Disability Innovation Fund—Career Advancement Initiative Model Demonstration Project PR/Award #: H421C210026



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Contents

Purpose and Components	3
Core Partnerships	3
Measured Outcomes	5
Coordinated Comprehensive Supports	6
Career Coaching Core Components	6
VR Participants Who May be ICAP Participants	7
ICAP Referral Steps for Individuals Who Are New or Returning to Vocational Rehabilitation	8
ICAP Referral Steps for Individuals Referred to VR from a Career Coach	<u>C</u>
ICAP Process Overview: Roles, Responsibilities, and Communication Touch Points	10
Collaboration for Job Search Success:	16
Job Search Resources	17
Training and Technical Assistance	21
Community of Practice	21
Local Implementation Teams (LIT)	21
Outreach Efforts and Considerations	22
Career Pathways at Oregon Community Colleges	22
Training Programs and Career Pathways	
Vocational Rehabilitation Process	24
Vocational Rehabilitation Process Flowchart:	26
Career Coaching Process Flowchart	27
ICAP Statewide Team	28
Links to Additional Resources:	29



Purpose and Components

ICAP will provide people with disabilities the opportunity to gain skills and postsecondary credentials toward achieving competitive integrated employment that is **not just a job—but a career**.

This will lead to economic mobility.

The Inclusive Career Advancement Program (ICAP) will support a minimum of **500** people with disabilities, including those from marginalized communities, in:

- Choosing a career pathway of interest
- Accessing postsecondary education
- Participating in internships in high-demand career fields
- Obtaining credentials in their chosen career field
- Obtaining employment upon completion of their program

ICAP is a **Disability Innovation Fund Grant**. A demonstration project grant means an award of funds to an eligible applicant to assist in meeting the cost of conducting a demonstration, either on a pilot or full-scale basis, of the technical or economic feasibility or application of a new or improved procedure, method, technique, or approach that will further the research purposes identified.

Core Partnerships

ICAP has four core partners who collaboratively lead the project and contribute their significant experience and expertise in their respective areas of operation.



Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation (OR VR), as authorized under Title IV (inclusive of the Rehabilitation Act) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), assists people with disabilities (PWD) across Oregon to obtain and maintain competitive integrated employment (CIE) in alignment with their skills, interests, and abilities as identified in their Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). Services are individualized to ensure each eligible PWD receives the essential services to gain employment. OR VR is the lead applicant for this grant project. Their staff work in partnership with community vendors and businesses to foster individualized opportunities leading to CIE. The agency is a state and federally sponsored resource serving all Oregonians with disabilities, with the exception of Blindness or Deaf-Blindness. In 2019-2020, OR VR served 18,127 eligible individuals. The Oregon Commission for the Blind (OCB) serves Oregonians 14 and older who are blind and visually impaired to increase independence, continue education, and fully connect to their communities. In 2019-2020, OCB served 660 adults in VR and 111 Pre-Transition Youth. OR VR and OCB are partnering with ICAP to offer the full population of PWD access to career pathways.

Portland Community College (PCC) is 1 of 17 public community colleges in OR and the largest institution of higher education in the state. It serves more individuals receiving WIOA adult education and training services in OR than any other organization. PCC was an early leader of the statewide Career Pathways Initiative and is currently leading the Community College STEP Consortia and PTO Coalition. For the ICAP project, PCC will serve as an intermediary between the core partners and 14 other community colleges. PCC worked closely with the core partners to design and plan ICAP and will work to maximize efficiency and effectiveness of project implementation, integrate the project with other statewide community college initiatives, and engage other community colleges to sustain the model.

Cornell University's K. Lisa Yang and Hock E. Tan Institute on Employment and Disability (YTI), within the Industrial and Labor Relations School, is also a core partner in ICAP. They have collaborated with the Oregonbased partners in project planning and design of the project's Evaluation Plan (see **Section D**). YTI has been a provider of federally- and state-sponsored research, training, technical assistance (TA), and organizational development surrounding workforce development, community employment innovations, transition planning for youth with disabilities, and workplace disability inclusion policies and practices since the mid-1960s. YTI recently led the



research, evaluation, and TA for the NYS PROMISE initiative funded through the U.S. Department of Education, and is a principal collaborator in the Office of Disability Employment Policy's Center for Advancing Policy on Employment for Youth. YTI will provide TA (professional development/training) to ICAP's community of practice (CoP) and local employers through webinars, toolkits, and access to resources, and serve as the evaluator of ICAP. YTI's expertise in employment, career pathways, career and technical education (CTE), work-based learning (WBL), transition, and inclusive employer practices provide a strong foundation for the project.

