

Maryland State Department of Education
Division of Rehabilitation Services
Vocational Rehabilitation Program Eligibility Fact Sheet

Eligibility

Eligibility criteria for the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program are stated in the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, Title I, Part A, Section 102. To be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, an individual must:

- Have a physical or mental impairment, which results in a substantial impediment to employment; and
- Be able to benefit in terms of an employment outcome (A person with an impairment and impediment is presumed to be able to benefit; in the rare event that there are serious doubts about ability to benefit, the individual will be offered trial work experiences or a period of extended evaluation to further determine ability to benefit); and
- Require VR services to prepare for, secure, retain or regain employment.

Presumed Eligible for VR Services

Individuals who receive certain benefits and apply for VR services in order to achieve employment are presumed eligible for VR services. The following are presumed eligible:

- SSI/SSDI recipients, and/or
- Individuals eligible for long-term supports of DDA/BHA and pursuing competitive or supported employment.

Eligibility Documentation

DORS counselors are required to obtain documentation supporting the eligibility decision, using existing documentation as much as possible; additional assessments may be scheduled if needed.

Eligibility Determination Timeline

DORS counselors are required to make the eligibility determination within 60 days unless an extension is needed and the applicant agrees. For individuals presumed eligible, the eligibility decision is made well before the 60-day timeline.

Ineligibility for VR Services

An individual may be determined ineligible for VR services for the following reasons:

- The individual does not have a physical or mental impairment; or
- The individual's impairment does not result in a substantial impediment to employment; or
- The individual does not require services to achieve employment; or
- The individual cannot benefit in terms of an employment outcome due to severity of the disability, determined subsequent to trial work experiences.