

Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)

Disability Services **1-800-442-6351 • TTY 866-830-7327**
Labor & Industry Website: www.dli.state.pa.us Click: **Disability Services**

Where do I Begin?

- Youth with a disability who meet eligibility criteria for employment and are interested in working should be referred to the local OVR office
- Referral can be made up to 2 years prior to graduation and can be made by anyone
- Initial Interview – Be prepared to:
 - Provide a medical history related to the youth's disability (names and addresses of doctors and specialists, hospital admissions, names of medications)
 - Discuss how the youth's disability may affect his or her ability to work
 - Provide an education history/Individualized Education Program (IEP) and job history
 - Bring copies of any vocational tests and reports that may be available

What are the Eligibility Criteria?

- Unlike the entitlement services provided by special education, OVR is an eligibility program, which means a referred youth must meet the following criteria to qualify for services:
 - Have a disability that is a physical, mental, or emotional impairment, which results in a substantial impediment to employment
 - Expected to benefit in terms of an employment outcome from services provided
 - Be prepared to enter, engage in, or retain competitive (20 hours per week, minimum wage, integrated community setting) employment
- Eligibility for services is determined within 60 days by a qualified VR counselor

What Happens Next?

- If eligible, services will be provided based on severity of disability (federal law)
- An Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) will be jointly developed by the individual and OVR counselor
- The goals of the IPE and IEP should support the youth's employment outcome
- A financial needs test will determine what costs will be covered by OVR and what the youth or family may be required to contribute
- Diagnostic services, vocational evaluations, vocational counseling and guidance, and job placement services are always provided by OVR at no cost to the youth and/or family

What Types of Services may be Included in the IPE?

- Diagnostic and Vocational Evaluations
- Counseling, Guidance, and Placement Services
- Training Services and Supports
- Physical Restoration Services
- Assistive Technology Services

Employment and Completion of the Program

- OVR services will end when the youth achieves the IPE goals and is successfully employed for at least 90 days. The case will then be closed.
- If necessary, OVR post-employment services are available after the case is closed.

Additional Programs Offered by OVR

- Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services (specialized children services, orientation and mobility, rehabilitation teaching)
- Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (information and referral, advocacy, interpreter database)
- Hiram G. Andrews Center (comprehensive vocational training program)

For additional information, please contact:

**The Department of Labor & Industry, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)
Room 1700, 651 Boas Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17121
General Information: 717-787-5279
www.dli.state.pa.us**