# Vocational Rehabilitation Services Manual D-300: Records Management

Revised July 1, 2021

## D-302: Case Notes

### D-302-1: Overview of Case Notes

The management of the TWC VR program is largely reflected in the case file documentation of each customer. One key to program success is the VR staff's ability to demonstrate accurate and timely decisions that:

* comply with the law;
* are made in partnership with the customer; and
* lead to the delivery of substantial services for the eligible customer, ultimately resulting in competitive integrated employment.

Case file documentation includes:

* information contained in ReHabWorks (RHW);
* information contained in the paper case file;
* information contained in the virtual case file; and
* case notes.

The VR staff uses case notes to compile information resulting from interactions with the customer, the customer's family or representative, referral sources, service providers, and others. Case notes should establish a sound record of program effectiveness and efficiency by:

* conveying compliance with federal and state laws regarding:
	+ use of funds; and
	+ decisions in service delivery;
* documenting the VR counselor's decision making and application of the VR process;
* providing a clear and concise explanation of the customer's progression through the rehabilitation process;
* explaining any causes for delay, planned interventions, and the result of interventions;
* documenting how services were seamlessly provided to the customer during absence(s) of the VR counselor of record; and
* recording counseling and guidance provided.

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## D-303: Case File Organization

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### D-303-1: Case Files

Documentation of service delivery, including contact reports and other reports, are maintained in either a virtual case file or a two- or six-sided paper case file.

Any electronic documents that are not contained in RHW are contained virtually in a shared drive such as the Unit G:Drive, SharePoint, OneDrive, etc. RHW must be updated to indicate the status of the case file as either:

* Virtual – all documents are stored electronically,
* Paper – all documents are stored in a paper case file, or
* Mixed – some documents are stored electronically and in a paper case file.

#### Documentation Order

Each region may determine which type of paper case file is used. In either case, the following documentation order must be maintained, two- or six-sided. Each section of the case file should be organized so that initial documents are on the bottom and most recent are on the top unless otherwise specified. Because of the volume of information often contained in the six-sided case file, dividers should be used to section off certain areas of documentation. This makes the information easier to access on a routine basis.

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#### Case Files for Potentially Eligible Students

A paper and/or virtual case file is required for each potentially eligible student. The case file for a potentially eligible student must include:

* the [VR1820, Request to Receive Pre-Employment Transition Services](https://twc.texas.gov/forms/index.html);
* documentation verifying the student’s disability;
* any release forms;
* any referral forms, reports, invoices, and relevant documentation related to Pre-ETS; and
* documentation of legal status to work in the United States. (Note: This documentation is required only when a potentially eligible student is participating in a work placement as part of work-based learning.)

When closing a potentially eligible student’s case, VR staff must follow the policy in this chapter related to closing the paper case file.

#### Maintaining Closed Case Files

Keep all documents, including financial records, in the closed customer virtual and/or paper case file, which is stored for a total of seven years.

Field offices only store files for cases closed in the current and preceding fiscal year.

Ship all other closed customer paper case files to the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) Records Management Center (RMC) in accordance with procedures in the [TWC Records and Information Management Manual, Records Storage](https://twcgov.sharepoint.com/sites/BusOPS/BusOpsIntra/DocServicesFormsTemplates/Records%20and%20Information%20Management%20Manual.pdf) (PDF).

Retrieve closed customer paper case files from the TWC RMC in accordance with [TWC Records and Information Management Manual, Records Storage](https://twcgov.sharepoint.com/sites/BusOPS/BusOpsIntra/DocServicesFormsTemplates/Records%20and%20Information%20Management%20Manual.pdf).

#### Reopening a Case

When starting a new file on a case that was previously active, the VR staff copies or download significant documents from the closed case file for placement in the new file. Do not remove forms, reports, and other data from the old file.

### D-303-2: Records and Reports from Outside Sources

Records and reports that are received from other sources, such as medical providers or training institutions, must be reviewed by the VR counselor before they are filed in the customer's paper or virtual case file. The VR counselor initials and dates next to each date stamp to confirm that they have reviewed the content.

With the exception of the required date stamps and VR counselor date and initials to confirm review of content, VR staff should avoid making permanent marks on records and reports that are received from sources outside of VR. The use of a yellow highlighter to draw attention to specific content is acceptable.

Computerized Criminal History (CCH) records are not to be added to a customer’s virtual case file under any circumstances. For information on storing these records, refer to B-405-4: Evaluating and Documenting Computerized Criminal History Results.

