# VRSM E-300 Case Note Requirements

August 13, 2018

| **Case Note Topic** | **Documentation** |
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| Diagnostic Interview | 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.  The case note must include:   * brief description of the customer’s disabilities (relevant history and current treatment); * a description of the functional limitations and their impact on employment, education, and independence; * a record of the customer's perception of problems or issues related to his or her disabilities and need for services; * the customer’s educational and work history; * the customer’s knowledge, skills, and abilities; * the customer’s resources and comparable benefits (or the need to apply for benefits); * information about the customer’s SSI or SSDI status (including verification of benefits or a note about the need to verify benefits); * the VR counselor’s observations throughout interview; and * a statement of the next actions needed to move the case through the VR process. |
| Eligibility (including level of significance) | 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.  **Level of Significance** –Document the level of significance 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 level of significance; or * A completed DARS1390, Checklist for Determining Significance of Disability. If the DARS1390 is used, meet the documentation requirement by also completing a case note in RHW that the form was completed. |
| Trial Work | A case note that provides a clear justification of the need for trial work as an assessment. |
| Assessing and Planning | 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; * led to the customer's participation in informed choice; * led to the development of the plan for making contact with the customer. |
| Comprehensive Assessment | 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; * Services that are needed to achieve the employment goal; * 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; * Explanation of customer contribution to planned services (if required); and * Any other factors that may impact participation in services.   **Note:** Only areas listed above that apply to the customer and their circumstances need to be addressed in assessments and documentation.  **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. |
| IPE Amendment or JAR | A case note that describes:   * any changes to personal or financial information captured in RHW; * review of each section of the existing IPE or IPE amendment; * progress in achieving the employment goal (including review of intermediate goals); * the results of the plan review (i.e. “no changes required” or “IPE amendment completed”); * when applicable, the reason for an IPE amendment and the nature and scope of the changes, including how objectives, services, and a plan for communication with the customer were developed, when applicable.   **TIP:** This case note is also used to document post-employment services since an IPE amendment must be completed to provide post-employment services. |
| Service Justification | A case note that describes:   * type of service, * goal of service, * specific provider, * begin and end dates of service, * information about available comparable benefits, and * information about how the consumer 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:** A service justification is not required if comparable information has already been recorded in another case note or in the customer’s IPE. |
| Contact | A case note or series of case notes that documents all contacts between any VR staff member and the   * customer; * customer’s representative; or * legal guardian.   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 contact 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. |
| Counseling and guidance | 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:   * issue 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.   **TIP:** As with other case notes, the writing style and format of a C&G case note can be individualized by the VR counselor as long as 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:** When counseling and guidance is provided during the completion of the joint annual review or when completing an IPE amendment, the compliance and quality criteria for counseling and guidance must also be met and clearly documented for this to count as a counseling and guidance case note for the purpose of a case review. |
| Closure | 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; and * how the case meets the criteria required for closure. |
| Requires Special Attention | 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. |

Certain circumstances require specific documentation to implement a service or take some other action. The following table describes the minimum documentation required for these circumstances.

| **Action** | **Documentation** |
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| Approval Request | A case note or series of case notes entered by   * VR staff member that is requesting an approval and * VR staff member that is approving or denying the request.   The “Add to Topic” for a request should include the specific good or service, such as “Out-of-state Training”.  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:  Requests:   * 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.   Approval or Denial:   * 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. |
| Phase Adjustment | A case note or series of case notes that describes:   * the circumstances surrounding previous closures and the need for phase adjusting the case; * consultation with the VR manager, if applicable.   If a new case is opened instead of adjusting the phase of an existing case, use the case note topic, “Reopening Case File Justification”. |
| PIN Reset | A case note or series of case notes entered by management that describes:   * an action taken; and * the reason that the customer's PIN was reset. |
| Reopening Case File Justification | A case note or series of case notes that describes:   * the circumstances surrounding previous closures and the need for opening a case; * the changes that will lead to a successful outcome; and * consultation with the VR Supervisor, if applicable.   If a phase adjustment is used rather than opening a new case, use the case note topic, “phase adjustment”. |