

# NC DIVISION OF SERVICES FOR THE BLIND POLICIES AND PROCEDURES VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

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<b>Section:</b>	<b>C</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Counseling and Guidance Services</b>
<b>Current Effective Date:</b>	<b>02/08</b>
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Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) counseling means assisting the eligible individual through verbal interaction to deal effectively with important issues or concerns related to VR, which differentiates it from other types of counseling routinely provided during the VR process. Counseling techniques may vary based on the individual's needs and the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor's approach. Guidance means the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor gives information and acts as a coordinator, advocate or mediator.

Counseling and guidance issues may include, but are not limited to:

1. the VR process; roles and responsibilities and expectations of individual and Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor; explanation of Division of Services for the Blind (DSB) policies and procedures and decisions affecting the individual [such as Eligibility, Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) (On-Line DSB-4005-B-VR Individual Plan for Employment with instructions), and Case Closure]; individual Informed Choice (IC); individual rights and avenues of appeal [Client Assistance Program (CAP)];
2. comparable benefits available to the individual;
3. Assessment of the individual's real and perceived disabilities, functional abilities and limitations (including education, work history and job skills), impediment to employment, resources, family support, VR services needed, motivational level, job placement options and an initiation of tentative job placement plans, employer expectations (attendance, sick leave, staying on task, appropriate dress, hygiene, behavior), salary expectations, job modification and attitudinal barriers, and other factors affecting the achievement of an employment outcome;
4. Transportation (transportation), housing and leisure time needs;
5. availability of support services and referral to other agencies and programs;
6. self-advocacy;
7. understanding and following medical advice; and
8. personal adjustment counseling.

The Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor provides VR counseling and guidance throughout the VR process to all individuals, including applicants. Establishment of a professional counseling relationship with the individual is the foundation for providing the other services necessary to achieve a successful employment outcome. Regular contacts are crucial if emerging problems are to be identified and resolved.

The individual is responsible for working with the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor to develop a good working relationship, keep and be on time for all of appointments with the DSB Vocational

Rehabilitation Counselor. If the individual cannot keep an appointment, the individual must tell the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor as soon as possible (preferably before the appointment time). The individual should tell the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor about changes that could affect the individual's program (such as a change in address, family size, personal injury legal action, other benefits and funding sources, job status, disability or general health, financial situation or support network). The individual should ask questions when something is not understood so the individual can make informed choices. The individual should be honest about his/her disability, needs and feelings.

VR counseling and guidance is exempt from individual purchasing policies and procedures, comparable benefits and financial eligibility requirements. There is no maximum allowance for vocational counseling and guidance provided by DSB since this is a no-cost service to individuals. Duration of services is based upon individual needs; services should substantially contribute to the individual's program and must be reflected in the individual's IPE.