# Part E Chapter 8: Case Note Requirements

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Policy Number** | **Authority** | **Scope** | **Effective Date** |
| Part E, Chapter 8 | N/A | All TWC-VR staff | 2/5/2025 |

Table of Contents

[Part E Chapter 8: Case Note Requirements 1](#_Toc188454077)

[Overview of Table 1](#_Toc188454078)

[Documentation in Vocational Rehabilitation 1](#_Toc188454079)

[How to Tell the VR Story 2](#_Toc188454080)

[Delegating Required Documentation 2](#_Toc188454081)

[Case Note Requirements 2](#_Toc188454082)

[Review 30](#_Toc188454083)

## Overview of Table

This table reflects the content found in the VRSM as of the revision date this document. Unless otherwise specified, the content of more recently updated sections of the VRSM and other relevant policy manuals or guidance memorandums supersede instructions included in this table. Staff are expected to review the referenced policy content before taking any action on a case.

For additional policies and procedures related to case note documentation, refer to Part E, Chapter 3.1 Case Record and Documentation.

## Documentation in Vocational Rehabilitation

Case notes are critical components of the VR case. They allow VR staff to tell the story of the customer’s case from start to finish and document compliance with published policy and procedures. They demonstrate the VR counselor-customer working relationship, the customer’s journey, and how the customer made informed decisions. Documentation in VR should allow any potential audience member to understand the decision-making process, justification for services, and how those services will help the customer achieve the employment goal and address barriers to employment. When a decision is made on a case, the reason for the decision is explained and documented. If there are delays in the case, such as delays moving to the next phase in the VR process or service delays, case notes explain what happened.

Good documentation is objective, professional, compliant, effective, and easy to read.

### How to Tell the VR Story

The VR counselor uses the requirements in Part E Chapter 8 as a guide for writing individualized case notes. The case note requirements in this document ensure case notes remain compliant with policy, procedures, and regulations and justify decision-making.

When writing case notes, important questions to consider include:

* What is being done to address the disability and related functional limitations that made the customer eligible for VR services?
* What contribution is Counseling and Guidance making toward the customer’s employability?
* What is being provided to the customer for the purpose of becoming employed, why is it necessary, and who is providing it?
* What is the progress toward employment?
* What actions will happen next? Who is responsible for what?

TIP: Refer back to these questions frequently to ensure documentation is covering all the important facts of the case.

NOTE: All customer correspondence via SARA creates a system generated case note. System generated SARA case notes cannot be modified and will be automatically entered into RHW.

## Delegating Required Documentation

Documentation responsibilities cannot be delegated and must be entered in RHW directly by the individual completing the action that is being documented.

