

7.00 TRANSITION PLANNING AND SERVICES-OVERVIEW

Introduction

CBVH will work with students, families and school districts to facilitate the coordination of appropriate transition services for students with disabilities who are transitioning from secondary education to adult vocational rehabilitation and related services. CBVH recognizes that these efforts are critical to enable students to achieve maximum success in employment, post-secondary education, independent living, and community participation and is committed to being an active partner in the transition process.

Description

Transition services are a coordinated set of activities for secondary students with disabilities, aged 14-21, designed to achieve specific outcomes which promote movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, integrated employment (including supported/extended employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, and community participation. The coordination is carried out by the school district with the active participation of the student, his or her family, and appropriate community service agencies, including CBVH.

The coordinated set of activities is based on the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences, potential, abilities and interests, and should include instruction, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation. CBVH will serve as an active partner during the secondary school years in helping the student to acquire the skills necessary to achieve these outcomes.

Vocational Assessment

Vocational assessment is an ongoing process involving the collection of information about a student's vocational aptitudes, abilities, skills, expressed interests, and occupational awareness. To promote continuity between school and vocational rehabilitation services, and to avoid unnecessary duplication, delay, and cost, CBVH counselors will attempt to make full use of existing school assessments.

Assessments are the programmatic and financial responsibility of the school district, when needed by districts to determine the student's educational program, including transition services. However, CBVH counselors may consult with school personnel to assist in recommending assessment practices and interpreting results in relation to employment. School responsibility for assessment includes not only students receiving

special education services, but also those students with disabilities not in special education who can benefit from transition services provided by the school.

Schools are encouraged to develop assessments (in community settings whenever possible) which are relevant to planning for the transition to adult service programs. CBVH counselors should assist the school by identifying resources in the area that are familiar with blindness and can offer comprehensive assessments (e.g. private agencies using the Comprehensive Vocational Evaluation System). Assessments should be conducted in integrated settings to the maximum degree possible, in the student's primary language whenever possible, and in an accessible format.

Rule

Assessments for in-school youth may be purchased by CBVH when existing assessments fail to provide adequate information for the counselor to determine CBVH eligibility or to develop plans for CBVH services.

Service Planning

Service planning with schools should occur as follows:

1. A representative of the school district will contact CBVH when transition planning begins (when the student is 14). The CBVH Senior Counselor should then determine if the student is already known to the Children's Consultant.
2. As a participant in the school's transition planning process, CBVH staff should:
 - a. Contribute knowledge of rehabilitation services and outcomes;
 - b. Identify the need for involvement by other state agencies, adult service programs, independent living centers, and community based services whose resources can assist students who are legally blind, their families, and education personnel during the transition planning and service delivery process;
 - c. Provide information to assist in the selection of suitable vocational goals that are consistent with labor market needs and integrated community living opportunities, including providing information about:
 1. work site accommodations;
 2. employer expectations;
 3. labor trends and occupational outlooks;
 4. job entry qualifications;
 5. job placement analysis;

6. summer work opportunities;
 7. and other vocationally-related issues.
3. The CBVH counselor may contribute to the Committee on Special Education (CSE) transition planning meetings as a meeting participant. If this is not possible, other alternatives should be used such as telephone conferences, so that students, parents, and school district staff can avail themselves of the CBVH counselor's expertise.
 4. CBVH is responsible only for services written into the Individualized Education Program (IEP) by the CSE with the direct knowledge and agreement of the CBVH counselor.

Coordinating School District and CBVH Services

School districts have the primary planning, programmatic and financial responsibilities for the provision of transition services. Financial responsibility for services, other than those which are mandated for school districts by Federal or State law or regulation, may be shared by other agencies, including CBVH. In addition, CBVH might serve as a consultant to school districts in meeting their responsibilities in areas where CBVH has expertise (for example, providing information regarding assistive technology).

CBVH Responsibilities

After receiving an application for vocational rehabilitation services, the CBVH counselor will make an eligibility determination. Students found eligible will remain in Status 10 until a vocational goal is determined and an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) is developed. No IPE may be developed for students until two years before the student is expected to exit school (unless the student is in extended evaluation).

