



VRS Community Partners + VRS Staff Forum

October 1, 2024

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Welcome to the VRS Community Partners + VRS Staff Forum!

- **ASL Interpreters** are designated as “co-hosts”, so they appear at the top of your participant list. If you need the ability to “multi-pin” please email Janeen.Oien@state.mn.us.
- **Closed Captioning** is available. A livestream is linked in the chat.
- **Your name:** Please change your Zoom name to display your first and last name and the agency where you work. An easy way to rename is: 1) go to the participant list and find your name, 2) hover over your name, 3) select “more”, 4) select “rename”.
- **Questions and Comments:** Please submit feedback, questions, and comments via Microsoft Form: [Q&A Microsoft Form](#).
- **Technical Issues:** If you have technical issues, please contact Janeen.Oien@state.mn.us.
- **Recording:** This session will be recorded and posted to the VRS website along with the agenda, presentation, and transcript.

Agenda

- **Welcome:** Lori Thorpe, VRS Director of Contracts and Partnerships
- **General Services: Job Related Services:**
 - Sara Sundeen, VRS Community Partnerships Program Specialist
 - Evie Wold, VRS Placement Program Specialist
 - Sam Kapala, VRS Placement Program Specialist
- **Reminders and VRS Updates:** Lori Thorpe
- **Q & A:** Janeen Oien, Community Partnerships Program Specialist
- **Wrap-Up:** Lori Thorpe



General Services: Job Related Services

Sara Sundeen, Evie Wold and Sam Kapala

- Updates on Job Related Services
- Some of these services used to be known as On the Job Work and Training Options
- Billable Service Guide
- This is about General (adult) Services – *not Pre-ETS Services*

If you have questions during this presentation, please use this Microsoft Form: [Q&A MS Form](#)



Job Related Services



Employment Planning Services



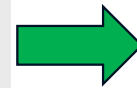
Evaluative Services



Experiential Services

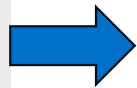


On the Job Support Services



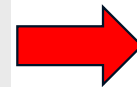
Employment Planning Services

Job Shadow, Informational Interview,
Volunteering, Job Seeking Skills Training



Evaluative Services

On-the-Job Evaluation, Comprehensive
Vocational Evaluation, Employee
Development Services



Experiential Services

Work Experience, Intermediate Jobs,
Internship, Job Tryout



On the Job Supports

Job Coaching

Billable Service Guide

- General Services:
 - This information applies to the following services: On-the-Job Evaluation (OJE), Work Experience, Job Tryout (JTO), and Internships
- Link to guide:
 - [Billable Services for Job Related Services](#)



Activities Community Partners Can Bill For

- **Site Development Time**
 - Calls, emails, web searches and/or employer visits to arrange for an On-the-Job Evaluation, Work Experience, Job Tryout, or Internship. This can be done with or without the individual present.
- **Direct Service Time**
 - Evaluation hours for On-the-Job Evaluation
- **Team Meetings and Final Meetings**
 - Attending a meeting with the individual's other "team" members to report on progress or discuss next steps at the completion of a service.
- **Follow-Up**
 - Contact with the individual and/or employer on or off the job site while the individual is actively participating in the service, using the agreed upon mode of communication.

Activities Community Partners Cannot Bill For

- Time spent creating and editing resumes and cover letters or related documents, unless the Community Partner is meeting with the individual.
- Time spent case noting, writing reports, preparing invoices, or no-show fees.
- Communications/attempted communications with individuals and other team members to schedule or confirm meetings.
- Site Development and Follow-Up for Job Tryout when a person is receiving placement services through a PBA.

Employment Planning Services

Employment Planning Services

- Job Shadow
- Informational Interview
- Volunteering
- Job Seeking Skills Training



What is a Job Shadow?

- Job Shadows are opportunities for individuals to **observe** jobs and **ask questions** about the skills, knowledge, and abilities needed to perform the tasks involved in the job.
- A Job Shadow is also a good opportunity to understand the work culture of a specific company.
- Job Shadows can be coordinated by community partners (if on their contract) or VRS Placement Professionals.



What is an Informational Interview?

- An Informational Interview is an informal conversation with someone working in a career/job of interest. Providing job related information and advice. It is not a job interview; the objective is not to find job openings.
- Informational Interviews can be coordinated by community partners (if on their contract) or VRS Placement Professionals.



What is Job Seeking Skills Training?