## Case Note Requirements

| **Case Note Topic** | **Staff Use** | **Documentation** | **VRSM Ref.** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ATF Backdated SA (After the fact Backdated Service Authorization) | Any VR staff | A case note entered by VR staff member that is requesting, approving, or denying a request to issue a backdated SA.  Request  The “Add to Topic” for a request includes the specific good or service and the purpose of the case note, such as “Training ATF Backdated SA Request” or “Medical Services ATF Backdated SA Request.”  The case note content must include the following:   * what is being requested (include specific good or service, provider, and anticipated dates of service); * circumstances supporting the request; and * name and job title of requester.   **TIP:** Verify the required management approval level per applicable policy prior to documenting the request to ensure that it is routed to the correct approver in a timely manner.  Approval or Denial  The “Add to Topic” for an approval or denial includes the specific good or service and the specific decision (“approved” or “denied”), such as “Training ATF Backdated SA – Approved.”  The case note content must include the following:   * the parameters of the approval or denial (include specific good or service, provider, and when applicable, the date range of the approval); * type of review completed in TxROCS (if applicable); and * name and job title of staff making decision.   **TIP:** Verify the required management approval level per applicable policy prior to documenting the approval or denial to ensure that you are the correct approver. | D.3 |
| ATF Replacement SA (After the Fact Replacement Service Authorization) | Any VR staff | A case note entered by VR staff member that is used to document the change of SA during the delivery of services.  This case note is used when requesting, approving, or denying a request to issue an ATF Replacement SA.  Note: ATF Replacement Sas require approval only if the original SA required approval.  Request  The “Add to Topic” for a request includes the specific good or service and the purpose of the case note, such as “Training ATF Replacement SA Request” or “Medical Services ATF Replacement SA Request”.  The case note content must include the following:   * what is being requested (include specific good or service, provider, and anticipated dates of service,); * original SA number; * circumstances supporting the request; and * name and job title of requester.   **TIP**: Verify the required management approval level per applicable policy prior to documenting the request to ensure that it is routed to the correct approver in a timely manner.  Approval or Denial  The “Add to Topic” for an approval or denial includes the specific good or service and the specific decision (“approved” or “denied”), such as “Training ATF Replacement SA – Approved.”  The case note content must include the following:   * the parameters of the approval or denial (include specific good or service, provider, and when applicable, the date range of the approval); * original SA number; * type of review completed in TxROCS (if applicable); and * name and job title of staff making decision.   **TIP**: Verify the required management approval level per applicable policy prior to documenting the approval or denial to ensure that you are the correct approver. | D.3 |
| Approval Request | Any VR staff | A case note or series of case notes entered by the VR staff member requesting an approval.  The “Add to Topic” for a request should include the specific good or service, such as “Out-of-state Training.”  The case note content must include the following:   * what is being requested (include specific good or service, provider, and anticipated dates of service); * circumstances supporting the request; and * name and job title of requester.   **TIP:** Verify the required management approval level per applicable policy prior to documenting the request to ensure that it is routed to the correct approver in a timely manner.  **TIP**: Ensure that each of the requirements that are being reviewed by the approver (see "Approval Response” below) are clearly addressed in the case prior to requesting approval.  **TIP**: Purchasing approvals must be completed using the RHW Purchase Approval process. Refer to E-200: Summary Table of Approvals, Consultations, and Notifications for additional details. | E.5 |
| Approval Response | Any VR staff | A case note entered by VR staff member that is approving or denying the request.  The “Add to Topic” for an approval or denial should include the specific good or service and the decision (“approved” or “denied”), such as “Out-of-state Training – Approved.”  The case note content must include the following:   * the parameters of the approval or denial (include specific good or service, provider, and when applicable, the date range of the approval); * type of review completed in TxROCS (if applicable); and * name and job title of staff making decision.   As part of the approval decision, the VR staff member that is approving or denying the request should ensure that:   * the good or service is clearly connected to and supportive of vocational objective; * purchase is included in IPE, IPE amendment, or in a case note with all service justification elements included (if before IPE or for potentially eligible customers); * exploration and application of available comparable benefits is documented; and * required consultations and approvals have been completed, when applicable.   **TIP:** Verify the required management approval level per applicable policy prior to documenting the approval or denial to ensure that you are the correct approver. | E.5 |
