORMS AND ATTACHMENTS

- 80-VR-08-01.A Time Extension for IPE
- 80-VR-08-01.B Annual Review for IPE

RESOURCES

- 80-VR-01.B VR Program Overview
- 80-VR-01.C Participant Acknowledgement
- VR-80-02-01 Case Closure Procedure
- 80-VR-01.D Applicant/Eligible Individual Rights and Duties
- 80-VR-04.A Comprehensive Assessment Form
- 80-VR-11-12 Transition Services Procedure
- 80-VR-11-14 Job Related Services Procedure
- VRP-1900 Supported Employment Procedure (to be revised to 80-VR-18-01)
- 80-VR-16-01 Self-Employment Procedure
- 80-VR-07-01.A Selection of a Provider Informational Sheet
- Vocational Rehabilitation Provider Directory
- Employment First Provider Directory
- 80-VR-07 and 80-VR-07-01 Informed Choice Policy and Procedure
- 40-FIN-01-06 Vocational Rehabilitation Purchases
- 80-VR-11-01 Assessment Services Procedure

REVIEW

It is the responsibility of the Deputy Director, or designee, 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 review as required in "Policy and Procedure Development, Review, Dissemination and Acknowledgement" (10-ADM-01).