

Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation  
Social Service Department



Vocational  
Rehabilitation  
Program

Handbook of Services

## **EMPLOYMENT RESOURCES**

[www.kansasjoblink.com](http://www.kansasjoblink.com)

[www.pbpnation.org](http://www.pbpnation.org)

[www.cjonline.com](http://www.cjonline.com)

[www.kansascitystar.com](http://www.kansascitystar.com)

[www.pbpindiantribe.com](http://www.pbpindiantribe.com)

[www.pbp gaming.com](http://www.pbp gaming.com)

[www.sacnfoxcasino.com](http://www.sacnfoxcasino.com)

[www.goldeneaglecasino.com](http://www.goldeneaglecasino.com)

*Not sure what type of job/career you should be looking for?  
Visit [www.onetonline.org](http://www.onetonline.org) and take the free interest assessment  
quiz.*

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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## **Rights and Responsibilities**

You have specific rights and responsibilities as a VR participant.

### **You're Rights:**

- ◆ To participate fully in the development of your own Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)
- ◆ To be treated with dignity
- ◆ To have your eligibility for services determined within 60 days, unless there are unforeseen circumstances and you agree to extend the time
- ◆ To receive a fair and complete evaluation to determine your eligibility
- ◆ To have your records and communication kept confidential
- ◆ To make informed choices during your rehabilitation process
- ◆ To appeal program decisions, if necessary
- ◆ To have access to due process for problem resolution
- ◆ To access and receive services in a barrier free environment, including communication access and written information in an alternate format
- ◆ To receive appropriate assistive technology for assessment or services leading to employment

### **You're Responsibilities:**

- ◆ Take an active part in development, implementation, and completion of your Individual Plan for Employment (IPE)
- ◆ To request disability related accommodations
- ◆ To contribute financially in your rehabilitation program to the best of your ability
- ◆ To apply for and secure sources of funding for which you may be eligible for
- ◆ To actively participate and maintain regular contact with your rehabilitation counselor
- ◆ To talk with your counselor if you are having a problem that is affecting your vocational plan
- ◆ To actively seek and gain employment

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## **Mission Statement**

Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation (PBPN) Vocational Rehabilitation's mission is to assist American Indians with disabilities find and/or maintain gainful employment, learn skills necessary to live more independently, and give on-going support to those severely disabled in maintaining/obtaining employment.

## **Purpose and Goal**

The purpose of Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation Vocational Rehabilitation (PBPN VR) is to provide culturally appropriate vocational rehabilitation (VR) services to American Indians with disabilities who reside in Jackson, Atchison, Brown, Nemaha, Pottawatomie, Shawnee, Doniphan, and Jefferson counties. These services are consistent with individual strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, and, most importantly, informed choice, so American Indians with disabilities may prepare for and engage in gainful employment, including self-employment, subsistence, and business ownership.

PBPN VR's continuing goal is to improve the number of American Indians receiving VR services. The main objectives are:

- ◆ to maintain, expand, and improve on effective VR services for American Indians with disabilities;
- ◆ continue to increase the number American Indians with disabilities receiving comprehensive and successful VR services; and
- ◆ maintain and improve the cooperation, coordination, and collaboration between local, state, and federal services.

The expected outcomes include an increase in appropriate employment placements for American Indians with disabilities, improved service delivery, and an improvement to the community's economy. These outcomes will increase individual applicant's level of confidence and trust in service providers, as well as their self-confidence and self-esteem by becoming valuable contributing members to their community and families.

## **ORDER OF SELECTION**

VR will ensure that, when resources are not adequate to serve all individuals eligible for services, VR will implement an Order of Selection, which closes lower priority categories to ensure that individuals with the most severe disabilities are served first. This action will only occur if circumstances are such that resources to service all applicants are depleted.

Persons who are the most severely disabled and are determined to be eligible shall be classified in the highest priority category.