Content that is not relevant to the customer's VR services should not be maintained in the customer’s virtual or paper case file. When content is received that is not relevant to the customer's VR case, this information should be disposed of by the VR counselor.

## D-304: Transfer of Cases and Caseloads

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### D-304-2: Transfer of Open Cases

Within three business days of receiving a request to transfer an open case, the current VR counselor and RA team must:

* document the request for a transfer, including the reason that the case is being transferred and the office to which it is being transferred;
* update all demographic information in RHW;
* review and/or update the IPE, joint annual review (JAR), or IPE amendment (for the VR counselor only);
* review and/or update disability information in RHW (for the VR counselor only);
* close or update all service records;
* pay and/or close all service authorizations; and
* notify the VR Manager about the request for a case transfer.

Providers must be notified when service authorizations are closed without payment. The receiving unit issues a new service authorization when the case is received for ongoing services, when applicable.

#### Transferring within the Same Management Unit

A formal case review is not required for cases that are transferred within the same management unit; however, the VR Manager, VR Supervisor, or designee must transfer the case and enter a RHW case note to verify that the transfer has been completed. In units with two VR Supervisors, they should coordinate the transfer.

The VR counselor/RA team to which the case is assigned must contact the customer in a timely manner to schedule an appointment for the customer to meet with the assigned VR counselor to resume services.

#### Transferring to a Different Management Unit

Within five business days of receiving a request for a case transfer, the transferring VR Manager, VR Supervisor, or Unit Support Coordinator:

* completes a partial Compliance and Quality review of the Customer Eligibility, Application, and Diagnostic Interview, the Eligibility Decision, and the Level of Significance in TxROCS;
* prints or adds to the virtual file a copy of the completed case review;
* using email for virtual case files or certified mail for paper case files, sends the case file and the copy of completed case review to the receiving office;
* completes [VR1025, Case Transfer Letter](http://intra.twc.state.tx.us/intranet/gl/html/vocational_rehab_forms.html), notifying the customer that his or her file has been sent to the receiving office; and
* places a copy of the transfer letter in the customer's case file.

Within three business days of receiving the paper case file, the receiving VR Manager, VR Supervisor, or designee:

* assigns the case to the receiving counselor in RHW;
* enters a case note verifying that the case was received and assigned; and
* notifies the VR counselor that the case was assigned.

#### Transferring a Transition Services Case

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### D-304-5: Transfer of a Case Using ReHabWorks

Once the paper or virtual case file is delivered to the receiving VR office, the receiving VR Manager, VR Supervisor, or designee must transfer the case in RHW. If the case is sent to TWC RMC, the management unit mailing the case must transfer the case in RHW. To transfer the case in RHW, staff:

* selects the "Paper File Transfer" from the "Case Management" navigation menu;
* when the "Paper File Transfer" page displays the office where the paper files reside, selects from one of the following two options:
	+ sending the records to another office; or
	+ sending the records to TWC RMC by:
		- selecting the "Division" in the drop-down list to select the location where the paper file will be sent (once populated, staff selects "New Office" from the drop-down list of offices for that division); and
		- selecting the check box for "Records Center" to send the paper file there; and
* saves and closes the page.

For more information, refer to the [ReHabWorks Users Guide, Chapter 9: Other Case Management, 9.3 Case Transfer](https://intra.twc.texas.gov/intranet/manuals/rhwhelp/index.html).

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## D-307: Processing Closed Case Files

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### D-307-1: Pulling Closed Case Files for Storage

For each case file on the inventory sheet that is pulled for storage, VR staff should:

* Remove the sealed Computerized Criminal History (CCH) report from the paper case file. Write the customer's last name, first initial, and case ID on the confidential envelope. Place the envelope in a separate box bound for RMC for storage.
* Print any necessary records stored on CD and file the copies in the paper case file. Remove the CD from the case file and place it in the locked confidential shredding container.
* Secure any loose papers to the file prongs and remove staples, clips and post-it notes from the entire file. Small sheets of paper must be copied to a standard 8 1/2 by 11-inch letter size paper.
* Documents in six-sided files must be taken out and put into a regular two-sided file.
* Envelopes, with the exclusion of the sealed CCH envelopes, must be opened and the documents removed from the envelope. If the documents are folded, they must lay flat in the file.
* Record on the tab label the customer's last name, first name, and case ID.
* Stamp "Confidential" on the front and back of each file.
* Using a black felt-tip marker, write the fiscal year in which the case was closed on the outside of the file jacket.
* Change the file location status in ReHabWorks to Records Center.

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