- Providing group or individual counseling or training regarding the techniques to prepare for, obtain, retain, or advance in competitive, integrated employment.
- Includes assisting individuals in preparing resumes, job applications and developing job interviewing skills and other soft skills. How to address business' perceptual barriers and prepare to meet business' expectations. Assisting the individual to become knowledgeable about job duties, employment policies and practices.
- Can be coordinated by community partners (if on their contract) or VRS Placement Professionals.
- There is some overlap between Job Seeking Skills Training and Placement Services. Think about Job Seeking Skills Training as more intensive pre-job search supports.



Evaluative Services

- Comprehensive Vocational Evaluation
- Employee Development Services
- On the Job Evaluation (OJE)



What is an On-the-Job Evaluation?

- A short-term real work experience at a business in the community to help an individual learn about their skills, interests, work tolerance, and suitability of certain types of work
- Identifies the need for specific supports, coaching or training to improve the individual's employability
- This is done prior to choosing a job goal



On-the-Job Evaluation (OJE) Details

- An On-the-Job Evaluation may be used when the Counselor and the job seeker need more information to determine a job goal, *and this information cannot be obtained from any other service or person*
- **Do not use an On-the-Job Evaluation to prove a person can work or to test their motivation to work**
- There is no requirement or expectation of employment through an On-the-Job Evaluation

Who provides the OJE services?

- VRS Placement Coordinator/Staff
- Community Partner



On-the-Job Evaluation (OJE) Services

Typical OJE services can include:

- Site development, with or without the participant
- On-site evaluation hours
- Final debrief meeting
- For questions about what constitutes a billable service reference [Billable Services for Job Related Services](#).



On-the-Job Evaluation (OJE) Wages

Wages are payment to the participant for their time spent working. Wages should be paid at the prevailing wage for the individual's position or minimum wage, whichever is *higher*.

How are wages paid?

- By community partner as a payroll agent
- Wage reimbursements are 1.6 times the participant's hourly wage multiplied by the total hours worked

Example: If the On-the-Job Evaluation is 20 hours and the individual's wage is \$16 per hour, total cost reimbursement to the community partner is \$512 ($\$16 \times 1.6 = \$25.60 \times 20 \text{ hours} = \512)



On-the-Job Evaluation Forms and Communication

VRS

- Maintains ongoing communication along with scheduled formal review(s) of the individual's progress with both the individual and the employer and/or the community partner throughout the On-the-Job Evaluation.

Placement Professionals:

- Required to have ongoing communication with VRS and the participant during site development, if site development is provided.
- Notify VRS immediately if there are significant changes or supports needed.
- Conduct regular check-ins with the employer.
- Submit reports summarizing progress and final recommendations.
- Once an On-the-Job Evaluation is completed, the individual, Counselor, and Placement Professional should meet to discuss next steps.



Experiential Services

- Work Experience
- Intermediate Job
- Internship
- Job Tryout



What is a Work Experience?

- Short term
- Skill-building
- Exploratory, not evaluative



Work Experiences

- No requirement of employment
- Time limited based on individual's needs
- Part time or full-time
- Placement Professionals coordinates all details with the employer



Work Experience - Services

WORK EXPEREINCE SERVICES

- Site development
- Follow-up
- Final meeting



Work Experiences - Wages

How are wages paid?

1. By community partner as payroll agent
2. Directly by the business to the individual

Wage reimbursements are 1.6 times the participant's hourly wage multiplied by the total hours worked



Work Experience – Forms and Communication

Forms:

- VRS has an optional form called Work Experience – General Services Follow-Up Report to VRS that community partners can utilize or customize for their use

Communication:

- Ongoing throughout the Work Experience
- Notify VRS if changes or supports needed
- Meeting upon completion
- Submit reports summarizing progress and final recommendations



Work Experience – Service Continuation

Work Experiences can continue to be provided as a service continuation when an individual is eligible for full VR services but no longer eligible for Pre-ETS.



Intermediate Jobs

What are "intermediate jobs" for General Services?

- A job that leads to employment but is not the final employment goal outlined on the EP
- longer in duration than short-term, exploratory work experiences
- Individuals are hired and paid by the employer

VR Counselor may utilize a VRS Placement Coordinator, Job seeking Skills Training, referring to CareerForce workshops or referring to a community partner for PBA



What is a Job Tryout?

