

Mutual Commitment:

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (OVRs) and the Oregon Commission for the Blind (OCB) have a commitment to work in collaboration to provide quality vocational rehabilitation services to all eligible individuals with disabilities. The goal of this agreement is to provide a framework for maximizing the employment and independent living opportunities for individuals with disabilities in Oregon.

This agreement acknowledges that OVRs and OCB are distinct and separate entities with equal responsibilities for serving individuals with disabilities as outlined in each organizations' State Plan.

Responsibilities of Parties in Serving Clients:

OVRs will be responsible for serving individuals with disabilities or impairments other than those that fall within the definition of legal blindness and are not of a rapidly progressive nature leading to legal blindness that meet program eligibility requirements.

OCB will be responsible for serving individuals whose impairments fall within the definition of legal blindness, or rapidly progressive nature leading to legal blindness that meet program eligibility requirements.

When an individual has an impairment that falls within the definition of legal blindness, or a rapidly progressive nature leading to legal blindness in addition to other physical or mental disability(ies), the individual will be served by OCB unless OCB in consultation with OVRs determines the client would be appropriate to be served by both agencies as outlined below:

A case can be opened jointly only if it meets all of the following criteria.

1. The client meets the eligibility criteria for both agencies
2. The individual has multiple rehabilitation needs that are significant in nature and result in both legal blindness and another physical or mental disability(ies).
3. It is determined by both agencies that there are substantial rehabilitation services that are required and could be best provided by a cooperative effort involving the expertise of counselors from OCB and OVRs.

Agreements of Joint Rehabilitation Cases:

1. All vision related rehabilitation services, including assistive technology that address the individual's vision related rehabilitation needs are the sole responsibility of OCB.
2. Order of Selection -If either agency is in an order of selection, the responsibilities of serving consumers as described above is not altered. The Order of Selection Policy of each respective agency is followed.
3. Ticket to Work – If a consumer who has received a Ticket to Work from Social Security and has elected to assign their ticket, the ticket will be assigned to the agency that has the highest projected costs in the Individualized Plan for Employment. The agency that holds the ticket will elect cost reimbursement and will collect and submit the expenses for case services, administration, and tracking for both agencies. The responsible agency will provide the portion of the cost reimbursement to the other agency that will include case service expenses and 50% of the administration and tracking costs to the other agency reimbursed by Social Security.

Consultation Services for Clients other than those served jointly:

Each agency provides services to consumers eligible for their respective programs. However, there may be circumstances in which the professional expertise of staff of the OCB or OVRS is necessary to best serve a consumer that is not eligible or appropriate for the other program. Consumers that meet the criteria could receive services on a fee-for-service basis. Services would be provided contingent upon the availability of agency staff resources.

Each agency will establish an hourly rate for consultation and client services that would be paid to the referring agency when providing services to or on behalf of the non-eligible consumer. The rates would be reasonable and based upon actual expenses.

Each agency will provide information and referral under this agreement without charge to the other agency.

OVRS State Rehabilitation Council and OCB Board

Both vocational rehabilitation programs have a separate structure that serves as the State Rehabilitation Council as outlined in the Rehabilitation Act. The State Rehabilitation Council of OVRS and the OCB Board will work in collaboration to ensure appropriate statewide planning for VR services when appropriate.

Services for Individuals with Disabilities

OVRS and OCB will work in partnership to ensure the availability of quality rehabilitation services in Oregon.

OVRS and OCB will work jointly to develop and enhance the quality and availability of assistive technology. Both agencies will share resource and vendor information.

Independent Living Services

OVRS and OCB will collaborate with the State Independent Living Council in the development and implementation of the Independent Living State Plan.

Communication and Resource Sharing

OVRS and OCB agree to support local activities and relationships between each agency's staff to facilitate professional consultation and working relationships.

OVRS and OCB agree to share training plans and calendars. Where appropriate, cross training and joint training will be encouraged.

OVRS and OCB will share data in order to effectively track and serve mutual consumers.

OVRS and OCB will work collaboratively on the development of possible joint projects to leverage additional resources and expand and improve services.

Workforce System Serving Customers with Disabilities

OVRS and OCB will work collaboratively to ensure that the interests and concerns of the public vocational rehabilitation program are expressed and considered at state policy levels within the workforce system.

OVRS and OCB will work collaboratively at the state and local level to provide consultation and technical assistance to assist workforce system partners to ensure that all workforce system services are fully accessible to customers with disabilities.

OVRS and OCB will involve each other in initiatives to assist local workforce partners in evaluating the accessibility of services to customers with disabilities, including the provision of consultation and information and referral to assist workforce partner staff in understanding and meeting the needs of customers with disabilities.

OVRS will represent the interests of OCB when developing or revising Memoranda of Understanding with local workforce boards in Oregon. OVRS will consult with OCB regarding activities at the local level that would impact customers with disabilities.

Administration

OVRS and OCB will maintain regular communication regarding federal maintenance of effort requirements. Should there be a possibility of insufficient non-federal resources available to OVRS or OCB to match the federal funds, the agencies will notify one another. The other agency will be given the opportunity to make available non-federal funds to match federal funds to be expended in that program. Should there be a deficit in non-federal sources within both programs that result in a reduction in the state allotment, OVRS and OCB would work in partnership for appropriate statewide planning.

OVRS and OCB will notify each other should either agency be unable to expend the full federal allotment available. OVRS and OCB would provide the other agency the opportunity to match and expend federal funds prior to federal funds being returned to the Rehabilitation Services Administration in the reallocation process.