

Texas Workforce Solutions-Vocational Rehabilitation Services Update to Providers on Temporary Exceptions Due to COVID-19

March 30, 2020

TWC Vocational Rehabilitation Division (VRD) staff and service providers deliver essential services that are necessary to assist Texans with disabilities to prepare for, obtain and retain competitive integrated employment. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important that we continue to provide these essential services to our current customers and to individuals applying for services. VRD staff are providing these services remotely and in ways that do not compromise the health and safety of our customers, staff, service providers and communities. We understand that many of our service providers are implementing similar measures.

To support VRD staff and service providers as we work together to maintain continuity of services to our current customers and access to services for new customers, VRD is implementing temporary exceptions to certain requirements in the VR Standards for Providers Manual (VR-SFP).

These exceptions are effective immediately and for 30 days after the effective period for the [executive orders issued by Governor Abbott on March 19, 2020](#).

The exceptions are intended to:

- provide alternatives to documenting VRD staff, provider, and customer approval
- allow for electronic issuance of service authorizations, invoices and reports
- allow for exceptions to accommodate COVID-19 related delays in services, and
- clarify that providers may use teleservice and telehealth methods of service delivery where effective and appropriate.

As mentioned in our [March 20, 2020 message](#) below, VRD has developed a procedure by which VR staff can approve and issue service authorizations (SA) electronically, without the need for an original signature from a VR staff member. This allows staff working remotely to issue SAs for those services that are necessary and can be safely delivered without risk to you or the customer. These procedures have been shared and are now being implemented by VR staff.

In addition, to prevent delays in authorizing payment on services rendered, providers may email encrypted documents to the intended TWS-VRS staff recipient(s) or continue to fax documentation to the number specified on the Service Authorization. Please confirm receipt of records with VR staff as appropriate.

The health and safety of our customers, providers, staff and communities remains our top priority. Providers should continue to cooperate with the guidance on COVID-19 containment strategies issued by federal, state and local authorities.

If you have a question regarding provision of services to a customer related to COVID-19 impact or mitigation measures, please fax or email the question to the VR Standards mailbox at: vr.standards@twc.state.tx.us.

Again, updates and information regarding service delivery during this time will be posted on this page.

For the latest information on the coronavirus pandemic, including symptoms, how to protect yourself, and travel advisories, visit the CDC's COVID-19 website found at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html. Included in this website is CDC Guidance for Businesses and Employers: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html

For State information, you may review the Texas Department of State Health Services website: <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/>