- Short-term opportunity to demonstrate job performance
- A job opening must exist that matches job goal



Job Tryout Details

A few things to know:

- Typically, a Job Tryout will occur during the job search process. The Placement Professional coordinates the details of the Job Tryout directly with the employer, which may include accommodation needs and disability disclosure
- **There does not need to be a job offer at the start, but a job opening must exist with the possibility of hire**
- 1-2 weeks (40-80) hours, but may be shorter or longer based on the needs of the individual
- Can be part-time or full-time



Job Tryout Services

Typically occur during the job search process

- SERVICES may not be authorized during a PBA

If outside a PBA, SERVICES may be authorized, such as:

- Site development
- Follow-up
- Final debrief meeting



Job Tryout Wages



How are wages paid?

By a community partner as payroll agent

Wage reimbursements are 1.6 times the participant's hourly wage multiplied by the total hours worked



Job Tryout Communication

VRS maintains ongoing communication about the job seeker's progress throughout the Job Tryout.

Placement professionals should:

- Follow up
- Maintain weekly communication
- Conduct regular check-ins with the employer, as appropriate
- Provide updates to the VRS Counselor if there are significant changes to Job Tryout services or supports needed
- Discuss next steps with the job seeker, employer, and VRS Counselor once the Job Tryout is completed



Job Tryout Forms / Brochure

- VRS does not have a Job Tryout form. Community partners will utilize their own forms.
- There is a [Job Tryout Brochure](#) for Placement Professionals to use when discussing a job tryout.



JOB TRYOUT
Recruitment that makes good business sense

Making informed hiring decisions saves you time and money.
Making informed hiring decisions saves you time and money. Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) offers the opportunity to enhance your hiring decisions by “trying out” a candidate — at no cost to you. Let’s talk about how your business can benefit by hiring a qualified person with a disability utilizing VRS. Your business has a unique opportunity to tap into great workers at no cost.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is a Job Tryout and how does it work?
A Job Tryout is a short-term work experience which allows your business the opportunity to “try out” a candidate to determine if they are a good job match prior to extending a job offer. VRS will contract with a third-party vendor for payroll and insurance costs during the Job Tryout. The Job Tryout does not guarantee a permanent job at the end of the Job Tryout, although that is often the result. The process is easy:

- Interview the candidate.
- Work with an Employment Specialist to discuss the Job Tryout
- Provide the Job Tryout candidate with standard new training and job duties.

Is a Job Tryout complicated to implement?
Absolutely not. You will talk with VRS and the candidate about the content of the work, your expectations, hours, duration of the tryout and a schedule for a progress reviews.

What is the catch?
No catch. Our goal is to benefit Minnesota businesses by helping them hire and train great employees.

What if the Job Tryout doesn’t work out?
The VRS Employment Specialist will maintain frequent communication with you and the candidate. If the candidate is not a good match for the job, your business can choose to end the Job Tryout at any time.

BENEFITS OF USING THE JOB TRYOUT

- Enhance your hiring decisions by “trying out” a new candidate
- Prescreened candidates
- Reduce turnover rates
- Minimal paperwork
- No fee
- Increase workforce diversity
- Consultation and technical assistance from a VRS Employment Specialist on disability-related issues, including reasonable accommodations

Create a positive impact on your workforce and bottom line at the same time!

WHAT IS VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES?
Our goal is to connect your business with qualified job seekers, saving you time and money. Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) offers a wealth of expertise and experience to assist businesses with creative strategies to recruit and retain skilled workers with disabilities. Our talent pool ranges from entry-level to experienced professional. And, we charge no fees . . . ever.

TO LEARN MORE, CONTACT:

Your contact info here

mn EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES
www.mn.gov/deed/vrstalent

The VR program received 73.42% of Federal Fiscal year 2023 funding through grants from the U.S. Department of Education. The Federal Fiscal year 2023 grants totaled \$47,671,377. The required state match for these funds is \$12,849,251. The state of Minnesota appropriated \$14.3 million to meet the match requirement.
Upon request, this document can be made available in alternative formats for people with disabilities. DEED is an equal opportunity employer and service provider.

3/24 | DEED-70700



What is an Internship?

- Internships are a time-limited professional learning opportunity to enhance skill development, experience, and future opportunity for competitive integrated employment.
- Internships are for any job seekers who are ready to begin work and have a clear job goal; not just for college students.