Measured Outcomes

Education and Training Outcomes	Target	45% BIPOC
Number of participants that will enter a career pathway	500	225
Number of participants that will complete ICAP education/training	375	169
Number of participants that will attain one or more recognized postsecondary credential 375		169

Employment Outcomes	Target
Participants will achieve CIE through ICAP	259
75% of participants will achieve hourly wage gains	194
50% of participants gain employer-provided medical benefits	129
65% of participants will increase weekly hours worked	168
50% of participants will receive a promotion or additional responsibilities resulting in an increase in salary	129
35% of participants in CIE will report income as their primary support at exit	91
65% of participants in CIE will report public benefits as their primary source of support at exit	168



Coordinated Comprehensive Supports

ICAP is designed to deliver integrated support for participant success from outreach through stable CIE as part of the project's innovative collaborative model. This involves successful partnerships between the VRC and the Career Coach embedded at the community college. **The ICAP Career Coaches and VRCs will team up to provide wraparound support to participants.** Coaching is a strategy with demonstrated success in improving academic and employment-related outcomes. For example, they will coordinate outreach/recruitment efforts (regardless of the referral source) and connect participants with a wealth of resources (e.g., skills training, financial assistance, community college-based student services, community-based support, job-finding resources, employment transition support) based on the specific disabilities and individualized needs of the person.

Career Coaching Core Components

Student-Centered Design: Designed to provide students what they need when they need it—if needs go beyond what the Career Coach can offer, referrals are made to resources in the community.

Success Coaching: Individualized success coaching offered to support postsecondary navigation, employment placement, and advocacy to support college completion and connection to careers.

Support Services: Comprehensive support plan development addressing barriers impacting student success.

VR Participants Who May be ICAP Participants

If you are enrolling a client, the expectation is that they will be employed in a short period of time, even if they are pursuing stackable credentials to further develop their career. Any **eligible** VR client who is pursuing the following types of training at a participating community college that is supported by their VRC as they work toward their employment goal can be an ICAP student.

- IRC: Industry-Recognized Credential
- CPCC: Career Pathways Certificate of Completion
- LTOY: Less-than-One-Year Certificate Programs
- Career Technical Education: Certificate One-Two Year
- Degree: Associate of Applied Science or any other associate degree (excluding AAOT)

The ICAP grant was designed around the career pathways model in Oregon that emphasizes short-term training that leads to employment, with multiple entry and exit points and stackable credentials throughout the working career of a participant. VR participants who match this model of short-term trainings offered through the local community college career pathways programs are preferred for ICAP participation. Some programs are very short, and some can take up to two years. When deciding if a client is appropriate for ICAP, consider the length of the program or course of study being no longer than two years, with exceptions for part-time study, certain apprenticeships, or other agreed upon timelines between the student, VRC and Career Coach. Also ensure that the course matches the VR career goal in their IPE. For example, supporting someone that is wanting to get a transfer degree to a four-year institution is not an appropriate ICAP participant as they would not be leaving the school for employment, but rather to continue their postsecondary education.

Associates of Applied Science degrees, for example, may be appropriate for ICAP participation if the student is planning to attend full time and exit with the AAS degree into a job that requires it. The scope of the ICAP grant requires ICAP participants to enroll in ICAP no later than June 30, 2026, and complete the training and enter employment within the window of the demonstration grant ending June 30, 2028, to meet the benchmarks of the grant.



ICAP Referral Steps for Individuals Who Are New or Returning to Vocational Rehabilitation

There are multiple entry points for individuals who are interested in the ICAP program. However, to be considered an ICAP participant, the individual must be eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR).

- After eligibility is determined, during the plan development process, the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) determines if ICAP is appropriate and necessary to meet their agreed upon career goal.
- VR refers prospective ICAP participant to the Career Coach for an informational interview to explore career
 pathway options that align with their career goal and determine if ICAP is appropriate and necessary for meeting
 their agreed upon career goal.
- Career Coach and VRC discuss the results of informational interview to plan next steps and timelines.
 - o Ensure Releases of Information (ROIs) are completed prior to exchange of participant information.
- VRC and Career Coach jointly decide on ICAP participation and agreed-upon services.
- VRC and Career Coach collaborate with participant to develop an IPE and community college training plan that will match the participant's unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choices.
 - o Ensure ROIs are completed prior to exchange of participant information.
 - o VRC marks the ICAP button in ORCA on the Special Programs page.
 - Career Coach captures Personal Identification (PID) number from VRC for service tracking, and moves student from pre-enrollment tab to program enrollment tab in Participant Book.
 - Ensure necessary accommodations are in place.
- Participant enrolls in career pathway.
- VRC and Career Coach provide comprehensive and collaborative services through regular contact.



