Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation

3.13 Self-Employment

All participants in vocational rehabilitation services will establish an employment goal consistent with their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, career interests, and informed choice. Self-employment is a means to achieve an employment goal. Self-employment is not a goal in itself.

Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation recognizes self-employment as the most viable means of promoting independence and economic self-sufficiency for many individuals with disabilities. Self-employment is not a viable option in all situations and sufficient assessment of the viability of the proposed business must show a favorable outcome for Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation to support the venture.

POLICY

Eligibility

Determination of eligibility for Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation services remains the same for individuals who express an interest in self-employment as for those seeking work in traditional employment settings. It includes a review of all documentation, including but not limited to, self-reports, medical, psychological, school, or other reports as well as formal testing results that will provide a comprehensive assessment of the participant’s skills and interests.

Determine the Vocational Goal

The vocational rehabilitation counselor works with the participant to determine the vocational goal and pursue either self-employment or employment via traditional means. The means of reaching the goal will be explored pre-plan and more formally within the plan.
Method to Meet Vocational Goal

Self-employment is a method to pursue an employment outcome. Self-employment is the environment in which the participant carries out his or her employment goal. Because of the nature of this employment option, there are additional activities required in order to establish the viability of self-employment to reach the vocational goal.

Criteria for Support of Self-Employment

Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation bases the Individualized Plan for Employment on the appropriateness of the vocational goal for the specific participant and the services needed to reach that goal. In the case of a participant interested in self-employment, the Individualized Plan for Employment begins exploring the appropriateness and feasibility of self-employment as a viable means of successfully achieving the vocational goal. If it is determined that self-employment is not viable in a particular situation, a traditional means of reaching the employment goal can be pursued.

Competitive Integrated Employment for Persons Self-Employed

Competitive Integrated Employment for a person who is self-employed means work performed on a full-time or part-time basis and yields an income that is comparable to the income received by other individuals who are not individuals with disabilities, and who are self-employed in similar occupations or on similar tasks and who have similar training, experience, and skills.

Options: New Business or Overcome Barriers in Current Business

Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation recognizes that a participant pursuing employment may be interested in starting a new business. Additionally, a participant who is self-employed and experiencing difficulties maintaining his/her business due to disability-related barriers may also seek assistance.
Restrictions or Exclusions

Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation supports self-employment as a potential employment outcome. However, Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation does not support businesses speculative in nature, businesses organized as hobbies, franchises, or nonprofit organizations. The proposed business idea must be consistent with the community’s values and sensibilities. Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation will not support a self-employment venture that entails developing a business that is illegal or is involved in illegal activities under state or federal law.