Internship Details

- Prior to beginning an internship, interns should have a professional resume and appropriate job seeking skills training.
- Can be full or part-time and there does not have to be a job opening.
- 260 hours but may be shorter or longer based on the individual's needs.
- The Placement Professional coordinates the details of the Internship directly with the employer, which may include accommodation needs and disability disclosure.
- VRS Internship Plan must be completed prior to the start of an Internship.



Internship Services

- Site development
- Follow-up
- Final meeting



Internship Wages

How are Internship wages paid?

1. By a community partner as payroll agent
2. Directly by the business to the individual (preferred)

Wage reimbursements are 1.6 times the participant's hourly wage multiplied by the total hours worked.



Internship Form and Brochure

INTERNSHIP FORMS

- An Internship Plan must be completed and signed prior to the start of the internship
- There is an Internship Brochure for you to use when discussing an internship with an employer

Department of Employment and Economic Development
Vocational Rehabilitation Services

VRS Internship Plan

This is an Internship Plan for: General Internship Pre-ETS Internship

Check One: Internship Services and Wages Internship Services Only

Check One: Intern is in a PBA/VRS Job Search Intern is not in a PBA/VRS Job Search

If in PBA, Start Date of PBA Hold: _____

Intern: _____

Provider: VRS or CRP/LUV Name of CRP/LUV: _____

VRS Counselor: _____ Other: _____

Placement Professional: _____ Date of Plan: _____

Internship Goal(s): _____

Total Number of Internship Hours: _____ Hours per Week: _____ Shift Preference: _____

Transportation: _____ Geographic Area: _____

Other Considerations: _____

Intern Responsibilities (check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> Attend all meetings. Call ahead to reschedule when necessary. Maintain frequent contact with Placement Professional.	<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare to discuss accommodation needs with employers.
<input type="checkbox"/> Participate in resume and cover letter customization.	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete cold calls each week if needed.
<input type="checkbox"/> In coordination with your Placement Professional, develop a weekly plan of internship site development activities.	<input type="checkbox"/> Contact Internship Team Member <ul style="list-style-type: none">• if any extra support or assistance is needed• if personal issue affects your internship search• after talking with any potential internship site• after first day on the internship
<input type="checkbox"/> Inform Placement Team of address and telephone number change.	<input type="checkbox"/> Maintain contact with job coach.
<input type="checkbox"/> Return all calls from Internship Team members and Internship Sites right away.	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

If I sign this form electronically, my name as typed in the signature field is my legally binding signature. I understand that my electronic signature has the same legal effect and can be enforced in the same way as a handwritten signature. By signing this form, I acknowledge that I am the person named below, and that if I am not the person named below, I may be subject to legal consequences.

Intern Signature _____ Parent/Guardian/Conservator/
Authorized Representative Signature, if needed

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Internships and Reporting Expectations

Placement Professionals will:

- Notify VRS when an Internship site has been developed
- Maintain weekly follow-up
- Check-in with the employer regularly, as appropriate
- Complete monthly reports and submit monthly invoices
- Notify VRS immediately if there are significant changes to Internship Services or needed supports
- Meet with the Intern and Counselor upon Internship completion to discuss next steps



What happens if an Internship happens during a PBA?

When an Internship occurs during a PBA, PBA services are put on hold and the Internship begins.

- The day the Internship Plan is signed becomes the “hold date” for the PBA. The “hold date” ends when the Intern has stated they are ready to engage in active job search again – this could be at the completion of the internship or during the internship.
- Placement Professionals send monthly internship reports while job placement services are on hold.



On the Job Supports

- Job Coaching



Job Coaching

- If job coaching is being considered, there should be a collaborative discussion to assess and determine the person's job coaching needs which includes VRS staff, the provider, the employer (if applicable) and input from the participant.
- When determined necessary, job coaching:
 - Must be added as a separate service on the Employment Plan.
 - May be provided by VRS or a community partner.
- **Job Coaching is *not* a standard accompanying service to Job Related Services. Job Coaching should be considered on an *individualized basis*.**
- **Transportation:**
 - Consider how the participant will get to and from the employment site and plan accordingly.



- Job Related Services are tools in our toolbox of resources
- Each participant is unique and there may be times when more than one service will meet the individual's needs
- Each Job-Related Service is unique and includes many details



Job Service Definitions and Resources can be found on our Community Partnership site: <https://mn.gov/deed/job-seekers/disabilities/partners/>

Or contact:

- Sam Kapala sam.kapala@state.mn.us
- Sara Sundeen sara.sundeen@state.mn.us
- Evie Wold evie.wold@state.mn.us

Thank you



The VR program receives 74.05 percent of its funding through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. For federal fiscal year 2023, the total amount of grant funds awarded were \$47,671,377. The remaining 25.5 percent of the costs (\$14,300,000) were funded by Minnesota state appropriations.