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the cooperative agreement on transition in NYS, have created "systems change" where schools have the primary responsibility for preparing students for the world of work. CBVH's responsibilities, therefore, lie primarily in providing technical consultation to schools and preparing students for permanent employment. CBVH staff should use their knowledge and experience to influence schools to provide services needed to prepare students to participate in postsecondary, employment and community living outcomes. While the following services may be provided by CBVH, the provision of these services should not supplant the school's responsibilities.

Individualized Plan for Employment Development Plan

While a student remains in status 10, an Individualized Plan for Employment Development Plan (IPEDP) should be jointly developed by the counselor and the student, based on the student's interests and objectives. The purpose of the IPEDP is to outline a plan to gather information necessary to formulate a vocational goal and implement an IPE. The three main areas encompassed by an IPEDP include:

1. Completion of medical, vocational, situational and other assessments,
2. Selection of a suitable vocational rehabilitation goal, and/or
3. Determining the nature and scope of rehabilitation services that will be needed to reach the goal.

Limitations on Services Provided in Status 10

Because schools have the primary responsibility for providing transition services, and younger students often lack clear vocational goals, CBVH will limit the services provided to students in Status 10. In addition to providing counseling and guidance to the student, and technical consultation with the schools, CBVH may only provide the following services:

1. Rehabilitation teaching - outside of school hours, for application in the home
2. Orientation and Mobility - outside of school hours, for application in the home
3. Low Vision Services
4. Adaptive Equipment, total not to exceed \$500/student/year.
5. Social Casework
6. Work experience, limited to:
 - a. job coaching required to support a work experience (not to exceed 150 hours while the child is in Status 10).
 - b. reimbursement to the employer for training expenses (wages), or
 - c. a training stipend to the student to cover work related expenses (e.g. maintenance and transportation) when a student is not paid wages by the employer.

Technology, assessment, training, and equipment over \$500 may be available to individuals with an IPE indicating that the equipment is necessary for application in a postsecondary setting, vocational training specific to the vocational goal, or placement in a job.

Even after an IPE has been developed, CBVH must not take responsibility for services the school districts are mandated to provide.

School Responsibilities

Schools are required to provide special education students with transition services for skills development to promote successful integrated employment, independent living, community integration, and postsecondary education outcomes. Transition services are individually tailored through Individualized Educational Programs (IEP's).

For students with disabilities not in special education, transition planning should be done under the provisions of the annual guidance review. School districts are required to provide access to existing programs and services on a basis equal to that provided for students who do not have disabilities. Students in this circumstance may require the development of academic skills, career preparation services, or social skills in preparation for transition to successful adult life. They will need to work with school personnel, CBVH and other agencies to access appropriate resources, including existing academic and career preparation curricula, and other services. CBVH can offer technical assistance, referrals and information to assist the school to meet its requirements under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Coordinating the IPEDP/IPE with the IEP

The coordination of the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) or Individualized Plan for Employment Development Plan (IPEDP) with the IEP must be an integral part of the counselor's planning for transition services.

Developing an IPEDP or IPE that coordinates closely with the IEP provides continuity of service delivery for those students who will need vocational rehabilitation services once they complete the transition services initiated by the school system.

Planning will help students, their families and school districts design services to maximize the student's final years in school to prepare for full inclusion and integration into society, employment, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency.

Collaboration in assessing student progress and participation in planning with the student, family and school should result in consensus about desired outcomes, goals and services that must be reflected in both planning documents. The IPEDP or IPE should be developed, to the extent possible, during the annual review of the transition component of the IEP. At that time, information required on the IPEDP or IPE will be written to be consistent with the content of the IEP, including vocational goals, educational and rehabilitation objectives, projected dates and responsibilities for participation in the transition process.

In-school youth who apply and are eligible for CBVH services must have an IPEDP or IPE indicating that transition services are being provided, even though the school district is programmatically and financially responsible until that student exits school.