| Assessment & Planning | VR counselor use only | An optional case note that can be used to record information that will be used to create the comprehensive assessment case note or information that adds additional details that support the decisions that are made as the case is moved through the VR process.  A case note or series of case notes that shows how the assessing and planning activities:   * provided information on the customer's disability (including a review of existing records, when available, and a review of new assessments, when necessary); * resulted in the identification of the customer's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, and interests; * resulted in the identification of the customer's potential employment goals; * led to the making of decisions that support the goals, objectives, and services identified in the customer's IPE (including documentation of best value for purchased goods and services); * led to the customer's participation in informed choice; * led to the development of the plan for contacting the customer. | B.7 |
| Attempt to Complete C&G | VR counselor use only | A case note that documents attempts by the VR counselor to complete C&G with the customer either in person or by phone messages, electronic communication, or written correspondence.  The case note should clearly indicate   * that the purpose of the contact was to reach the customer to complete C&G; * details of the manner of communication, such as “message left” or “email sent”, and * any planned follow-up actions. | C.3 |
| Attempt to Contact | Any VR staff | A case note that documents attempted contacts made in person, by phone messages, electronic communications, or written correspondence by any VR staff member with the   * customer; * customer’s representative; * legal guardian; or * others with direct involvement or information about customer’s participation in VR services.   Each case note should clearly indicate   * the purpose of the contact, * details, such as how and with whom a message was left, and * planned follow-up actions. | various |
| ATU (Assistive Technology Unit) | ATU staff use only | Assistive Technology Unit (ATU) staff enters a case note or series of case notes that include:   * AT evaluation scheduling * Special customer considerations * AT demonstration details * AT evaluation summary * AT equipment recommendations * training services progress * technical advice * other information that support customers | various |
| CCRC (Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center) | CCRC staff use only | CCRC counselors and admissions team enter a case note or a series of case notes that include:   * service authorization approvals * counseling and guidance * general updates * training progress notes * tour reports * admissions process updates | C.6.2  C.10.7 |
| Case Transfer | Any VR staff | A case note that provides relevant details of all case transfers, including   * date of request; * name of person making the request (including job title of requestor, if VR staff); * reason the case is being transferred; * details associated with required steps of transfer; and * confirmation that customer was notified of transfer.   **TIP:** Update the file location in RHW once the case is transferred. | E.3.2 |
| Closure | VR counselor use only | A case note or series of case notes that describes:   * the reason the case was closed; * the circumstances that led to the decision to close the case; * how the case meets the criteria required for closure; and * the date and method the customer was offered/provided:   + the “Can We Talk?” brochure, and   + the information to make informed choices.   **TIP:** All closures require a Closure case note to be completed in RHW. | B.10 |
| Comprehensive Assessment | VR counselor use only | A case note that describes:   * Summary of records of disabilities and related impediments to employment; * Customer’s adjustment to disability; * Services recommended that will address specific functional limitations; * Assessment of rehabilitation technology needs; * Justification for selected employment goal; * Justification for services that are needed to achieve the employment goal (including documentation of best value for purchased goods and services); * Available resources and comparable benefits; * Independent living skills (including transportation and travel capabilities and resources); * Any relevant legal issues; * Description of customer involvement and informed choice in the selection of services, providers, and the employment goal; * Educational and vocational history and goals; * Justification for planned frequency of contact; * Justification for frequency of counseling and guidance (required after July 1, 2019); * Explanation of customer contribution to planned services (if required); and * Any other factors that may impact participation in services.   If a required topic is not assessed, document the reason in the case note for the comprehensive assessment.  When relevant, the case note may also include information about:   * a customer's work tolerance; * a customer's ability to acquire specific job skills; * a customer's patterns of work behavior; * the additional medical or psychological evaluations needed to determine the nature and scope of services; * the vocational and psychological assessment completed by the VR specialist; * functional assessments conducted in a trial work setting; and * any additional assessments needed to determine:   + the best job placement; or   + the support services to be provided through supported employment services.   **TIP**: If assessing and planning case notes were used to record detailed information that is part of the comprehensive assessment, it is appropriate to refer to those specific case notes by case note title and date rather than repeating the information in the comprehensive assessment case note.  **TIP**: The "Can We Talk" brochure, the information to make informed choices, and the appeals process must be provided and/or offered when we start, stop, and/or change a service or phase. VR staff must document in RHW the date and method the information was provided and/or offered. | B.7 |
| Consultation/Review | VR staff member that is providing formal consultation or review of a case | A case note that includes:   * the parameters of the consultation including specific good or service, provider, the date range of service (when applicable), and specific recommendations; * type of review completed in TxROCS (if applicable); and * name and job title of staff providing consultation.   The “Add to Topic” for a consultation should include the specific good or service, such as “Hearing Aids.”  **TIP:** Do not use this topic for approvals. | E.5 |
