

Budget Unit Brief

FY 2017



Vocational Rehabilitation

Overview

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS) assists individuals with disabilities to achieve employment and live independently. The Division of Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services is the largest Division within the Department of Education. The IVRS is responsible for providing services leading to employment for eligible Iowans with disabilities in accordance with Iowa Code chapter [259](#), the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended and codified in [29 U.S.C. Section 701 et seq.](#), the federal Social Security Act ([42 U.S.C. Section 301, et seq.](#)), and corresponding federal regulations.

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services serves individuals with disabilities under [Title II](#) and [Title XVI](#) of the federal Social Security Act and [Title IV](#) of the Workforce Investment Act. The IVRS serves people with disabilities by:

- Providing vocationally related assistance to achieve economic independence; or
- Providing disability determinations that result in appropriate financial benefits per Social Security Administration guidelines.

Other services and financial assistance are provided to enable persons with disabilities to maintain independent functioning as long as possible within their communities and to prevent institutionalization.

Employees of IVRS work within three bureaus and a Planning and Development Team:

- Disability Determination Services Bureau. This Bureau is responsible for determining the eligibility of Iowa residents that apply for disability benefits under the Social Security Disability Insurance (Title II), Supplemental Security Income (Title XVI), or the Department of Human Services Medicaid Waiver programs.
- Rehabilitation Services Bureau. This Bureau assists eligible individuals with disabilities to become employed. Persons who receive vocational rehabilitation services have a wide range of disabilities.
- Administrative Services Bureau. This Bureau provides support to the other elements of the Division through the functions of fiscal accounting, budgeting, and payroll; statistical records, reporting, and closed case file control; personnel management and collective bargaining administration; purchasing and property control; information systems; and the physical plant management of the Jessie Parker Building.
- Planning and Development Team. This Team is responsible for planning, legal, program evaluation, and outreach. This includes development of business contacts to foster client employment. Services also include oversight of the Iowa Independent Living Centers and Statewide Independent Living Council, as well as some direct service provision to Iowans with independent living needs.

The Office of the Administrator is responsible for overall administration of the statewide programs. The administrator determines program scope and policies, promotes public interest and acceptance, directs budget funds, develops program plans, and provides for staff development, research, and evaluation. Under the umbrella of the administrator are two community advisory groups: the State Rehabilitation Council and the Community Rehabilitation Program Advisory Group.

Waiting List

The IVRS currently has a waiting list because they cannot serve all individuals with the current state and federal funding. The IVRS counselors determine eligibility according to federal guidelines, and then depending upon the significance of the disability, the individual may be placed on one of three waiting lists:

- Most Significantly Disabled (MSD) – The IVRS counselor has determined the individual has a significant disability and is seriously limited in three or more functional areas (mobility, communications, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, or work skills).
- Significantly Disabled (SD) – The IVRS counselor has determined the individual has a physical or mental disability that seriously limits the person in one or two of the MSD listed functional areas.
- Others Eligible – The IVRS counselor has determined the individual is eligible for services; however, the person does not meet the criteria for either MSD or SD.

More Information

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services: <http://www.ivrs.iowa.gov/index.html>
Iowa General Assembly: <http://www.legis.iowa.gov/index.aspx>
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As funds become available, individuals on the waiting lists are served according to the severity of disability. Individuals on the Most Significantly Disabled waiting list are served first. All individuals on the MSD waiting list must be served before individuals on the Significantly Disabled waiting list. Others Eligible are served only when all persons from the Significantly Disabled waiting list have been served.

Funding

The Vocational Rehabilitation General Fund appropriation is used for the general operations of the Division. The General Fund appropriation matches federal funds, and for every \$1 in state funding the Division matches \$3.69 in federal funds (21.3% state to 78.7% federal). The federal grant is subject to a maintenance of effort (MOE) requirement that requires the state to spend an amount equal to or greater than the second previous year. For example, the MOE state funding level for FFY 2017 must equal or exceed the level of state funding match reported for FFY 2015. If the state does not meet the MOE requirement, there is a penalty that the federal grant is reduced by the amount of the shortfall. The IVRS failed to meet the MOE requirement for FFY 2010 (\$32,000), FFY 2011 (\$1,121,461), FFY 2012 (\$151,855), and FFY 2013 (\$129,122). The IVRS does not expect an MOE deficit in FFY 2016. The annual appropriation for Vocational Rehabilitation has been \$5.9 million since FY 2015.

Related Statutes and Administrative Rules

Iowa Code chapter [259](#)

[281](#) Iowa Administrative Code chapter [56](#)

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