Summer Youth Employment

Some schools provide summer youth employment for the purpose of career development for occupational education students. Schools can also provide summer youth employment as part of a 12 month educational program if such a program is necessary to prevent significant regression in the student's skills. CBVH recognizes the value of summer employment during high school, and may provide summer youth employment opportunities including work experience training when:

1. the services are consistent with transition outcomes in the IEP or annual guidance plan;
2. the student is not eligible for the school's 12 month programming;
3. no other source of funds are available;
4. the services are part of the IPEDP or IPE.

CBVH should also coordinate summer youth employment opportunities with existing programs funded by other sources, including the Workforce Investment Act (WIA).

Job Coaching

Job coaching is the responsibility of the school district, when:

1. the student is enrolled in a 12-month school program, or
2. the work experience takes place during the school day, as part of the student's program, or
3. the student will receive school credit for the work experience.

For a student in a regular school year program, CBVH will provide job coaching in conjunction with a work experience or summer job outside the school's responsibility. Job coaching is limited to 150 hours while the child is in Status 10, to provide necessary job skill training beyond what is normally provided by the employer. Consideration should be given to whether job coaching is required to enable the student to benefit from the work experience; it should not be provided routinely. (See Chapter 8.38 for additional information about job coaching, including rates).

7.01 REFERRAL BY SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO CBVH

Criteria for Referral to CBVH VR Services

CBVH can expect to receive a formal referral for vocational rehabilitation services for a student two years before the student exits school. However, schools may also contact CBVH for assistance in transition planning for students who are 14 or older or for consultation regarding blindness issues for students of any age.

The Joint Agreement Between the Office of Elementary, Middle, and Secondary and Continuing Education (EMSC), VESID and CBVH identifies the criteria for referring youth with disabilities to VESID or CBVH. School districts will refer students to CBVH when the school, student and/or parents/guardians/primary care providers recognize that the student may need vocational rehabilitation services from CBVH.

Schools have been notified of the following specific criteria for referral for vocational rehabilitation services:

1. It is projected that the student will be exiting school within two years;
2. The student is currently receiving transition services as indicated in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), or the student's annual guidance plan reflects desired adult outcomes, transition planning and services;
3. The student requires additional services to meet the desired adult outcomes in the IEP that are not otherwise available through mandated district based or funded programs or are about to complete the transition component of the IEP and are in need of services provided by adult agencies; and
4. It has been determined that the disability will interfere with the student's ability to work as an adult in the community.

Recommended Referral Information

A CSE representative, guidance counselor, or other school official should transmit complete referral information including a "Transition Referral Transmittal Sheet for In-School Youth" or letter that explains the purpose for the referral and selected documents that describe the student's disability, needs, preferences, interests, and skills (e.g., interpersonal, work, academic, independent living) which are relevant to vocational rehabilitation and achieving employment. Preferred documentation includes descriptions of the student's current abilities, work-related limitations and service needs in functional terms. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. the most current IEP or guidance plan with information about transition planning and services;
- b. student medical and health screening reports including the most current ophthalmological, audiological, psychological, psychiatric, or other specialist's disability assessment, if available and relevant;
- c. reports from related services (e.g., rehabilitation teaching, orientation and mobility, occupational therapy, social work);
- d. reports indicating special equipment or other accommodations needed (e.g., communication needs, modes of reading and writing, proficiency in braille, and visual functioning aids);
- e. indicators of academic achievement, such as transcripts, grades, academic achievement testing;
- f. career assessment information including: Level I, II, or III vocational assessment reports, work experience or work study progress reports, career assessment portfolios, mentor or work supervisor evaluations, and occupational education assessment reports.

Counselors may request and obtain additional school records if further information is required for eligibility determination or planning purposes, provided that the appropriate signed consent form is in place and appropriate notification of students and families has occurred.

When referring students to CBVH, the school district must ensure that the necessary consent for release of information has been obtained by the school from the parent or legal guardian, or from the student, if the student is 18 or older and a legal guardian has not been designated.