| Contact | Any VR staff | A case note or series of case notes that documents all contacts between any VR staff member and the   * customer; * customer’s representative; * legal guardian; or * others with direct involvement or information about customer’s participation in VR services.   **TIP:** Do not use this case note topic for contacts with providers or vendors.  Each case note includes a summary of   * relevant conversations, * observations, * decisions, and * actions that support the customer's progress and informed choices.   **TIP**: VRC’s should always document a contact as a C&G, IF C&G is provided during any part of the contact. Counseling and guidance is a “contact,” but should be documented using the C&G case note topic.  **TIP:** Contacts include face to face conversations, telephone contacts, and written or electronic communications. | various |
| Contact – Provider/Vendor | Any VR staff | A case note or series of case notes that documents all contacts between any VR staff member and any provider of VR goods or services.  Each case note includes a summary of   * relevant conversations, * observations, * decisions, and * actions taken or needed as a result of the contact. | various |
| Correction | Any VR staff | A case note that briefly describes a correction to previously entered content in RHW. This can include data correction requests or making a notation of information that was noted incorrectly in a previous case note.  When applicable, the case note should include the date and case note topic of the original case note that needs to be corrected. | NA |
| Counseling and guidance | VR counselor use only | A case note or series of case notes entered by the VR counselor that reflects the skillful application of counseling strategies and interventions. These case notes must include the:   * **topic** addressed through C&G that are related to the impediments to employment, IPE, and/or participation in VR services; * **strategies** for resolution of the issue to include description of decision-making processes involved; * **customer’s participation** in the resolution; * **customer’s reaction**; and * **actions required** of the customer or counselor.   **REQUIREMENT**: C&G must be provided on the same day the IPE is completed, and documented in RHW within 7 calendar days of the completion of the IPE as a C&G case note with the Add to Topic of “IPE Implemented.” C&G must also be documented at the frequency agreed upon on the IPE.  **TIP**: As with other case notes, the writing style and format of a C&G case note can be individualized by the VR counselor if the required content is included.  **TIP**: C&G frequency is **not** the same as basic frequency of contact or “FOC” on the IPE. C&G must be completed by a counselor; FOC can be maintained by any VR staff. FOC is evaluated in the IPE services section of a Compliance and Quality Case Review. However, C&G does count as a contact for the purpose of tracking FOC.  **TIP**: C&G must be entered using the case note title, “Counseling and Guidance.” When C&G is provided during other meetings, such as the joint annual review or IPE Amendment, document the C&G in an additional case note titled, “Counseling and Guidance.” | C.3 |
| Deafblind | DB specialist use only | The deafblind specialist writes a case note or series of case notes to document customer contacts and other pertinent details.  Case notes may include:   * evaluation findings * initial recommendations and rationale * recommendations/evaluation updates as needed * any contacts or contact attempts * consultations with customers (concerns, resource or advocacy information) * staffing between Deafblind specialists and VR staff * coding updates * service completion (Successful or Unsuccessful) * rationale for services not accepted | C.6.3 |
| Diabetes Ed. (Diabetes Education) | DE Specialist use only | The diabetes program specialist writes a case note or series of case notes to document customer contacts and other pertinent details.  Case notes may include:   * Services in evaluation and training * diabetes education recommendations * diabetes training on equipment * diabetes education referrals/resources | C.6.4 |
| Diagnostic Interview | VR counselor use only | A case note or series of case notes that describes pertinent information garnered from the customer, the customer's family or representative, and any available records during the Diagnostic Interview meeting with the VR counselor.  The case note must include, from the customer’s perspective:   * a brief description of the disability, including relevant history and current treatment; * current functional limitations and their impact on employment, education, and independence; * relevant history of access to and current use of rehabilitation technology; * perception of problems or issues related to his or her disabilities and need for services; * educational and work history; * general knowledge, skills, and abilities; * available resources and comparable benefits (or the need to apply for benefits); and * SSI or SSDI status (including verification of benefits or a note about the need to verify benefits).   The case note must also include:   * the VR counselor’s observations of the customer through the interview as they relate to the customer's ability to participate in and benefit from VR services; and * a statement of the next actions needed to move the case through the VR process.   **TIP**: The "Can We Talk" brochure and the information to make informed choices must be provided and/or offered and documented at application. VR staff must document in RHW the date and method the information was provided and/or offered. | B.3 |