ICAP Referral Steps for Individuals Referred to VR from a Career Coach

Potential ICAP students may also be referred to VR for ICAP consideration by their local community college by completing the steps below:

- Inform potential ICAP participant what VR is, services provided, local timelines and processes, and what is required for eligibility.
- Career Coach completes referral form.
 - Career Coach emails this referral to: ICAP@odhs.oregon.gov
 - Email Subject: #secure# ICAP Referral (do NOT send directly to VRC)
 - Career Coach will keep a copy of this referral form and enter a case note in Participant Book to document that the referral was made in pre-enrollment tab.
 - o VR ICAP team will track and coordinate intake with the point-of-contact VRC and local VR office.
 - o VRC will follow up with the Career Coach with questions, next steps, and intake date and time.

NOTE: The expectation of VR is that intake will occur within two weeks of receiving a referral from a Career Coach.



ICAP Process Overview: Roles, Responsibilities, and Communication Touch Points

Application		
VR Counselor Activities	Career Coach Activities	Communication Activities
 Sign application documents for services Talk about strengths or barriers in school or work Explore accommodations in use now or needed Identify how VR might help participant Gather information about participant Gather information about disability/disabilities If needed, arrange testing or evaluation 	 Conduct an ICAP Informational Interview Facilitate outreach and information sessions Connect student with academic advising Support student academic success Assist with enrollment Discuss program costs and connect participant with financial aid when necessary Arrange site visits or tours Demystify training and facilitate empowerment 	 VRC and Career Coach establish relationship Discuss intake meetings VRC shares probability of eligibility for VR services Meet with student as needed
Up to 60 days to eligibility		



Eligibility		
VR Counselor Activities	Career Coach Activities	Communication Activities
 VR must find that the applicant has a documentable disability—such as a physical, emotional, or mental disability VR must find evidence that a disability creates difficulty in getting, keeping, or advancing in a job VRC will decide if applicant can benefit from VR services to help achieve a work goal 	 Explore career pathways Explore credentials offered through career pathways Gather relevant disability related information from VRC or student to best accommodate student Connect with accessibility services if needed Arrange for programmatic visits Assess other needed resources (transportation, food, housing, childcare, etc.) Begin developing Individual Success Plan 	 VRC confirms eligibility with Career Coach Career Coach communicates student status with VRC Confirm mutual enrollment in ICAP



Comprehensive Vocational Assessment		
VR Counselor Activities	Career Coach Activities	Communication Activities
 Assist participant in choosing vocational goal in alignment with the participant's characteristics, desires, and labor market Ensure the vocational goal will match the participant's unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choices Collaborate with participant to agree on career goal and services needed to reach the career goal Ensure the IPE includes the services needed to reach the vocational goal 	Finalize Individual Success Plan and share with VRC: Interests Abilities/Capabilities Strengths Resources Priorities Concerns Informed Choice Labor Market Research	 Corroborate VR and Career Coach rolls and needs Discuss services that facilitate student success Career Coach communicates with VRC about anything they may have learned about the student that will impact their IPE
Up to 90 days to plan		



Individualized Plan for Employment		
VR Counselor Activities	Career Coach Activities	Communication Activities
 Ensure services received as part of the IPE will address barriers to employment and rehabilitation needs Coordinate services in IPE to help participant gain, maintain or advance a vocational goal Document the provision of ICAP career coaching services in the IPE (Job Supports: Career Coaching) 	 Facilitate individualized wraparound services Explore funding sources Identify technology needs Document comprehensive supports in the participant book 	 VRC shares IPE with Career Coach Career Coach shares ICAP college and career plan with VRC