Eligibility Criteria

A student must meet the same eligibility criteria as other CBVH consumers. These criteria are:

1. having a disability that is a substantial impediment to employment
2. having the ability to benefit from services; and
3. requiring CBVH services to enable the person to achieve an appropriate employment outcome.

Schools will be encouraged to refer any student who is known to be or suspected of being legally blind if that student may need CBVH Vocational Rehabilitation services.

CBVH will determine eligibility.

To the maximum extent possible, information from school records will be used to determine eligibility if the records are received in time for an eligibility decision to be made (60 days from the time of application). This includes using information from career and vocational assessment and district-based planning processes in which the student already participates.

7.02 TRANSFER FROM CBVH CHILDREN'S SERVICES TO CBVH ADULT SERVICES

Family Preparation

In order to prepare the family and begin planning for the future, the Children's Consultant should meet with the child and family during the child's 12th year and discuss that the child will be referred to the Vocational Rehabilitation Unit at the appropriate age. The discussion with the family should take place during each annual plan review until the transfer occurs and should be documented in the case record.

Transfer Guidelines

All children who are expected to graduate by age 18 and who clearly have vocational potential must be referred to the vocational rehabilitation program during the year after the child's 14th birthday, or at the beginning of high school. Exceptions to this rule should be discussed with the Children's Consultant's supervisor and documented in the case record. The Children's Consultant will discuss the case transfer with the child and his/her parent(s) or legal guardian before transferring the case to the Vocational Rehabilitation Program.

An "Indicator's of Employability" form will be filled out annually for children who will not be transferred during their 14th year. The form should be submitted to the Children's Consultants supervisor for review and signature. The Children's Consultants should complete this form each year and review the outcome with their supervisor to determine the child's progress/vocational potential.

Children who will remain in school until age 21 for whom the Children's Consultant and supervisor are unsure of vocational potential should be referred to VR no later than the year they turn 18. Referrals may occur any time between the child's 14th and 18th years.

Children who have habilitation needs only, as indicated on the "Indicators of Employability" form, should remain open with the Children's Consultants until age 21, or until they exit school. Connections with OMRDD should be in place before the child

leaves school.

Referral/Transfer Meeting

As part of the transfer to the Vocational Rehabilitation Unit, the Children's Consultant will schedule a meeting with the Senior Counselor and the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor expected to receive the referral, if known. The meeting may also include other rehabilitation professionals who are familiar with the child and family. The Children's Consultant should be prepared to provide a description of the disability and its impact on the child's functioning, a social summary, education information, relevant work experience, if any, and a summary of daily living skills. If possible, a date for transfer from the Children's Consultant to the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor should be established at the meeting.

Procedures for Transfer

Once a counselor has been assigned, the Children's Consultant should follow this procedure:

- a. Make an entry in the case record summarizing the referral meeting, indicating the response of the child and family, and status change;
- b. Complete the ISP closure form and obtain child's and parent's signatures;
- c. Enter the case into Status D in CARES;
- d. Prepare the case record for transfer, assuring that duplicate material has been removed and that the material is organized into: medical information, reports and correspondence, financial, narrative entries and other information;
- e. When possible, obtain signed Application for Services form (DSS-1002X);
- f. Inform the child's Teacher of the Visually Impaired of the transfer of CBVH management responsibilities to the specified rehabilitation counselor;
- g. Give the case record to the Senior Counselor.

The children's consultant should remain available for consultation upon request.

References

Rehabilitation Act: Sections 101 and 102 Federal Law: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

7.50 SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE DEAFBLIND

Introduction

It is recognized that CBVH maintains responsibility to serve individuals who are legally blind. However, under certain circumstances, individuals who are receiving services from the Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID), who become legally blind may wish to continue receiving services from VESID.

This section outlines procedures for transferring responsibility for service coordination and, for sharing resources and services available to meet the needs of severely hearing impaired individuals who are found to have a severe visual impairment while being served by VESID.

Definition of Deafblindness

For purposes of this agreement, the term "deafblindness" shall refer to the combination of:

1. severe hearing impairment or deafness and
2. severe visual impairment or blindness.