| Disaster Victim Status | Any VR staff | A case note or series of case notes that provides the following information to confirm RHW coding as a disaster victim:   * how the customer was directly impacted by the disaster? * what services are needed, because of the disaster?   **TIPS:** A customer could have been affected by the disaster in several ways including:   * The storm and resulting floods impacted their homes, families, and/or community supports. * People were displaced or had their living situation affected. * They lost their jobs or are temporarily unemployed due to the damages caused by the disaster. * Equipment, tools, uniforms or other items VR provided were lost or damaged. * Vendors and local businesses upon whom they depend for medical services, education, and other training and supplies suffered disruptions.   Customers may have been affected regardless of where they are currently living. There are customers who were displaced and are staying with friends/families in other areas of the state or who have subsequently moved to other areas of the stateand we need to appropriately identify these individuals as disaster victims in RHW, as well. | N/A |
| EAS (Employment Assistance Services) | EAS staff use only | Employment Assistance Services (EAS) staff are responsible for entering case notes for any activity they provide for customers.  The only actual formal item to go into a case note is the Initial EAS Consultation report.  This is copied and passed into the actual SR which then carries over into a case note via RHW.  The EAS staff documents EAS services in a case note when an SR is delegated to EAS.  The following are level 4 specs for EAS services that EAS should be documented in a case note in RHW:   * Assistive Technology Purchase Plan * Assistive Technology Troubleshooting * Baseline Computer Skills Assessment for Training Recommendations * Equipment/Software Installation Information Research (describe) * Initial Consultation * Job Retention Services * Loaner Equipment * Post Training Assessment * Refurbish/Issue Equipment * Technical Support Specialist Services   These are outlined on EAS Intranet site at: <https://intra.twc.texas.gov/intranet/vrs/html/employment-assistance-services.html> | various |
| Eligibility (including significance of disability) | VR counselor use only | A case note or series of case notes that describes the information that supports how each eligibility criterion is met:   1. physical or mental impairment; 2. substantial impediment to employment; 3. customer requires VR services to prepare for, secure, retain, advance in, or regain employment; and 4. presume that the customer can have a goal of an employment outcome.   For Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) cases that are presumed eligible, document in a case note   * statement of the presumption of eligibility; * the reported disability; and * documentation used to verify SSI/SSDI status.   For cases involving SSI or SSDI and that are not immediately presumed eligible for VR services, document in a case note clear justification for the delay in eligibility determination.  **Significance of Disability** –Document the significance of disability of the case as a stand-alone case note or as part of a case note for eligibility.   * A case note that describes how the customer's disability affects his or her functional capacities and meets the other criteria for establishing the disability's significance of disability; or * A completed [VR1390, Checklist for Determining Significance of Disability](https://intra.twc.texas.gov/intranet/gl/html/vocational_rehab_forms.html). If the VR1390 is used, meet the documentation requirement by also completing a case note in RHW that the form was completed. | B.4 |
| Employment | Any VR staff | A case note that provides relevant details related to the customer’s employment status. This includes documentation of changes throughout the life of the case, verification of employment, start date, and wages for closure.  Staff will indicate in RHW the source documentation used to verify the customer’s wages for closure. If using an alternate method, then a case note is also required.  When documenting the customer’s start date for closure, include the method used in the case note. The start date is also entered in RHW.  When documenting verification of employment for closure, include the method used in the case note.  If direct contact was made with the place of employment, document the name of the individual who verified the customer's employment (for example, name of the manager or the customer's name if VR staff spoke to them directly).  **TIP:** Documentation for the verification of employment must be as current as possible, but no older than 14 calendar days. The documentation must reflect 90 days of employment after all substantial services have been completed. | B.7  B.10 |
| Extension of Time for Eligibility | VR counselor use only | A case note that describes   * the reasons that an extension of time is required, and * that the customer is in agreement with the extension of time.   If the customer does not agree to an EOT for determining eligibility for VR services, document the date and method the information for the right to appeal and the "Can We Talk" brochure was offered/provided to the customer.  **TIP:** When these details are included in the comments section of the EOT for Eligibility page in RHW, which creates a system generated case note, an additional case note is not required. | B.4 |
| Extension of Time for IPE | VR counselor use only | A case note that describes   * the reasons that an extension of time is required, and * that the customer is in agreement with the extension of time.   If the VR counselor and the customer cannot reach an agreement of the contents of the IPE within 90 days, the VR counselor must document the date and method the "Can We Talk" brochure was offered/provided.  **TIP:** When these details are included in the comments section of the EOT for Eligibility page in RHW, which creates a system generated case note, an additional case note is not required. | B.8 |