When imposed, the Order of Selection shall in no way regulate:

- ◆ The provision or authorization of diagnostic and evaluation services; nor,
- ◆ Services planned and authorized under an existing IPE, including minor amendments to the existing IPE and planned post employment services.

Classification:

Any applicant of PBPN VR shall, upon determination of eligibility, be placed in a priority category.

- ◆ An individual shall be classified in the highest priority category for which the individual is qualified.
- ◆ The priority category and the rationale for the priority category must appear in the case record.
- ◆ The priority category placement and rationale shall be consistent with the case file contents.

Order of Selection Categories:

1. Priority Category I – Most Severely Disabled:
2. Priority Category II – Severely Disabled:
3. Priority Category III – Disabled:

PBPN VR's form, Determination of Severe Disability, shall be completed in every case where an individual is determined eligible or has been accepted for an extended evaluation, regardless of whether the category is opened or closed.

## Confidentiality

**Note: Under no circumstances are verbal or telephone requests for case file information from persons representing public or private investigating agencies or advocates to be honored. Any individual, agency, or advocate requesting information regarding a client case record shall require a written request from the client. All individual(s), family members, or advocates who wish to participate in the case of a client must have a Release of Information form signed by the client in order for PBPN VR staff to communicate with the individual(s), family members, or advocates.**

All information acquired by PBPN VR is the property of PBPN VR and shall only be used and released for purposes directly connected with the administration of the PBPN VR program. Use, release, and obtaining of personal information by PBPN VR shall conform to applicable state and federal regulations.

You may look at or copy information in your file upon written request, first copy free each additional copy is \$10 . Medical, psychological, or other information that may be harmful if released directly to you will only be made available to your representative, a physician, or a licensed/certified psychologist. If your file contains copies of reports or records originally developed by another agency, this information may be released only under the conditions established by the other agency.

In most circumstances, we will get your written permission before we release any information about you. However, information will be released without your written permission when:

- ◆ Required by law
- ◆ Requested for law enforcement, fraud, or abuse investigations
- ◆ Required by a court order
- ◆ Need to protect you or others from a threat of safety
- ◆ Needed for administration of the vocational rehabilitation program

## Are you eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation

Eligibility Criteria: an individual is eligible for VR if all the following criteria are met:

1. Enrolled with a Federal or State Recognized Tribe;
2. Have a physical or mental impairment;
3. Physical or mental impairment causes a barrier to employment;
4. Applicant requires VR services to address their barrier to employment caused by their physical or mental impairment;
5. Live in Jackson, Atchison, Jefferson, Shawnee, Pottawatomie, Nemaha, Brown, or Doniphan County.

Individuals who receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) are presumed to be eligible unless there is evidence that they will not be able to benefit from services. Your financial resources will not affect eligibility. You will be expected to help pay for your rehabilitation program according to your ability to do so.

## What We Need From You

- ◆ Tribal C.D.I.B Card
- ◆ Driver's License or State ID
- ◆ Social Security Card
- ◆ Proof of Income
  - ⇒ Pay stubs
  - ⇒ SSI/SSDI statement
  - ⇒ If no income, No Income Statement
- ◆ Proof of address (examples below)
  - ⇒ Utility bill
  - ⇒ Rent receipt
  - ⇒ Voter's registration card
- ◆ Names and contact information of doctors and specialist

