

September 29, 2017: Notice to Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers

The combined Vocational Rehabilitation Division (VRD) of the Texas Workforce Commission will implement a combined Vocational Rehabilitation Standards for Providers Manual (VR-SFP) on October 1, 2017. SFP chapters that are posted on September 1, 2017 will go into effect on October 1, 2017.

Information on changes to:

- Travel Reimbursement
- Bundled Job Placement Services
- Job Coaching
- Director Credential
- Liability Insurance

Travel Reimbursement

The following exception to VR- SFP policy should be noted by providers:

VR-SFP 20.6, Travel Premiums, is in effect as of October 1, 2017. Providers subject to the travel reimbursement methodology in Chapter 3.3.1 of the Blind Service Division (BSD) Standards Manual for Consumer Services Contract Providers as of August 31, 2017, may continue to be reimbursed for travel under 3.3.1 until further notice. Those providers may continue to submit requests for travel reimbursement using DARS 2879, Service Providers Travel Log. Providers may not claim travel reimbursement using both the VR-SFP and the BSD Standards. Only this provision (3.3.1) of the BSD Standards will remain in effect after October 1, 2017, and only until such time as TWC completes additional review of VR-SFP 20.6.

Bundled Job Placement Services

Former General Rehabilitation employment service providers providing Job Placement Services can continue to use the DARS1833 Bundled Job Placement Service Plan and Benchmark Status when the form was completed prior to the October 1, 2017 until January 1, 2018. If the Job Placement Plan is updated the DARS1845A-Bundled Job Placement Services Placement Plan-Part A and DARS1845B-Bundled Job Placement Services Plan-Part B and Status Report must be used.

- The job placement specialist will submit the DARS1833-Bundled Job Placement Service Plan and Benchmark Status Report, to record the status of the Placement Plan (Employment Conditions and Employment Goals with System Occupational Codes (SOC) at achievement of Benchmark A, B and C.
- The DARS1845B- Bundled Job Placement Services Plan-Part B and Status Report must also be submitted with the following sections completed:
 - Job Placement Information,

- Employer Information,
- Customer Employment Information,
- Service Delivery Information at Placement,
- Service Delivery Information at 45 day- Benchmark B,
- Service Delivery Information at 90th day- Benchmark C,
- Visits with Customer and
- Signatures.

Customers using the DARS1833-Bundled Job Placement Service Plan and Benchmark Status Report who have not been placed in a job by January 1, 2018, must meet with the VR counselor, job placement specialist and customer to complete the DARS1845A-Bundled Job Placement Services Placement Plan-Part A and DARS1845B-Bundled Job Placement Services Plan-Part B and Status Report.

Customers with visual impairments that are currently participating in Job Placement and Work Readiness services under the blind services standards for providers and who are not placed in a job before October 1, 2017 must be re-referred for VR-SFP Job Placement Services as outlined in the VR-SFP; use the DARS1840 Job Placement Referral form.

Each customer must have a DARS1845A-Bundled Job Placement Services Placement Plan-Part A and DARS1845B-Bundled Job Placement Services Plan-Part B and Status Report. If the customer is employed prior to October 1, 2017, services for these customers can continue Job Placement and Work Readiness Services as defined in the BSD-Standards for Providers. If the customer loses the job on or after Oct. 1, 2017, service authorizations must be replaced and the customer must receive services through VR-SFP chapter 17.4 Bundled Job Placement Services.

Job Coaching

Customers with visual impairments who are employed and currently receiving job coaching prior to October 1, 2017 can continue with these services as authorized under the existing Blind Services Standards for Providers so that services are not interrupted. VR staff will need to work with a regional program support specialist when it is necessary to issue any services authorizations for job coaching of individuals that are still using the BSD-SFP model. If job coaching services have not started before October 1, 2017, service authorizations must be replaced and the customer must receive services through VR-SFP Chapter 17.5 Job Skills Training.

The following exceptions to VR- SFP timelines should be noted by providers:

Director Credential

Providers for whom the requirement to have the Director Credential is new as of October 1, 2017 and who are unable to complete the Director Credential requirement by October 1, 2017, may submit the DARS 3490 Temporary Waiver of Employment Services Credentials to request a temporary waiver for the Director Credential.

Providers should complete the DARS 3490 and submit it to their regional contact as stated in the form. Submission of this form must occur before October 6, 2017 and should include information regarding the date by which the provider will complete the Director Credential requirement. This temporary waiver will allow those providers additional time to achieve compliance with the VR-SFP requirement. All Director Credentials should be obtained by January 1, 2018.

Liability Insurance

All providers will be allowed six months from the October 1, 2017 effective date to obtain the appropriate liability insurance as required in VR-SFP 3.2.1 General or Business Liability. Providers are encouraged to obtain this insurance as soon as possible, but will not be out of compliance with the VR- SFP if the insurance is in effect by April 1, 2018.