| IPE/ILP Amendment | VR counselor or IL staff use only | A case note that describes:   * review of all information captured in RHW under the following menus: * Initial Contact;   + Application (including financial information and BLR requirements); and * Plan; * review of each section of the existing plan or amendment; * progress in achieving the identified goals (including review of intermediate goals and educational goal); * the reason for the amendment; * the nature and scope of the changes; * justification for any additional services that are needed to achieve the employment goal (including documentation of best value for purchased goods and services); * a description of how informed customer choice was included in the development of the IPE/ILP Amendment; and * the date and method the “Can We Talk" brochure was offered/provided.   **TIP**: This case note is also used to document post-employment services since an IPE amendment must be completed to provide post-employment services.  **REQUIRED**: The education history (including training information, and semester/grading period pages) in RHW needs to be updated when the IPE is reviewed or updated to capture measurable skills gains and credential attainment for federal reporting.  **TIP:** When an IPE/ILP amendment is completed, this resets the date for the next joint annual review to be completed.  **REQUIRED:** When completing an IPE/ILP amendment, review all release forms and work authorization documents to ensure that they are current. | B.8 |
| Job Ready | VR counselor or business team staff only | A case note is entered when it is determined that a customer is ready to begin looking for employment.  The case note will describe:   * customer’s employment interest (expand on the customer’s interest beyond the SOC code title); * whether the Job Ready Worksheet was completed and placed in the customer file (worksheet not required); * any assistive technology tools used for employment; * any geographical/transportation concerns; * if the customer is being referred to or will need assistance from an ESP; and * any work experience training. | A.10 |
| Joint Annual Review | VR counselor use only | A case note that describes:   * review of all information captured in RHW under the following menus:   + Initial Contact;   + Application (including financial information and BLR requirements);   + Education History; and   + Plan; * review of each section of the existing plan or amendment; and * progress in achieving the identified goals (including review of intermediate goals and educational goal).   **TIP:** When completing a JAR, review all release forms and work authorization documents to ensure they are current.  **REQUIRED:** The education history page (including training information and semester/grading period pages) in RHW also needs to be updated when the IPE is reviewed or updated to capture measurable skills gains and credential attainment for federal reporting. | B.8 |
| Medical Services Coordinator Info. | Medical Services Coordinator (MSC) use only | A case note or series of case notes that documents MSC case actions related to the coordination of medical services, including:   * comparable benefit verification information with contact name and date; * specific medical service coordinated, including the provider name, admission or start date of service, and number of units or days authorized; * for surgery cases, the name of the surgery, surgeon, hospital or facility, and admission and surgery date; * verification of discharge date, end date of service, and customer completion of service; * a list of ancillary providers required for coordination of the primary medical service; * customer medical complications and requests for additional services or an extension of services; * the reason for delay in the coordination of medical services; * the VR counselor contact information to discuss medical coordination case issues; and * the medical provider contacts to coordinate and pay for medical services.   Use the “Add To Topic” field to customize case note titles for quick reference. For example, MSC case notes could include “Add To Topics” of   * comparable benefits; * surgery details; * discharge details; * service delay; * complications; or * purchasing. | C.5.2 (various subchapters) |
| Modifications | Any VR staff | A case note or series of case notes that is used to document information about modification details as they related to VR services. Modifications include:   * Vehicle, * Home, and/or * Job site | various |
| O & M (Orientation and Mobility) | O&M staff use only | A case note or series of case notes that describes:   * assessments completed with customers * training progress reports * service record closures * customer contacts or attempts to contact | C.6.5a  C.6.5b |
| Phase Adjustment | VR Counselor only | A case note or series of case notes that describes the circumstances surrounding previous closures and the need for phase adjusting the case.  VR Supervisor approval is required. | E.3.2 |
| PIN Reset | VR management team use only | A case note or series of case notes that describes:   * an action taken; and * the reason that the customer's PIN was reset. | B.2.1 |
| Purchasing | Any VR staff | Limited use for purchasing actions.  **TIP:** When an SA is changed prior to authorizing payment, there must be a corresponding case note to document the change to the SA and the updated SA is sent to the provider.  **TIP:** If an SA is closed because the service is no longer authorized, VR staff members must notify the provider no later than the same business day that the SA is closed. Document the provider notification in a case note in RHW. | D.2  D.3 |
| Purchasing Pre-review | Administrative supervisor, purchasing specialist, or the final approver (e.g., the VR Manager) if there are other approvals required before the purchase | A case note that confirms that:   * the purchase is clearly connected to and supportive of the vocational objective; * policies and procedures for type of purchase have been applied correctly; * purchase is included in IPE, IPE amendment, or in a case note with all service justification elements included (if before IPE or for potentially eligible customers); * exploration and; * exploration and application of available comparable benefits is documented; * BLR has been calculated and applied correctly; * correct specification levels are used to create service record; and * required consultations and approvals have been completed, when applicable.   **TIP**: When a RHW Purchase Approval is required, the pre-purchase review is completed AFTER or in combination with the RHW Purchase Approval.  **TIP**: If an approver has reviewed and documented an element of the pre-purchase review requirements as part of their approval prior to the pre-purchasing review, the staff completing the pre-purchase review does not have to duplicate these efforts during their review or documentation of the review. | D.2  D.3 |
