



Protection and Advocacy for  
People with Disabilities  
Since 1977

## **Your Guide to Services from the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services**

### **Can I Get Services From the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (WVDRS)?**

- You are eligible for services if you get SSI or SSDI (based on your disability) and you want to work, or
- You may be eligible if you have a substantial mental or physical disability and need WVDRS services to get or keep a job.

### **What kinds of services does WVDRS provide?**

- Vocational Counseling
- Vocational, Medical, Psychological or Educational Evaluations or Services
- Vocational and Assistive Technology Evaluations
- Job Skills Training

- Job Placement
- Supported Employment
- Environmental Modifications at Home or Work
- Assistive Technology
- Vehicle Modifications and Driver's Training
- Follow-up Once You Get a Job

## **What can I expect when I first meet with a WVDRS counselor?**

You will need:

- Your Social Security Number
- Names and Addresses of Doctors You've Been Seeing
- Names and Addresses of Schools You've Attended
- Medical Insurance Information
- Past Job Information
- Other Information such as Medical, Psychological or School Records

You can take anyone you want with you when you meet with your counselor.

The counselor will decide if you are eligible for services from WVDRS and what services you may need.

If eligible, you and your counselor will write an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

*Remember: This is YOUR IPE. Take the opportunity to choose your own job path and the services you need to reach your employment goal.*

You can choose to write your own IPE and have WVDRS approve it. (Forms and instructions are available from your counselor.)

### **What is in MY IPE?**

- Your vocational goal chosen by you, based upon your strengths, abilities, and interests.
- When you plan to achieve this goal.
- Services you will need to reach your goal.
- Who will provide these services? You have the right to choose who will provide your services.
- How and who pays for the services listed in your plan?
- The dates your services will begin and end.

**You will get a copy of your IPE; if not, ask for it in writing!**

### **What if I disagree with my counselor?**

You have the right to appeal any decision WVDRS makes about eligibility or services.

If at any time during the process you need assistance, you can contact WVA at 1-800-950-5250.

You should receive a written copy of “Your Rights and Responsibilities” when you apply for services; when you develop your IPE; and/or when your services change.

## **What is the Appeal Process?**

1. First, WVA suggests that you talk to your WVDRS counselor to try to resolve the problem.
2. If you still disagree, you have 60 days to notify WVDRS in writing that you want a Fair Hearing. This is a formal process where you and WVDRS each present evidence to support your claims.
3. If you choose, while waiting for the Fair Hearing, you may request an informal review. This meeting usually involves you, your counselor, and WVDRS supervisory staff.
4. When you request a Fair Hearing, WVDRS also has to offer you the option of mediation; this is a separate process where you discuss your issues before an impartial decision maker. Mediation cannot be used to delay or deny the right to have a Fair Hearing. It is your choice whether to use mediation. You can go to mediation and then have a Fair Hearing if you are not satisfied.
5. The hearing officer is responsible for making a decision within 60 days of your request for a hearing unless both sides agree to a delay.
6. If you disagree with the hearing officer’s decision, you have 20 days to request a review of the decision by the

Secretary of the West Virginia Department of Education and the Arts.

7. The reviewing official has 30 days to notify you of the decision.
8. If you disagree with the reviewing official, you can appeal in circuit or federal court.

### **WVA Tips...**

WVA would like to stress the importance of putting your requests and concerns in writing to create documentation.

We also recommend that you...

- Keep copies of all correspondence with WVDRS for your own records.
- Send letters to the appropriate WVDRS staff by certified mail with a return receipt. This will prove the letter was received and when it was received. You can do this at any post office.

**REMEMBER:** Putting your requests and concerns in writing creates a record that can be used as evidence if an appeal or complaint is later filed.

## **Where can I get services from WVDRS?**

There are WVDRS offices located throughout West Virginia. Each office serves a certain area of the state.

Call your local office and request an appointment with a counselor to apply for services.

To find your local WVDRS office, call: 1-800-642-8207 or visit <http://www.wvdrs.org>.

If you have questions or need Assistance, you can contact:

West Virginia Advocates  
Client Assistance Program  
1-800-950-5250

**To request additional copies or  
alternative formats, please call 800-950-5250.**

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