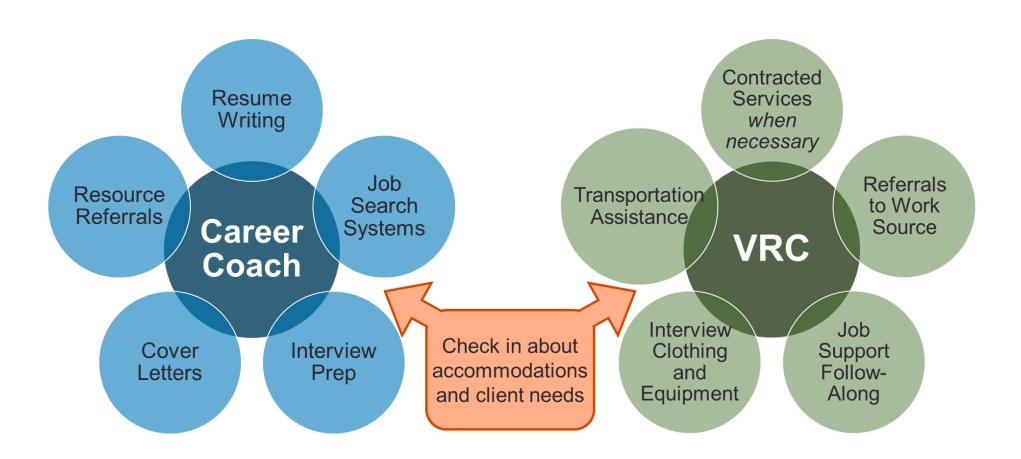


Services, including training		
VR Counselor Activities	Career Coach Activities	Communication Activities
 Collaborate with Career Coach Provide VR Services Implement IPE additions or revisions 	 Develop self-advocacy skills Monitor progress Troubleshoot concerns Implement interventions and adjustments to Success Plan 	 VRC and Career Coach develop regular cadence of communication to review student progress Inform the team of new or extenuating circumstances Career Coach informs and updates VRC of student grades, schedule changes, and completion of VR documentation



Job Search Assistance		
VR Counselor Activities	Career Coach Activities	Communication Activities
 Stay updated on job search progress Connect with participant Contracted VR partners (job developers) may assist in Job Search or Job Placement activities, if required Refer to VR Workforce team 	For up to 90 days after career pathway completion: • Assist with job search skills and identifying and accessing resources • Monitor progress • Assist with job leads, applications, follow through	 VRC and Career Coach collaborate to update student status with job search and employment attainment If student has not secured employment within 90 days, VRC and Career Coach meet with student to communicate the ending of coaching services and the continuation of VR services for ongoing job search assistance.

Collaboration for Job Search Success:





Job Search Resources

ODHS Vocational Rehabilitation Workforce and Business Relations (internal ODHS | VR employees only)

The Workforce and Business Relations Team is dedicated to enhancing employment opportunities and economic self-sufficiency for Oregonians by providing tailored support to job seekers and fostering partnerships with employers. VRCs may submit requests for specific assistance for their clients through the internal OWL page by filling out the <u>Workforce and Business Service Request Form</u>. Here are some specific services available to clients:

- Informational interviews
- Labor market information
- Mock interviews
- Resources and training on industry-specific employment skills
- Referral/connection to business partner or industry
- Resume review
- Retention services

WorkSource Oregon

This statewide network of career centers provides job seekers with free, comprehensive services, including access to Oregon's largest job database, <u>iMatchSkills</u>. They also offer virtual and in-person workshops, events, and expert guidance on resume writing, interview skills, and support for training and educational programs across the state.

Job Accommodation Network (JAN)

This is a free, confidential service provided by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy, offering personalized guidance on workplace accommodations, disability rights, and self-employment resources for individuals with disabilities. JAN assists job seekers, employers, and service providers through one-on-one consultations, webinars, and a comprehensive online resource center.

- Deciding Whether to Disclose a Disability During an Interview (JAN Role-Play Training Series)
- <u>Disclosing a Disability to Obtain an Accommodation (JAN Role-Play Training Series)</u>

Self-Made Millennial



This resource is a YouTube channel by career strategist Madeline Mann that offers practical, engaging advice to job-seekers on resumes, interviews, LinkedIn strategies, and landing competitive roles.

Indeed Career Guide

The Indeed Career Guide is a comprehensive online resource designed to support job seekers at every stage of their career journey, offering expert advice on resume writing, interview preparation, salary negotiation, and job market trends. With a user-friendly interface, it provides articles, templates, and tools to help individuals enhance their job search strategies and achieve career success.

