

# Vocational Rehabilitation

**Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD)** is the state agency that empowers Ohioans with disabilities through employment, disability determination, and independence. It is accomplished through its Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR), Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired (BSVI), and Division of Disability Determination (DDD). A fourth area is the Division of Employer and Innovation Services (EIS), which is responsible for establishing and maintaining partnerships with employers.

## Helping Ohioans with Disabilities Get a Job

OOD operates Ohio's Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program. Through the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation and Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired, the VR program provides services to eligible individuals with disabilities to assist them in getting and keeping a job. Disabilities may include physical, intellectual, mental health, or sensory disabilities. OOD works with adults seeking to enter the workforce or retain a job, and with youth beginning at age 14, to assist them as they transition from high school into college and/or the workplace.

## Applying for Services

VR services are available in all 88 counties of Ohio. An individual who is interested in applying for VR services can begin the process online by visiting [www.OODWorks.com](http://www.OODWorks.com). A self-assessment on this site helps an individual decide if VR services are the right fit. Individuals with disabilities can also contact any of OOD's field offices ([www.OOD.Ohio.Gov](http://www.OOD.Ohio.Gov)) to begin the process.

## Career Counseling

Once eligibility is established, OOD's VR counselors provide individualized career counseling to help eligible individuals with disabilities explore and prepare for employment options available in their community. These services are person-centered so that individuals with disabilities take part fully in the process, with VR counselors helping them navigate all of the possibilities.

For individuals receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and/or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), OOD can offer work incentives consultation services to understand the impact of employment on disability and other benefits.

## Services

Career counseling results in a specific written plan called an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) that outlines the individual's job goal and the services needed to reach that goal. OOD closely monitors needed services purchased from providers in the community to make sure the individual's needs are met. Services may include work experience, job training, job search assistance, assistive technology, and on-the-job supports. For information about approved providers, visit [ProviderSearch.ood.ohio.gov](http://ProviderSearch.ood.ohio.gov).

## Employment

OOD, along with its network of providers, works with employers to match individuals who are ready to work with available job openings. Once the individual is working successfully on the job for at least 90 days and is satisfied with the work, OOD will close the case. If the individual experiences difficulties on the job later, short-term services may be available to keep the job, or the individual can reapply for VR services.

The services described are funded, in part, with federal funds awarded by the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) under the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program provided by Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) 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) 2019, OOD received \$99,548,657 in federal funds. Funds appropriated by the State covered 21.3% of the total costs, or \$26,942,648. Of these federal funds, \$14,932,299 is set aside for Pre-ETS. For purposes of the Supported Employment (SE) Program, the DOE SE grant funded 90% of the costs for the Supported Employment for Youth with a Disability Program up to the grant amount and 100% of the costs of regular Supported Employment program costs up to the grant amount. In FFY 2019, OOD received \$297,857 for SE Youth with a Disability and State appropriated funds paid a small amount more than the remaining 10% or \$33,192 of the total costs. In FFY 2019, OOD received \$297,857 in regular SE grant funds. For purposes of the Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who are Blind (OIB) Program, the federal grant received from DOE in FFY 2019 paid 90% of the total costs incurred under the program. In FFY 2019, OOD received \$1,153,208 in federal grant funds. Funds appropriated by the State paid over the 10% required match or \$130,000 of the total costs incurred under the OIB program. For purposes of the Independent Living (IL) Program, the federal grant received from HHS paid 90% of the total costs incurred in FFY 2019. In FFY 2019, OOD received funding of \$640,571. Funds appropriated by the State paid 10% or \$71,175 of the total costs incurred under the IL Program.

## Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities

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