# Vocational Rehabilitation Services Manual D-200: Purchasing Goods and Services

Added August 4, 2018

## D-204: The Purchasing Process

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### D-204-2: After-the-Fact Purchases

The purchase of goods and services must be authorized with an SA in RHW before the good or service is ordered or received. However, when a delay of services may have endangered a customer's well-being, the VR counselor may authorize an after-the-fact hospital or medical service authorization. See C-701-4: Necessary, Unplanned Medical Services for additional information details.

All after-the-fact service authorizations must be reviewed and approved by the VR Supervisor, if issued by a field office, or Regional Program Support Manager, if issued by a regional Medical Services Coordinator (MSC) or Medical Services Technician (MST).

### D-204-3: After-the-Fact Ancillary Service Authorizations

An after-the-fact ancillary SA is one that is issued after a service has been provided.

All after-the-fact service ancillary authorizations must be reviewed and approved by the VR Supervisor, if issued by a field office, or Regional Program Support Manager, if issued by a regional MSC or MST.

After-the-fact ancillary SAs are issued:

* when a service is unanticipated, arising from services previously authorized;
* because of complications from services previously authorized; or
* because additional services are needed to directly support an existing SA.

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### D-204-4: Replacement Service Authorizations

The specifications in a service authorization(SA) may change after the delivery of services.

If a change is needed to services that are delivered by the same vendor (for example, if a change is needed to the MAPS codes), and approval by the VR Manager or state medical director was required on the initial SA, the same approvals must be obtained before issuing the replacement SA.

If a change is needed to services that are delivered by the same vendor (for example, if a change is needed to the MAPS codes), and approval was not required for the original SA or the new SA, then no additional approval is required.

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## D-206: Purchasing Restrictions

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### D-206-1: Paying Professional Dues

VR does not pay dues to a professional association or trade union, unless the purchase is justified as critical to the success of the customer's employment.

VR funds cannot be paid to organizations that financially support a lobbyist.

If the VR counselor believes that payment of professional dues is critical to the success of the customer's employment, the VR counselor must enter a case note in RHW that explains the justification for the decision.

The regional director must approve payment of any professional association or trade union dues or fees and may consult with TWC Office of General Council as needed to determine if use of VR funds is allowed.

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### D-206-3: Out-of-State Purchases

The purchase of any goods or services from out-of-state providers requires regional director approval. In addition to this, payment of out-of-state tuition rates at training institutions in the state of Texas also require regional director approval. For additional information about payment rates for out of state training refer to [C-414-17: Tuition and Fees](https://twc.texas.gov/vr-services-manual/vrsm-c-400%22%20%5Cl%20%22c414-17).

Out-of-state MAPS services must also be purchased from providers who are properly credentialed. To ensure that a provider is properly credentialed, consult with the state office program specialist for MAPS provider services prior to requesting regional director approval.

Purchasing an out-of-state service that is ordinarily regulated in Texas, but is not regulated in the state where the service is provided requires consultation with state office program specialist prior to regional director approval. (Note: This includes out- of-state proprietary and vocational training).

Purchase of any good or service from an out-of-state provider that that is normally purchased under a contract, but the out of state provider does not have a contract for that good or service with TWC-VR requires consultation with state office program specialist and Once approved, a contract exception must be completed.

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## D-209: Types of Purchases

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### D-209-3: Contracted Goods and Services

When purchasing contracted goods and services, refer to the:

* [VR Standards for Providers](https://twc.texas.gov/partners/vocational-rehabilitation-standards-providers-manual); and
* [VR Contracting Processes and Procedures Manual (Word)](http://intra.twc.state.tx.us/intranet/manuals/cppm/CPPM.docx).

Contract Administration staff members solicit and manage contracts for VR goods and services. Some goods or services must be purchased under contract. Before purchasing a good or service, staff members use RHW to find out whether a contract is required. When the SA is generated, RHW assigns the contract number based on the vendor and the type of purchase. Refer to [ReHabWorks User's Guide, Chapter 16: Case Service Record](http://online.dars.txnet.state.tx.us/prd/services/rhwhelp/ch16.htm) for more information about creating a service record.

Customer goods and services that are purchased under contract include the following, but are not limited to:

* Employment assessments
* Orientation and Mobility services
* Hearing aids and related accessories
* Diabetes Self-Management Education services
* Durable medical equipment
* Assistive technology
* Supportive Residential Services for Persons in Recovery
* Work Readiness services
* Work Experience
* Pre-Employment Transition services
* Project SEARCH and similar programs
* Basic Employment services
* Supported Employment services
* Self-employment services (including supported self-employment)
* Post-Acute Brain Injury services
* Vehicle modifications
* Intensive Work Preparation and Life Skills Training

When purchasing an outcome-based contracted training service, such as Vocational Adjustment Training, the service is purchased no more than one time. When there is a significant change in circumstances that may justify an additional purchase of the same service, VR Supervisor approval and completion of DARS3472 is required for the second time that the service is purchased and VR Manager approval and completion of DARS3472 is required the third time that the service is purchased and for any subsequent purchases of the service.

#### Ensuring a Valid Contract

Before issuing an SA, VR must:

1. note the contract number on the documentation for a good or service purchased under contract; and
2. ensure that the contract number is current on the service record.

When creating a service record in RHW to purchase goods or services that require a contract, VR staff ensures that the contract for the selected good or service is valid for the entire planned period of service.

To confirm that a contract is valid for the entire planned period of service:

1. Reviews the provider's contract information in RHW on the Service Record page by selecting:
	* the Vendor Detail button;
	* the vendor's name; and
	* the contract number.
2. Reads the contract details carefully to ensure that:
	* the contracted good or service is included in the contract; and
	* the dates of service are within the contract's start and end dates.

If the contract is not valid when the good or service is purchased or delivered, VR staff does not use that good or service but instead:

1. continues to search in RHW for a valid good or service; and
2. consults with the VR Manager if you are unable to locate a valid good or service.
3. enters in the comments section of the SA all special instructions or requirements for the specific good or service being purchased.