JobsNow.org

JobsNow.org is a Portland-based nonprofit dedicated to promoting workplace inclusion and connecting diverse job seekers with employers across the Pacific Northwest and California. JobsNow.org offers a range of services aimed at helping individuals find sustainable employment.

Harvard Extension School: Career and Academic Resources

This YouTube channel offers a wealth of guidance for job seekers and working professionals, featuring insights on writing resumes and cover letters, interviewing, and changing careers.

- How to Write a Great Resume and Cover Letter
- How to Ace an Interview: 5 Tips from a Harvard Career Advisor

ICAP Resources for Job Support Handout



Employment		
VR Counselor Activities	Career Coach Activities	Communication Activities
 Ensure employment is a good fit and aligns with the career goal Navigate necessary job accommodations Secure job coaching services, if required Help participant to keep their job or get a better one Stay in touch with participant 	 For up to 90 days after career pathway completion: Help identify job accommodations Support participant through life transitions Assess other needed resources (transportation, food, housing, childcare, etc.) Support with new work/life balance demands and unanticipated impacts of working 	VRC and Career Coach collaborate to update student status with employment attainment and employer information to gather necessary ICAP measured outcome data



Retention		
VR Counselor Activities	Career Coach Activities	Communication Activities
 After successfully working 90 days, VRC and participant will discuss exiting participant from VR Services Create corrective action plans, if required If no help is needed from VR, file will be closed Participant may return to VR to retain or advance if disability remains a barrier 	 For up to 90 days after career pathway completion: Monitor and identify issues and successes on the job for 90 days Tell success story, if applicable Exit student from ICAP 	 VRC and Career Coach connect every 30 days through case closure Career Coach notifies VRC immediately of participant jobrelated problems VRC and Career Coach confirm any outstanding measured outcome data Career Coach informs VRC of successful exit from ICAP services VRC informs Career Coach of successful exit from VR services



Training and Technical Assistance

Cornell University's Yang-Tan Institute on Employment Disability (YTI) with the Industrial and Labor Relations School will provide TA (professional development and training) to ICAP's community of practice (CoP) through webinars, toolkits, and access to resources. YTI's expertise in employment, career pathways, CTE, WBL, transition, and inclusive employer practices provides a strong foundation for the project. VRCs and Career Coaches are encouraged to reach out for assistance and support to help meet the needs of participants.

• To connect with the YTI team for TA, email ICAP@odhs.oregon.gov.

Community of Practice

CoPs work to strengthen service delivery and collaboration as members learn, share expertise, and work together on solving common problems. For ICAP they happen at the statewide level, and at the local level, to best address the needs of the program and the people we serve. The Statewide CoP brings together ICAP Career Coaches and Point of Contact VRCs from participating community colleges quarterly.

Local Implementation Teams (LIT)

Local team meetings are generally set collaboration meetings between the local team that consists of core people (the point of contact VRC and the Career Coach) assigned to a particular community college. Other people that may be invited to these meetings include a tribal representative when appropriate; a VRC from OCB; someone from Accessibility Services from the community college, if appropriate; various community partners, when invited; or other community members who share the vision and bring some level of insight or expertise to the group. The goal of these local teams is to create a regular space (cadence locally determined, but need to occur at least monthly) and it is a place to accomplish the following:

- 1. Talk about potential referrals
- 2. Discuss local resources available to clients
- 3. Connect on new concepts, ideas, offerings, from both the community college side and the VR side
- 4. Talk about outreach goals and objectives as it relates to BIPOC and other specialized populations
- 5. Review and stay on top of targets and needs
- 6. Bring questions and solutions locally, and decide what needs to roll up to the state level CoP or larger ICAP team
- 7. Any other ICAP-related business as the program develops.

The size and function of these local groups will ebb and flow over time to meet the need of the local connections. It may also give rise to allowing a space for new staff and partners to learn about what each other does and practice core collaboration skills that best meet the needs of ICAP clients.

Outreach Efforts and Considerations

ICAP seeks to improve opportunities not traditionally available to students who experience disability and the intersectionality of race. ICAP outcomes must demonstrate the effectiveness of the program to meet the needs of diverse student populations. The LIT team should strategize how to partner with local organizations in historically disadvantaged communities to help ensure students have equitable access to career advancement opportunities.

Career Pathways at Oregon Community Colleges

Oregon career pathways are education and training programs with intentional student support that enable individuals to secure credentials and advance over time to higher levels of education and employment in a given occupation or industry sector. Career pathways facilitate student transition from high school to community college, from pre-college courses to credit postsecondary programs, and from community college to university or employment.