Impact of Deafblindness

The combination of these two sensory impairments is generally considered to result in effects upon functioning that are more than the sum of the effects produced by each disability.

Together they impact upon the person's ability to:

1. communicate with others
2. attain independence in activities of daily living
3. achieve psycho-social adjustment, and/or
4. pursue a vocational goal.

Description of Components of Deafblindness

1. Severe hearing impairment involves at least a 55db loss in the better ear, unaided, measured as:

- a. an average loss in the speech range of 500, 1000 and 2000 HZ, or
- b. a speech discrimination score of 40% or less.

2. Deafness involves:

- a. a primary reliance upon visual communication (sign language, lipreading gestures), or
- b. the inability to understand most speech with optimum amplification.

3. Severe visual impairment involves:

- a. a visual acuity of 20/70 or less in the better eye with best correction, or
- b. a visual field of no greater than 40 degree in the better eye.

4. Legal blindness involves:

- a. a visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye with best correction,
- b. a visual field of no greater than 20 degree in the better eye.

5. Deafblind (Services Provided by CBVH or VESID)

Persons who are unable to understand most speech with optimum amplification and who meet the criteria for legal blindness.

6. Deaf-Visually Impaired (Services Provided by VESID)

Persons who are not able to understand most speech with optimum amplification and who have a severe visual impairment which does not constitute legal blindness.

7. Blind-Hearing Impaired (Services Provided by CBVH)

Persons who are legally blind and who have a severe hearing impairment which is not deafness.

8. Hearing Impaired-Visually Impaired (Services Provided by VESID)

Persons who have a severe hearing impairment which is not deafness and who have a severe visual impairment which is not legal blindness.

Assessment of Visual Impairment

In order to assure that severe visual loss is recognized as early as possible, VESID will obtain comprehensive ophthalmological examinations, including visual fields, for all individuals who are hearing impaired or deaf found:

1. eligible for VR services, or
2. to need an extended evaluation.

When a person with a severe hearing-impairment is suspected (or known) to have developed a severe visual impairment while being served by VESID, the VESID counselor will obtain a comprehensive ophthalmological examination, including visual fields, to determine the extent of visual impairment.

Procedure

If the individual is diagnosed as legally blind, then the VESID counselor will follow the procedure for "Conference to Determine Appropriateness of Transfer" see pages 7.51.01 - 7.51.03.

If the individual is diagnosed as severely visually impaired, but not legally blind, then the VESID counselor will follow the procedure for "VESID/CBVH Shared Resources and Services" see pages 7.52.01 - 7.52.02.

Preparation for Transfer or for Obtaining Services

After an individual is diagnosed as having severe visual impairment or legal blindness, the VESID counselor will:

1. review critical rehabilitation factors:
 - a. individual's awareness and acceptance of the visual loss
 - b. age at onset of hearing loss
 - c. mode of communication preferred by the individual (oral, sign language, written, etc.)
 - d. history of education and communication skill training, and
 - e. individual's self-identity/socialization (does the individual consider him/herself as "deaf"?).
2. discuss with the individual whether he/she is experiencing vision-related functional problems in the areas of:
 - a. travel in and outside of the home
 - b. activities of daily living, and
 - c. education or employment activities.

VESID counselors may wish to consult with the VESID central office coordinator for the deaf or CBVH staff to obtain information or advice.

7.51 CONFERENCE TO DETERMINE APPROPRIATENESS OF TRANSFER

Procedure for Transfer Conference

The VESID counselor will follow this procedure in arranging a conference to discuss the appropriateness of an individual transferring from VESID to CBVH:

1. inform the individual of the availability of CBVH services and the desirability of his/her participation in a conference to discuss the appropriateness of a transfer.
2. complete the Interagency Service Request Form (see page 7.53.01).
3. forward the form to the district manager.

The VESID district manager will forward the form to the CBVH district manager, with a copy to the state coordinator for the deaf in VESID central office, who in turn will send a copy to the CBVH state coordinator for the deafblind.

