DVRS

NEW JERSEY DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES
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NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF

LWD

LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

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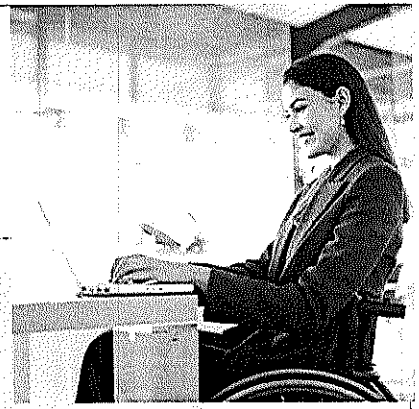
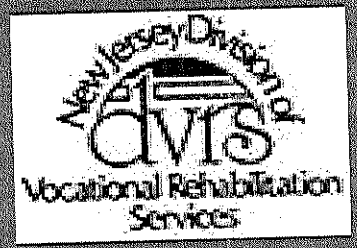
DVRS



- DVRS is the state agency designated by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended, (and administered through the federal office of the Rehabilitation Services Administration, RSA) to provide vocational rehabilitation services.

- DVRS at the state level is administered through the NJ Dept. of Labor & Workforce Development and as such must comply with both federal and state guidelines.



Mission Statement

IT IS THE MISSION OF DVRS TO "ENABLE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES TO ACHIEVE AN EMPLOYMENT OUTCOME CONSISTENT WITH THEIR STRENGTHS, PRIORITIES, NEEDS, AND CAPABILITIES."

Purpose of the VR Program

- "To empower individuals with disabilities to maximize employment, achieve economic self-sufficiency and independence, and to realize full inclusion and integration into society."

- "Persons with a disability have the right to live independently, enjoy self-determination, make choices, contribute to society and pursue meaningful careers."

WHO DO WE HELP?

- Individuals with physical, cognitive, or mental impairments who want to work, but will need services and supports in order to work in competitive (independent) employment.
- DVRS is an eligibility program.
- Individuals must have a documented disability.
- DVRS clients include adults of all ages who are able and willing to work. This includes students who are within two years of exiting the school system.
- Individuals who are blind or have a serious visual impairment are referred to the NJ Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI).

Steps in the DVRS process

- **1.Referral: Individuals can refer themselves to DVRS or can be referred by other state agencies, medical personnel, community organizations and others. The referral typically involves completion of a DVRS "Confidential Referral Form."**

  ***The Referral form is not an application.**

- **2. Application: Individuals apply for services at a "Survey Interview" (Intake appointment) with a DVR counselor. *Individuals apply, they are not registered as is the case with some other state entities.**

Steps in the DVRS process cont...

- **3. Eligibility: is based on documentation of individual's disability to include:**
  Medical Records, Mental Health Assessments, or other Diagnostic and Vocational Evaluations.

- **4. IPE: If made eligible, an individual completes an IPE (Individualized Plan for Employment) with their DVRS counselor. This plan includes a vocational goal and specific services to be provided by DVRS.**

- **5. Case Closure: Case is closed when person has been working successfully for a minimum of 90 days and services identified in IPE have ended.**

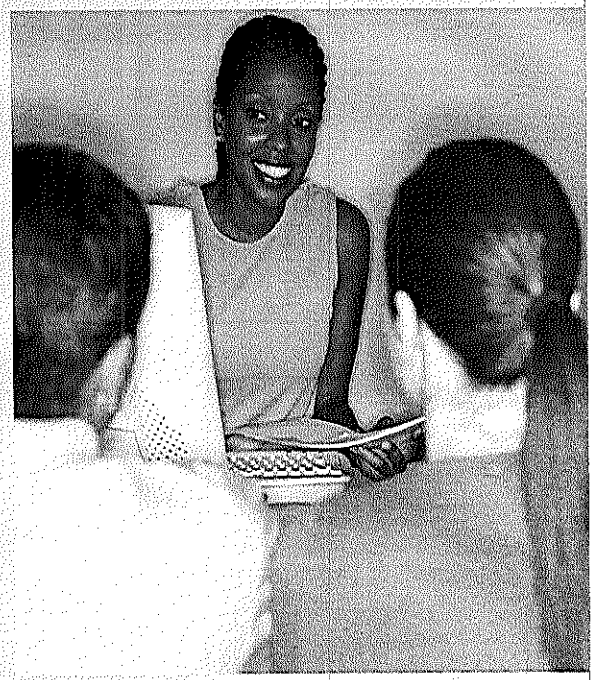
The role of DVRS counselors

- VR counselors are experts in providing vocational guidance and counseling to individuals with disabilities.
- Counselors are trained to assess an individual's *capabilities* regarding employment.
- Counselors provide guidance in helping the individual find the right career match and determine the specific services needed to achieve their vocational goals.