## Vocational Rehabilitation Process

1. Outreach – actively conducts outreach to surrounding communities.
2. Intake/Application process – before an application is accepted, an initial intake interview is conducted with each applicant.
3. Assessment – Once the application is approved, the applicant is informed that PBPB VR has 60 days to determine whether they are eligible for services.
4. Eligibility – PBPB VR considers three factors in determining eligibility: i) does the applicant have a physical or mental disability which, for that individual, constitutes a substantial impediment to employment, ii) does a reasonable expectation exist that the services provided by PBPB VR will have a discernible impact on the applicant's ability to obtain, maintain, or retain employment or will an extended evaluation period be required to measure the applicants rehabilitation potential, and iii) is the applicant an enrolled member of a federally or state recognized tribe.
5. Vocational Planning – if determined eligible, the applicant is moved to a consumer status and is ready to proceed in developing an IPE.
6. Provision of Services – VR services available to the consumer are consistent with services described in Section 103 of the Rehabilitation Act.
7. Employment – once employment ready, an array of services designed to assist in achieving an occupation will be provided.
8. Employment Tracking Period – when traditional employment is obtained, PBPB VR monitors the consumer for 90-days and provides assistance as necessary.
9. Closure – there are five types of closure: successful, unsuccessful, closed before determined eligible, case-closed-no-plan closure , and case closed ineligible
10. Post Employment Services – PBPB VR staff involvement does not cease after closure. The consumer is informed of post-employment services prior to case closure. These services include assisting consumers with problems at their job sites and assisting consumers maintain employment through advocacy and/or workplace modification.

## Comparable Benefits and Services

VR provides, as appropriate to the needs of each eligible individual, goods or services necessary to assist the individual achieve an employment outcome. When appropriate, counselors shall refer individuals with disabilities to receive services from other agencies and organizations. Comparable services and benefits are services and benefits that are similar to services provided by VR that are available at no cost to you from another program.

If comparable services and benefits are available, they **must** be utilized to meet, in whole or in part, the cost of VR services. The utilization of comparable services and benefits does not apply in the following situations:

- ◆ If the determination of the availability would delay the provision of VR services to any individual who is at extreme medical risk.
- ◆ If an immediate job placement would be lost due to a delay in the provision of comparable benefits.

Comparable Services and Benefits Exceptions: The following categories of service are exceptions to the requirement that comparable services and benefits be used:

- ◆ evaluation of VR potential, unless provided under an IPE for extended evaluation;
- ◆ counseling, guidance, referral, and placement;
- ◆ vocational and other training services that are not provided in a post-secondary institution, such as on-the-job training, personal and vocational adjustment services;
- ◆ rehabilitation technology services;
- ◆ post-employment services that would be included under 1 – 4 above;
- ◆ if an immediate job placement would be lost due to a delay in the provision of comparable services and benefits.

## Due Process

An applicant or recipient of PBPN VR services who is dissatisfied with any determination made by a PBPN VR staff concerning the furnishing or denial of services may request a timely review of the determination. Applicants will be informed of the PBPN VR appeal process and the availability of the Client Assistance Program (CAP). PBPN VR program will make disability related accommodations to assist individuals in the appeals process. The following procedures will be adhered to in the order they are presented:

Immediate Verbal Resolution:

1. before any steps are taken and during the intake interview with the applicant/consumer, they will be informed/reminded of the CAP and their right to requests CAP services at any time
2. verbal resolution must be attempted between PBPN VR staff and applicant/consumer first
3. if the applicant/consumer is not satisfied with the results at this level, they will be informed that they have a right to seek verbal resolution from the PBPN VR Manager

## Client Assistance Program

You may request assistance from the Client Assistance Program (CAP) to help resolve problems or misunderstandings with your counselor that may occur during your rehabilitation program. CAP is independent of VR, and provides advocacy and information free of charge. **CAP may act only as a mediator during such meetings to help resolve problems**

***Disability Rights Center of Kansas***

***c/o Client Assistance Program***

***2114 SW 6th Street***

***Topeka KS 66603***

***(785) 266-8193***

***Toll free 1-800-432-2326 Voice or TDD***

While such a hearing is pending, the VR program may not suspend, terminate, or reduce services under an IPE, unless requested by the