Career pathways in Oregon improve systems and are aligned with guided pathways work. Career pathways are an integrated approach to student success based on intentionally designed, clear, coherent, and structured educational experiences, informed by available evidence, that guide each student effectively and efficiently from the point of entry to the attainment of high-quality postsecondary credentials and careers with value in the labor market.

Four essential features of career pathways help operationalize the career pathways approach:

- 1. **Well-connected and transparent** education, training, support services, and credentials developed through relationships with faculty, industry, CTE, apprenticeship, workforce development or education partners that **align with local priorities and/or labor market need.**
- 2. **Multiple entry points** create equity and access for diverse populations, including individuals with barriers to education, and support all students' successful entry into a career pathway.
- 3. **Multiple exit points** at successively higher levels lead to self- or family-supporting employment and align with subsequent entry points.
- 4. **Stackable credentials** prepare students for additional credentials or training and one or more of the following: industry-recognized credential, occupational license, or credential with labor market value.

Four essential functions of career pathways in Oregon:

- 1. **Participant-focused education and training** that engages learners in customized and contextual learning experiences.
- 2. Consistent and non-duplicative assessments identify participants' education, skills, assets and needs.
- 3. **Support services and career navigation assistance** facilitate transitions and support learner persistence and completion.
- 4. **Employment services and work experiences** prepare participants for and provide access to the job market.

Training Programs and Career Pathways

Requirements vary by school and change frequently. Below are links to each community college partner and their career pathway programs:



- Blue Mountain Community College
- Central Oregon Community College
- Chemeketa Community College
- Clackamas Community College
- Columbia Gorge Community College
- Klamath Community College
- Lane Community College

- Linn-Benton Community College
- Mt. Hood Community College
- Portland Community College
- Rogue Community College
- Southwestern Oregon Community College
- Treasure Valley Community College
- Umpqua Community College

Vocational Rehabilitation Process

The stages of the VR process will guide the Career Coach and VRC in alignment of roles and responsibilities, communication touch points, and data collection requirements as the participant moves through each stage:

Application: The VRC gathers information to determine the applicant's eligibility or ineligibility for VR services; verifies that an application is complete and signed by the applicant and VRC; collects necessary information, documents, and/or assessment information to determine eligibility for VR services; and confirms that the individual has indicated an ability and willingness to complete the assessment process.

Eligibility: This stage helps the VRC and applicant better understand the impediments to employment. The applicant and VRC determine what services will be necessary to overcome employment obstacles. Determine if there is a reasonable expectation that the applicant will benefit from VR services in terms of an employment outcome. Determine if the applicant requires VR services to achieve an employment outcome.

Comprehensive Vocational Assessment: VRC assists the participant in identifying an appropriate vocational goal, determines services that remove or eliminate disability-related barriers or impediments to employment, provides assistance and accommodations to participants in order to successfully achieve CIE, identifies participant and VRC responsibilities, and determines the timeline of services.



Individualized Plan for Employment: The individualized plan for employment (IPE) identifies the agreed upon vocational goal and VR services to be provided to the project participant in order to achieve an employment outcome. The IPE is designed to assist a participant in obtaining, maintaining, or advancing in employment, consistent with their unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice. The IPE is a product of collaborative efforts between the participant (and/or an authorized representative) and the VRC.