What services can DVRS provide?

- The primary or central service provided to DVRS clients is vocational guidance & counseling, and this service is provided by the VR counselor.
- Other services may be provided if such service(s) is needed to assist the individual in obtaining and or maintaining employment.
- Such services are provided by outside entities who are contracted to provide services to DVRS clients.
- Any and all services must be related to a goal of employment.

ASSESSMENT



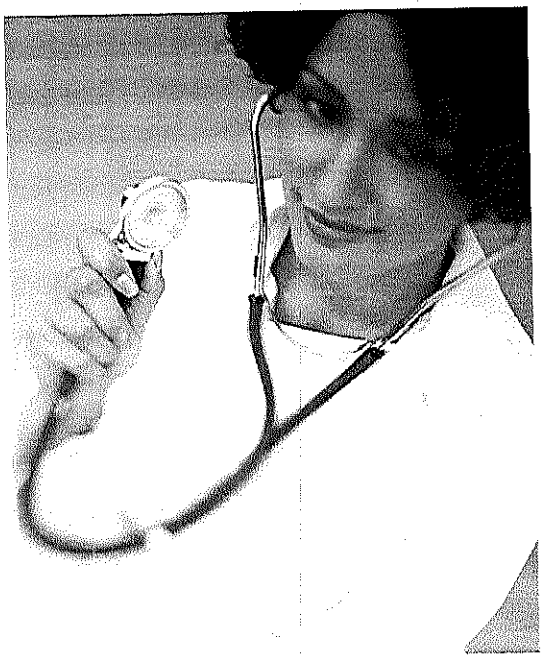
Assessment is typically the first step to determine an individuals capability to work and to identify what services will be needed.

Types of assessments may include:

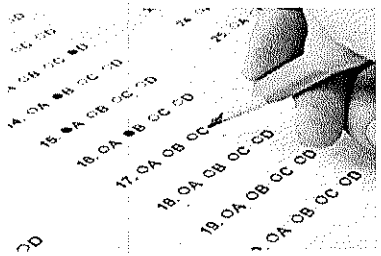
- Diagnostic Evaluations
- Career Assessments
- Work Capacity/Situational Assessments (assessing an individual's ability to perform certain job tasks and navigate a work environment)

Diagnostic Evaluations are typically used to determine an individuals diagnosis, find out more **information about the specific disability and/or to determine individual's strengths and functional limitations in relation to employment. Specific types** of evaluations may include:

- Medical Evaluations
- Psychological Evaluations
- Psychiatric Evaluations
- Learning Disability Evaluations
- Pre-Vocational Evaluations
- Physical Therapy or Work Capacity Evaluations



What types of Career or Vocational Assessments can DVRS provide?



- Once an individual becomes a DVRS client, VR counselors may use formal career assessments such as those found through the NJ Dept. of Labor, i.e. NJCAN, or may provide formal testing such as "Career Scope," which is administered in the local DVRS office.

- DVRS clients may participate in varied types of work ready or prevocational assessments that take place in structured work environments or integrated work settings.

To be eligible for DVRS, an individual must...

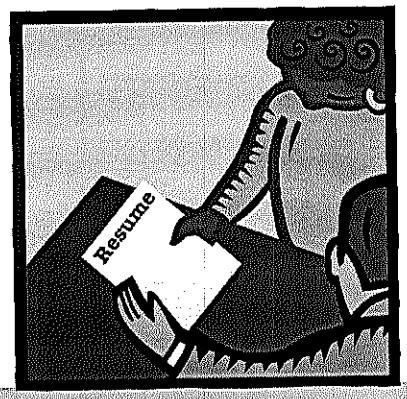
- Applicant must want to work and be able to legally work in the U.S.
- Have a physical or mental impairment which results in a substantial impediment to employment,
- Require vocational rehabilitation services to prepare, for obtain, and retain employment consistent with the applicant's strengths, abilities, capabilities and informed choice.

Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)

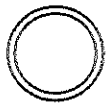
- The next step after a client has been determined eligible for DVRS services is to develop a plan for employment. This takes place when the client has determined a vocational goal and the specific services needed to achieve such goal have been determined.
- Any service provided must be deemed necessary for the DVRS client to achieve and/or maintain employment.
- The IPE is developed by both the VR counselor and client and will always involve vocational guidance & counseling as the "core" service that is provided.
- This is a written plan signed by both the DVRS client and VR counselor.

Vocational Counseling & Guidance is based on Informed Choice and can include:

- Labor Market Information, what are the current "In-Demand" occupations?
- Information regarding job descriptions, and the skills, aptitudes and abilities needed for specific jobs and occupations
- Review of Vocational Assessments
- Career Assessment and Planning
- Resume Writing & Interview Skills



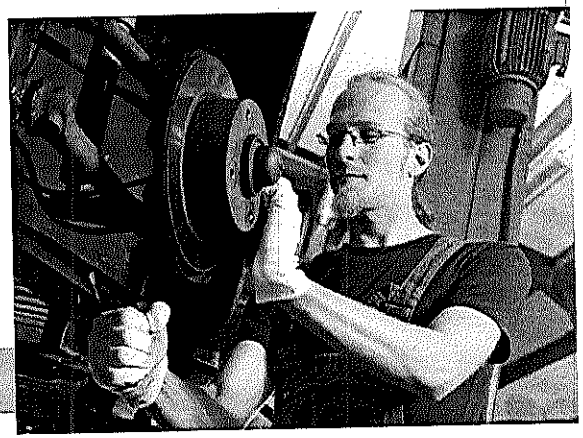
Vocational Guidance & Counseling cont…



- Assistance with developing short and long term vocational goals
- Information about vocational training and post-secondary schools
- Information about and referral for supported employment (job coaching) services
- Many services are of no cost to the individual, although some require a "financial needs assessment."

Many services are provided with no regard to income to include...

- Diagnostic Evaluations
- Vocational Guidance & Counseling
- Job Placement
- Supported Employment/Job Coaching
- On-the-Job Training
- Work Adjustment Training within a Community Rehabilitation Program



Examples of Cost Services

- Physical or Medical Restoration Services- i.e. Physical Therapy, Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Psychotherapy etc.
- Training- i.e. vocational, technical, college
- Books & Supplies for school
- Tools & Equipment needed for a job
- Vehicle Modifications, Driver Training, Wheelchairs, Assistive Technology Devices

Case Closure

- A client's case with DVRS is closed once the client has been successfully employed for a minimum of 90 days and all services identified in the IPE have ended.
- A client may be eligible for "post-employment" services and may also reapply to DVRS at any time in the future if the need arises.
- Post-employment services, imply a minimal amount of intervention needed for a designated period of time to assist the client in maintaining employment.

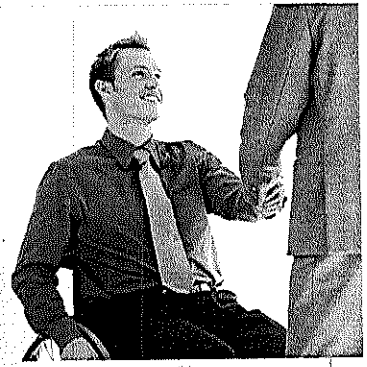
Partnerships with other state agencies/divisions

- DVRS has a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with DDD which is addressed in the next slide.
- DVRS works with the Office of Special Education/DOE to coordinate services to high school age transition students.
- DVRS has a contract with DMHS who provides supported employment services to DVRS clients who have a mental illness.
- DVRS serves on the NJ Mental Health Council, the NJ Advisory Council on Traumatic Brain Injury, the SRC for the Commission for the Blind, the NJ Council for Developmental Disabilities and the State Special Education Advisory Council for Special Education.

DVRS and DDD (Division of Developmental Disabilities)

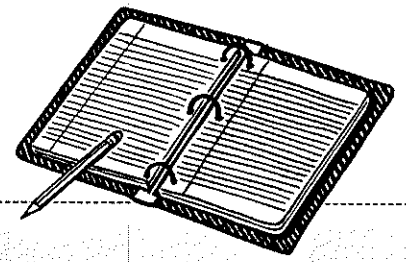
- Individuals may receive services from both DVRS and DDD at the same time.
- Individuals must still meet eligibility criteria for DVRS if seeking services from this agency.
- <u>DVRS is not a life long service as is DDD</u>.