Reminders and VRS updates

Reminders and VRS updates

CP Conversations: Monthly office hours for Community Partnership staff to meet with the CP Program Specialists. Next session is:

- Friday, October 11th, 9:00a.m. - 9:30a.m. [Here is the recurring Zoom link](#)

Next VRS + CRP Forum: bi-monthly forums to discuss topics related to both the work of VRS staff and our Community Partners. Next Forum is:

- December 3, 2024, 10:30a.m. – 12:00p.m.
- [Registration](#)

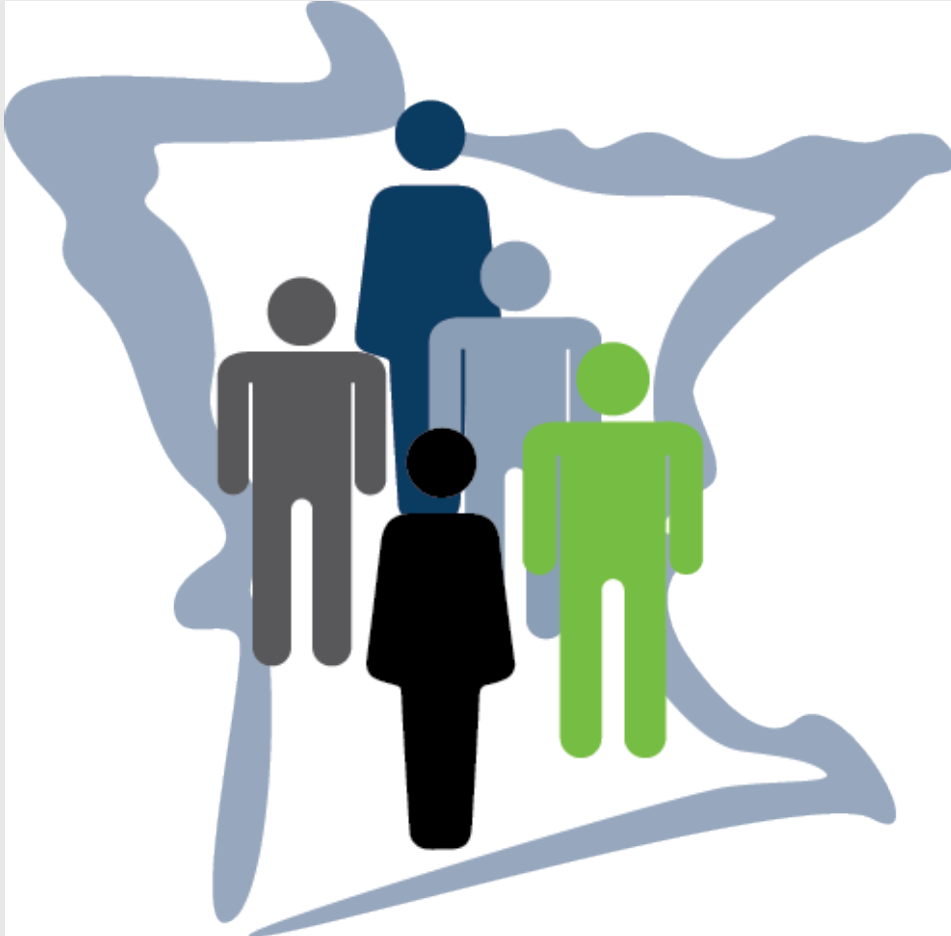
Discussion – Questions and Answers

Please submit questions and comments using the Microsoft Form linked in the chat and listed below.

[MS Form for Q&A](#)



Thank You!



We'd love to hear your feedback on our VRS Community Partner + VRS Staff Forums.

Please provide your thoughts in the Microsoft Form below. The forum feedback questions are at the end of the form.

[MS Form for Q&A and Forum Feedback](#)

Funding Notice

The VR program receives 78.7 percent of its funding through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. For federal fiscal year 2022, the total amount of grant funds is \$44,081,347. The required state match for these funds is \$11,930,529 (21.3 percent). The state of Minnesota has appropriated \$14.3 million to exceed the matching requirement.