# Vocational Rehabilitation Services Manual B-500: Individualized Plan for Employment

Revised June 29, 2020

## B-502: IPE Process

The IPE is developed with the customer or as appropriate, with the customer's representative, in his or her native language or mode of communication.

VR staff informs the customer of the available options for all or part of the IPE:

* with direct assistance from a VR counselor that is employed by TWC-VR,
* by the individual (without any assistance),
* with assistance of a qualified counselor that is not employed by TWC-VR, or
* with assistance, as appropriate, from a disability advocacy organization.

TWC-VR does not pay for assistance with IPE development.

The IPE must be approved by a VR counselor employed by TWC-VR and must include all required content. See B-504: Content of the IPE for more information.

Before asking the customer to sign the IPE, the VR counselor must explain:

* the terms and conditions for the delivery of services, including the start and end dates of the services;
* any financial commitment to the plan;
* the customer's right to appeal; and
* the availability of the Client Assistance Program.

A copy of the ["Can We Talk" brochure](https://twc.texas.gov/files/jobseekers/vocational-rehabilitation-appeal-process-twc.pdf) and the information to make informed choices must be provided (or offered) at every step in the VR process: application, eligibility, IPE, - denial of services, and closure. VR staff must document in RHW the date and method the information was provided and/or offered. Once signed, a copy of the IPE or IPE amendment must be provided to the customer.

## B-503: Timelines for Developing the IPE

The IPE must be completed as soon as possible, but no later than 90 days after the customer has been determined eligible for VR services.

### B-503-1: Extension of Time for IPE

If the VR counselor and customer cannot complete the IPE within 90 days after the date that eligibility is determined, the VR counselor must:

1. discuss with the customer the reasons that the development of the IPE will require additional time to complete, and when the IPE is expected to be completed;
2. obtain agreement from the customer that the extension of time (EOT) for completing the IPE is necessary;
3. document in the comments section of the EOT for IPE page in ReHabWorks (RHW):
   * the reasons that an EOT is required, and
   * that the customer is in agreement with the EOT;
4. complete the EOT for IPE page in RHW.

If the VR counselor and the customer cannot reach an agreement of the contents of the IPE within 90 days, the VR counselor must:

1. provide the customer with a "Can We Talk" brochure,
2. document in RHW the date and method the brochure was provided, and
3. consult with the VR Supervisor for guidance on how to proceed with the case.

If the VR counselor cannot contact the customer to obtain agreement to complete the EOT for IPE by the 90th day, the VR counselor should consult with the VR Supervisor for guidance on how to proceed with the case. If it is determined that the case should be closed, refer to [B-600: Closure and Post-EmploymentServices](https://twc.texas.gov/vr-services-manual/vrsm-b-600) for information about closing the case.

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## B-504: Content of the IPE

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### B-504-11: Signatures

A valid IPE must be signed by the VR customer or, as appropriate, the customer's representative, and approved and signed by a qualified vocational rehabilitation counselor employed by TWC VR. For more information, refer to [B-204-7: PIN Procedures](https://twc.texas.gov/vr-services-manual/vrsm-b-200#b204-7).

Under no circumstances does the IPE or IPE amendment take effect or allow for payment of any service until it is agreed to and signed by the customer or the customer's representative and the VR counselor.

Note: In addition to being included on the customer's IPE, purchased services must also be authorized in advance with a service authorization that is generated by RHW. For more information about required purchasing processes and procedures, refer to [D-200: Purchasing Goods and Services](https://twc.texas.gov/vr-services-manual/vrsm-d-200).

#### Customer or Representative Signatures

The VR counselor reviews with the customer or the customer's representative, his or her rights and responsibilities, as stated on the IPE, and provides him or her with a copy of the "Can We Talk" brochure before asking them to sign the IPE. The VR counselor must document in RHW the date and method the brochure was provided. The customer or required, the customer's representative, must sign and date an IPE after the IPE has been developed and agreed upon by both the customer and the VR counselor.

When the IPE is not available in RHW, print the [VR5163, Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)](https://twc.texas.gov/forms/index.html), and:

* have the customer sign it;
* place the signed VR5163 in the case folder;
* document in the case note that the VR5163 was signed; and
* enter the IPE into RHW and enter a pseudo PIN.

For more information about PINs, see the [ReHabWorks User Guide, Chapter 8: PINs](https://intra.twc.texas.gov/intranet/manuals/rhwhelp/index.html).

#### VR Counselor Signature

The VR counselor reviews and approves the IPE after considering:

* results of the comprehensive assessment;
* the customer's unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, career interests, and informed choice; and
* applicable TWC-VR procedures.

If the VR counselor does not agree with content that the customer is requesting to be included in the IPE, the VR counselor should not sign the IPE, but discuss specific points and problem areas with the customer.

If, after discussing the concerns with the proposed IPE, the customer and the VR counselor cannot come to an agreement on the content of the IPE, the VR counselor informs the customer of his or her rights, as outlined in the "Can We Talk" brochure. The VR counselor documents in RHW the date and method the brochure was provided. The VR counselor also documents the status of the pending IPE and notifies the VR Supervisor. If needed, an Extension of Time for completing the IPE may be necessary. Refer to [B-503-1: Extension of Time for IPE](https://twc.texas.gov/vr-services-manual/vrsm-b-500#b503-1) for more information.

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