Centers for Independent Living (CIL)



- The CIL(s) of New Jersey, many of whom are funded through DVRS, are non-residential community based , consumer driven organizations that provide 4 "Core" Services to individuals with disabilities to include: Advocacy, Peer Support, Information & Referral and Independent Living Skills Training.
- CIL(s) can provide another resource/support to DVRS clients and others with disabilities.
- CIL(s) are located in centers across the state. Your local DVRS office can provide contact information for the CIL in your area or this can be found at: http://www.njsilc.org

Important Information



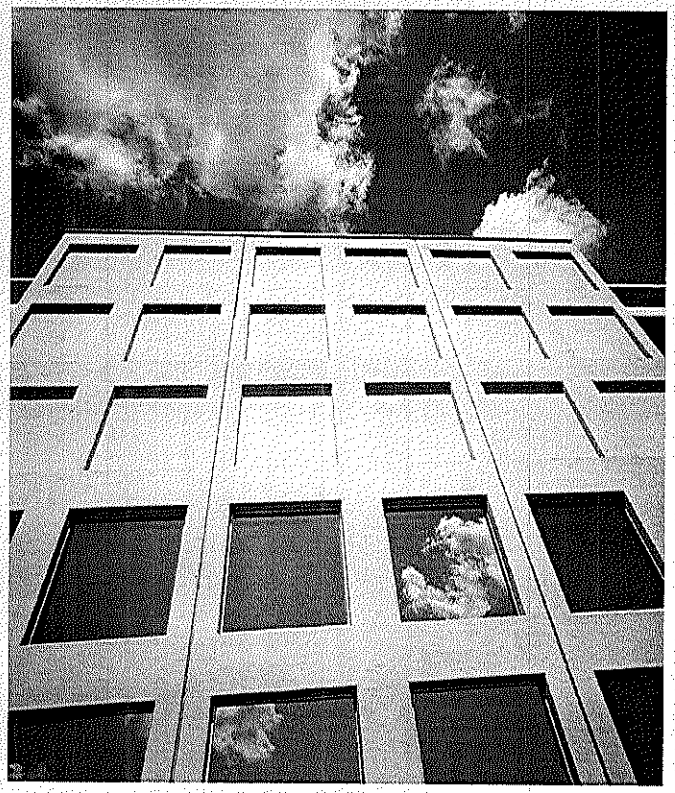
- DVRS services are eligibility based and not an entitlement program.
- Services are time-limited.
- Clients may reapply to DVRS if needed after their case has been closed, at any time in the future.
- All services are individualized and based on client choice.
- All client records are confidential.

Contact Information

There are eighteen local offices located throughout New Jersey.
The administrative office ("Central Office") is located in the LWD building in Trenton, NJ.

NJDVRS, Central Office,

John Fitch Plaza
P.O. BOX 398
08625-0398
609-292-5987 (Phone)
609-292-8347 (FAX)
609-292-2919 (TTY)



DVRS Website:
http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/dvrs

DVRS Local Offices

- Bridgeton (Cumberland, Salem) 856-453-3888
- Camden (Camden) 856-614-2500
- Elizabeth (Union) 908-965-3940
- Hackensack (Bergen) 201-996-8970
- Hackettstown (Sussex, Warren) 908-852-4110
- Jersey City (Hudson) 201-217-7180
- Morristown (Morris) 973-631-6304
- Neptune (Monmouth) 732-775-1799
- Newark (Essex) 973-648-3494
- New Brunswick (Middlesex) 732-937-6300
- Paterson (Passaic) 973-977-4285
- Pleasantville (Atlantic) 609-813-3933
- Somerville (Somerset, Hunterdon) 908-704-3030
- Thorofare (Gloucester) 856-384-3730
- Toms River (Ocean) 732-505-2310
- Trenton (Mercer) 609-292-2940
- Westampton (Burlington) 609-518-3948
- Wildwood (Cape May) 609-523-0330

Presenter

- Karen Carroll, LCSW is a Program Planning Development Specialist (PPDS) for DVRS. Her office is located at the DVRS Central Office.

  Direct dial # (609) 292-4967.

  Email: karen.carroll@dol.state.nj.us
- Ms. Carroll is responsible for monitoring specific program areas for DVRS that cover targeted disability groups to include:

  Substance Abuse, Mental Illness, Co-Occurring Disorders, Autism, and Brain Injury.

  In addition, Ms. Carroll monitors the DVRS Transition from School to Work Program.