## Vocational Rehabilitation Services

VR services include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ An assessment for determining eligibility and VR needs;
- ◆ Counseling and guidance;
- ◆ Work-related placement services;
- ◆ Physical and mental restoration services;
- ◆ Vocational and other training services;
- ◆ On-the-job training;
- ◆ Interpreter services and note taking services for individuals who are deaf, including tactile interpreting for individuals who are deaf-blind;
- ◆ Reader services, rehabilitation teaching services, note-taking services and orientation and mobility services for individuals who are blind;
- ◆ Telecommunications, sensory and other technological aids and devices;
- ◆ Occupational licenses, tools, equipment, initial stocks and supplies necessary in order to enter an occupation;
- ◆ Supported employment services in an integrated setting on a time-limited basis, not to exceed 18 months;
- ◆ Post-Employment Services;
- ◆ Rehabilitation technology services (assistive technologies);
- ◆ Supportive Services;
- ◆ Maintenance to individuals for additional costs incurred while participating in rehabilitation supported by PBPN VR who are attending higher education courses or training;
- ◆ Transportation – including travel and related expenses that are necessary to enable individuals to participate in VR services;
- ◆ Services to an applicant/individual's family members when those services are necessary to the VR of the individual;
- ◆ On-the-job personal assistance services provided while an individual is receiving PBPN VR services;
- ◆ Cultural services;
- ◆ Other services as necessary.

## INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT (IPE)

The IPE is developed jointly within the framework of a counseling and guidance relationship between the individual and the VR Counselor. The IPE is agreed to and signed by the individual or, as appropriate, the individual's representative and the VR Counselor.

Through the counseling relationship, a partnership is required, where options are explored and where implications of decisions are identified. It is within this partnership that the VR Counselor provides support tailored to the needs of the individual, as identified in the assessment process, so he/she may make informed choices that result in successful employment. In the development of their IPE, individuals will be encouraged to make decisions from relevant information available.

The right of self-determination to make decisions that result in successful employment is available to participants of the VR program. In addition, the responsibilities to make decisions based upon related laws, regulations and public policy is also a requirement of the partnership of the VR counselor and the individual with a disability.

Individuals must receive supports that will assist them in making informed choices. This is especially important for individuals with cognitive or other disabilities who require assistance in exercising informed choice.

Individuals shall promptly receive a copy of their IPE and any subsequent revisions. Copies shall be provided in the native language of the individual or through appropriate modes of communication.

The record of services must support the selection of the vocational goal, the objectives of the IPE and the selection of providers of services. PBPB VR goods and services may only be provided in accordance with the IPE.

## INFORMED CHOICE

Informed choice is a decision making process you and your counselor will use to select options that are consistent with your strengths, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, and career interests at various decision points throughout the vocational rehabilitation process.

Section 2(c) (1) of the Rehabilitation Act as amended addresses informed choice. All programs, projects, and activities funded under the Act must be "carried out in a manner consistent with the principles of respect for individual dignity, personal responsibility, self-determination, and pursuit of meaningful careers, based on informed choice, of individuals with disabilities."

Section 100(a) (3) (c) says, "Individuals who are applicants for such programs or eligible to participate in such programs must be active and full partners in the VR process, making meaningful and informed choices – (i) during assessments for determining eligibility and VR needs; and (ii) in the selection of employment outcomes for individuals, services needed to achieve the outcomes, entities providing such services, and the methods used to secure such services."

Requirements: **1.** inform each applicant and individual eligible for VR services, through appropriate modes of communication, about the opportunities to exercise informed choice throughout the VR process, including the availability of support services for individuals who require assistance in exercising informed choice; **2.** assist applicants and eligible individuals in exercising informed choice in making decisions related to the provision of assessment services; **3.** provide or assist eligible individuals in acquiring information that enables them to exercise informed choice in the development of their IPE outcomes, VR services and service providers, the employment setting and the setting in which the services will be provided, and methods for procuring services; **4.** develop and implement flexible procurement policies and methods that facilitate the provision of services and afford eligible individuals meaningful choices among procurement methods; and **5.** ensure that the availability and scope of informed choice is consistent with the obligations of the PBPB VR.