

Chapter 22: Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired
Policy and Procedures Manual
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Section I. Purpose

- A. In general, the Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired (DBVI) is responsible for the vocational rehabilitation of persons who meet the definitions of legal blindness or visually impaired and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) is responsible for the vocational rehabilitation of persons with all other disabilities who meet the DVR eligibility criteria. However, in some cases it might be appropriate for a consumer to be served concurrently by both DVR and DBVI. **To be served concurrently by both DBVI and DVR, the consumer must meet the eligibility criteria for both agencies.** This chapter will outline DVR and DBVI policy regarding concurrent DVR and DBVI cases.

Section II. General Policy

- A. Any visually impaired or legally blind person who expresses interest in vocational rehabilitation will be referred to DBVI unless, in the opinion of counseling staff from both agencies, the person may be better served by DVR, or served concurrently by both agencies. DBVI and DVR will take into account the following considerations when determining if an individual should be served by DBVI, DVR or both agencies concurrently:
1. Which disability is the primary barrier to employment?
 2. What set of services and expertise best meet the needs of the individual to help them achieve their employment goal?
 3. Which other community service providers may be involved in supporting the individual to achieve their employment goal?

In most cases, a consumer will be served by either DBVI or DVR only. In cases where a legally blind or visually impaired consumer is being served by DBVI, counselors may consult with DVR regarding services available through community resources, programs, services, and plan development, **without necessarily opening a concurrent DVR case.** A concurrent case would only be necessary if the consumer required a combination of services and expertise from both DVR and DBVI in order to achieve their employment goal.

Examples of Cases Where a Concurrent DBVI and DVR Case Might Be Necessary

Example A: A youth in transition is legally blind and requires mobility training in order to be successful in a job. DBVI has the specific expertise and program to provide these services. However, the young person also has a developmental disability and is eligible for supported employment services through the Developmental Disabilities Services Division (DDSD). Because DVR funds DDSD supported employment services and has an ongoing relationship with the provider, it might be beneficial for DBVI to have a concurrent case to oversee that set of services.

Example B: An adult with a significant psychiatric disability becomes legally blind in his mid-forties. Because the individual has become legally blind later in life, it is likely he will need DBVI services to gain or retain employment. However, the individual might also need specific services and supports related to their psychiatric disability that may be better provided by DVR in order to achieve their employment goal.

Section IV. Managing Concurrent Cases

Sharing of Case Information

- A. The DBVI counselor will seek the consumer's consent to share information and coordinate services with the DVR counselor. If the consumer refuses to provide consent to share information, the DBVI counselor cannot compel them to do so. If the consumer refuses consent, the DBVI counselor must manage the case with no coordination with DVR.

Case Management and Coordination

- B. If the consumer provides consent to share information, it will be most effective if the DBVI counselor and the DVR counselor coordinate their efforts. To this end the DBVI counselor will work with the DVR counselor to:
 1. Identify either the DBVI counselor or the DVR counselor as the case lead and primary contact for the consumer.
 2. Hold at least one three-way meeting with the DBVI counselor, DVR counselor and consumer to establish protocols for managing the case.
 3. Coordinate development of the DBVI IPE to ensure the employment goal and planned services are aligned with the DVR IPE.

Provision of Services

- C. The fact that the consumer has a concurrent case with DVR would not affect what services or supports could be provided by DBVI. All of the DBVI policies, procedures and spending guidelines would apply to the DBVI case. However, DVR services are considered a comparable benefit. (See Chapter 19, Comparable Services and Benefits.)