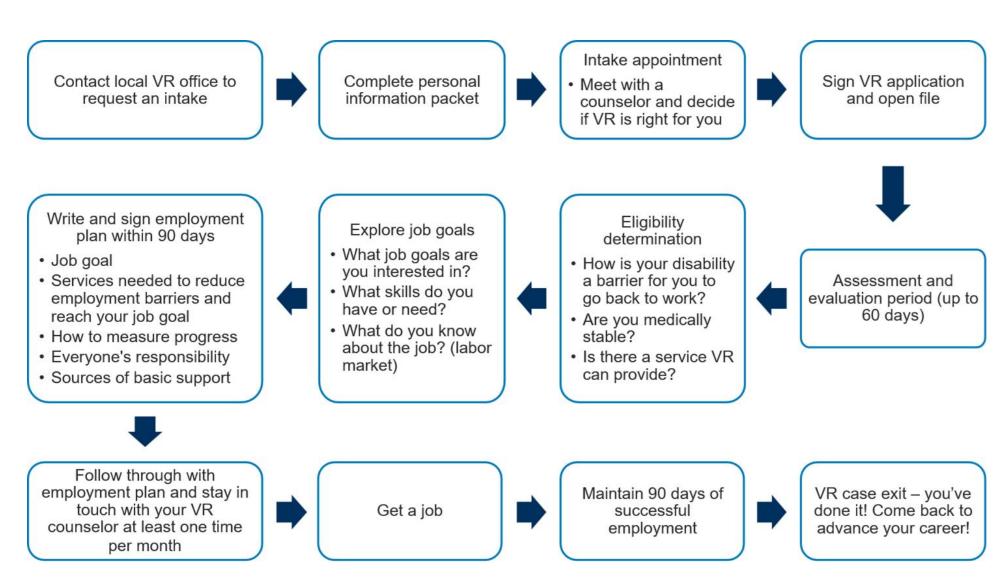
Services, Including Education/Training: Provide services based on the IPE to address impediments to employment, resulting in gainful employment for project participant. Direct participant to complete any required vocational training and other services as needed. Examine the participant's need for changes to services as required to achieve an employment outcome. Help the participant obtain diagnosis and/or treatment of impairment(s). Complete and/or help the participant complete any required assessments. Provide job search assistance, job placement services, and on-the-job supports as needed. Provide counseling and guidance throughout the VR case. Provide any employment goods or services (clothing, equipment, supplies, etc.).

Job Search: Assist participant in obtaining, maintaining, or retaining employment; verify that the employment is consistent with IPE employment goal(s); verify that the employment is in a competitive and integrated setting.

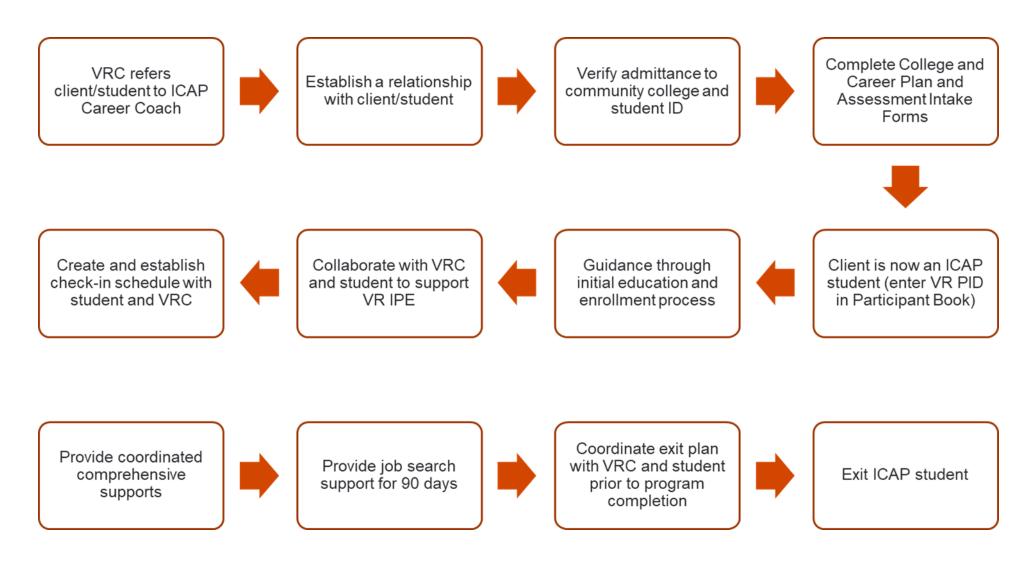
Employment: Provide assistance and accommodations to the participant to achieve employment goal, provide counseling and guidance, address impediments to employment, determine that the employment outcome is maintained for a minimum of 90 consecutive days, and confirm that the participant is satisfied with the employment outcome and agrees to VR exit.

Retention: Address ongoing job accommodation needs as necessary, determine that the employment outcome is maintained for a minimum of 90 consecutive days, gather employment and benefit verification, and confirm that the participant is satisfied with the employment outcome and agrees to VR exit.

Vocational Rehabilitation Process Flowchart:



Career Coaching Process Flowchart





ICAP Statewide Team

Vocational Rehabilitation Email us at ICAP@odhs.oregon.gov

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Links to Additional Resources:

ICAP Introduction Video

Recorded Trainings

Frequently Asked Questions

Core Partner Contact List

Find a VR Office

ICAP Resources for Job Support