| Records and Reports | Any VR staff | A case note that provides basic information about requesting and processing records or reports.  Restricted Use:   * Do not use for documentation specific to a SA or purchasing action (use “Purchasing” case note topic). * Do not use when more detailed information is being documented and should be documented in a case note topic, such as “Assessing & Planning”. | various |
| Referral | Any VR staff | A case note that provides basic information about referrals between vocational rehabilitation services and community resources. Do not use for referrals within vocational rehabilitation services, such as referrals to CCRC, Diabetes Education Services, EAS, VRT, Deafblind Services or other internal resources and supports. | various. |
| Requires Special Attention | Any VR staff | Used to document behavior that could pose a threat to other employees or to providers. (Exercise extreme care when using this case note title).  A specific and factual report including   * the date, * the location, * the names and addresses of witnesses and people involved, * what was said or done, and * the names of those willing to testify.   If it is later determined that the customer no longer poses a threat, enter a new case note that describes the change in circumstances.  **TIP:** VR staff must report incidents affecting the security of VR staff or property to VR management and, if appropriate, to the local law enforcement authority. | N/A |
| Service Justification | VR counselor use only | A case note that describes:   * type of service, * goal of service, * specific provider, * begin and end dates of service, * justification for services (including documentation of best value for purchased goods and services), * information about available comparable benefits, and * information about how the customer exercised informed choice.   When services are provided for family members, the service justification note must also describe:   * why services are needed for a family member; * which family member or members need the services (name and Social Security number); * what services are needed; and * how the services are expected to contribute to the customer's employment.   **TIP: An additional service justification is not required if comparable information has already been recorded in another case note or in the customer’s IPE.**  **TIP**: **A service justification is only allowable for potentially eligible customers and before a customer is placed in trial work or active services. After a customer has signed their Trial Work Plan (TWP) or IPE, any additional goods or services must be placed on the TWP or IPE amendment.** | various |
| State Office Use Only - RSA Approval – Purchase Prior Approval | State office use only | RSA approval case note entered by VR staff member that is approving or denying the request.  The “Add to Topic” for an approval or denial should include the specific good or service and the decision (“approved” or “denied”), such as “Out-of-state Training – Approved”.  The case note content must include the following:   * the parameters of the approval or denial (include specific good or service, provider, and when applicable, the date range of the approval); * type of review completed in TxROCS (if applicable); and * name and job title of staff making decision. | N/A |
| State Office Use Only - RSA Request - Purchase Prior Approval | State office staff use only | RSA approval request case note entered by VR staff member that is requesting an approval prior to purchase.  The “Add to Topic” for a request should include the specific good or service, such as “Out-of-state Training”.  The case note content must include the following:   * what is being requested (include specific good or service, provider, and anticipated dates of service); * circumstances supporting the request; and * name and job title of requester. | N/A |
| Trial Work | VR counselor use only | A case note that provides a clear justification of the need for trial work as an assessment.  **TIP:** There must be two or more documented trial work experiences before closing the case as “disability too significant to benefit from services”. | B.6 |
| TxROCS Case Review | VR staff member that is completing the case review | A case note that includes:   * type of review completed in TxROCS; and * name and job title of staff completing the review.   **TIP:** The TxROCS case review ID is a required data field when using this case note title. | various |
| VDU (Vocational Diagnostic Unit) | VDU staff use only | A case note or series of case notes that may include:   * scheduling information * customer contact or contact attempts * summary and recommendations of the VDU evaluation * feedback summary | C.6.6 |
| VRT (Vocational Rehabilitation Teacher) | VRT use only | The VR Teacher writes a case note or series of case notes to document customer contacts and other pertinent case information.  Case notes should include:   * customer assessments * any contacts with customers * training recommendations (include training goals in these areas: Adjustment to Visual Impairment, Independent Living Skills, Travel Skills, Communication Skills, Vocational Skills, and Support Systems) * training services summary (include what was taught, how was it taught, evaluation of tasks, and next actions) * training services completion (include VR teacher and VR counselor agree with the closure) * courtesy customer visits * staffings between VR teacher and VR counselor. | C.6.7 |

# Review

The Policy Planning and Statewide Initiatives Team, or designee, is responsible for reviewing this policy and these procedures and will update the Document History log if necessary.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Type** | **Change Description** |
| 9/3/2024 | New | VRSM Policy and Procedure Rewrite |
| 11/01/2024 | Revised | Added clarification that service justifications are not allowable in trial work experience services. |
| 2/10/2025 | Revised | Changed ‘level of significance’ to significance of disability to align with federal regulations wording. Added ‘tip’ to service justification for case notes. |