4. arrange a date for the conference at the earliest possible convenience for all participants. Participants should include the:
 - a. VESID counselor
 - b. CBVH counselor and/or senior counselor
 - c. individual and/or the individual's parents/legal guardian
5. at the conference, discuss with the participants
 - a. critical rehabilitation factors related to the
 1. hearing impairment
 2. visual impairment
 - b. services available through CBVH and VESID, particularly in relation to the sensory impairments
 - c. the individual's preference to continue to be served by VESID or to transfer to CBVH
6. decide with the individual which agency should provide primary services and maintain responsibility for coordinating service delivery.
7. inform the individual of:

- a. the decision regarding the transfer, and
- b. his/her right to appeal the decision

Transfer to CBVH

If the decision is that the individual will transfer to CBVH, the VESID counselor will:

1. prepare the record of services for case closure and transfer to CBVH
2. write a summary case note which provides essential information about the individual and about issues discussed at the transfer conference.
3. close the individual's case.
4. send copies of appropriate information from the individual's record of services with a referral memo to the senior counselor in the CBVH district office for assignment to the appropriate rehabilitation counselor.

CBVH Receipt of the Transfer Information

The CBVH counselor who will be working with the individual will:

1. develop a record of services and enter disability codes, on the Client Profile Form as follows:
 - a. legal blindness as the primary disability
 - b. severe hearing impairment or deafness as the secondary disability

Note: All other disabilities should be considered tertiary for reporting purposes.

2. meet with the individual to obtain an application for service (if not included with the transfer information) and complete other forms required by CBVH in order to provide services.
3. review medical and other assessment information in order to proceed with a determination of eligibility.

Individuals Continuing Services With VESID

When a decision has been made that an individual will continue to be served by VESID, the VESID counselor may wish to:

1. continue to use consultant services of the VESID state coordinator for the deaf, CBVH state coordinator for the deafblind or CBVH district office rehabilitation counselling staff
2. refer the individual to private agencies for the blind or private vendors approved by CBVH
3. refer the individual to the CBVH district office for rehabilitation teaching or orientation and mobility assessment/training in areas where CBVH has direct service staff in their office.

7.52 CBVH/VESID SHARED RESOURCES AND SERVICES

Introduction

An individual being served by VESID who has been diagnosed severely visually impaired, or diagnosed legally blind and has decided to continue to be served by VESID, may require special services related to his/her visual loss.

VESID/CBVH Shared Resources

CBVH and VESID have agreed to share resources with each other in order to better serve individuals who are deafblind. CBVH Central Office will forward to VESID copies of:

1. contracts for VR services developed with private agencies for the blind
2. listings of private vendors approved to provide services such as
 - a. orientation and mobility
 - b. rehabilitation teaching
 - c. communications instruction
 - d. social casework
 - e. psychological assessment
3. listings of CBVH district offices and staff

VESID Central Office will forward to CBVH information regarding:

1. contracts with generic agencies, especially those with experience serving individuals who are hearing-impaired

2. lists of individual approved to provide interpreter services for individuals who are hearing-impaired
3. agreements with private agencies specifically serving individuals who are deaf and hearingimpaired
4. VESID district offices and Rehabilitation Counselor's for the Deaf (RCD's)

Each Central Office unit will be responsible for sharing this information with appropriate staff.

Rule

Whenever possible, VESID counselors will be required to use services available through private agencies or vendors. Only when such services are not available, will the VESID counselor request the services of CBVH direct service staff.

Referral To CBVH For Direct Services

A VESID counselor may make a referral to CBVH direct service staff for assessment and/or training in the areas of:

1. rehabilitation teaching, and/or
2. orientation and mobility.

The following procedure will be used by the VESID counselor:

1. complete the Interagency Service Request Form.
2. forward the form to the CBVH district manager through the means described in Step 3, page 7.51.01 Procedures for Transfer Conference.

CBVH Receipt of Referral For Direct Services

Upon receipt of the Interagency Services Request Form, the CBVH district manager will forward the request to appropriate CBVH direct service staff.

The CBVH direct service staff person will:

1. contact the individual and provide assessment and/or training
2. submit report(s) on assessment and/or training to the VESID