



# VRS Community Partners + VRS Staff Forum

**December 3, 2024**

# VRS Community Partners + VRS Staff Forum

Welcome to the VRS Community Partners + VRS Staff Forum!

- **ASL Interpreters** are designated as “co-hosts”, so they appear at the top of your participant list. If you need the ability to “multi-pin” please email [Janeen.Oien@state.mn.us](mailto:Janeen.Oien@state.mn.us).
- **Closed Captioning** is available. A livestream is linked in the chat.
- **Your name:** Please change your Zoom name to display your first and last name and the agency where you work. An easy way to rename is: 1) go to the participant list and find your name, 2) hover over your name, 3) select “more”, 4) select “rename”.
- **Questions and Comments:** Please submit feedback, questions, and comments via Microsoft Form: [Q&A Microsoft Form](#).
- **Technical Issues:** If you have technical issues, please contact [Janeen.Oien@state.mn.us](mailto:Janeen.Oien@state.mn.us).
- **Recording:** This session will be recorded and posted to the VRS website along with the agenda, presentation, and transcript.

# Agenda

- **Welcome:** Lori Thorpe, VRS Director of Contracts and Partnerships
- **SILC Board applications**
  - Anne Paulson, Community Partnerships Program Specialist
- **General Services: Placement and Retention:**
  - Evie Wold, VRS Placement Program Specialist
  - Michelle Chmielewski, VRS Placement Program Specialist
- **Reminders and VRS Updates:** Lori Thorpe
- **Q & A:** Sara Sundeen, Community Partnerships Program Specialist

# Statewide Independent Living Council

***Recruitment for the  
Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)***

# Statewide Independent Living Council

- MNSILC is a federally mandated council of community volunteers appointed by the governor. This council works collaboratively with the Centers for Independent Living (CILs) and coordinates activities with other entities in the state that provide services similar or complementary to independent living services.
- *Seeking New Members across Minnesota*
  - Are you a person with a disability who is interested in enhancing the quality of life for you and your peers? Are you a parent, guardian, or professional enthusiastic about working with people with disabilities and the independent living philosophy? [Learn more about serving on the MNSILC.](#)

# Statewide Independent Living Council

- The duties of MNSILC under authorization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA 2014) include:
  - Jointly develop and sign the State Plan for Independent Living.
  - Monitor, review, and evaluate the implementation of the State Plan.
  - As appropriate, coordinate activities with other entities in the state that provide services similar to or complementary to independent living services, such as entities that facilitate the provision of or provide long-term community-based services and supports.
  - Meet regularly and ensure that all Council meetings are open to the public and sufficient advance notice is provided.
  - Submit to the administrator such periodic reports as the administrator may reasonably request, and keep such records and afford access to such records as the administrator finds necessary to verify the information in such reports.
  - Hold hearings and forums the Council may determine to be necessary to carry out the duties of the Council.

# Statewide Independent Living Council

- MNSILC also has the following authorities:
  - Work with CILs to coordinate services with public and private entities in order to improve services provided to individuals with disabilities.
  - Conduct resource development activities to support the activities described in the plan or to support the provision of independent living services by CILs.
  - Perform other functions, consistent with the purpose of this chapter and comparable to other functions described in this subsection, as the Council determines to be appropriate.
- Learn more here: [Statewide Independent Living Council \(SILC\) / Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development](#)



## General Services: Placement and Retention

Evie Wold and Michelle Chmielewski



# Placement and Follow-Up Services: General PBA



Continuous discussion regarding Disability Disclosure, Supported Employment, Reasonable Accommodations and Assistive Technology

# Job Seeking Skills Training – how does it fit?

- Job Seeking Skills Training is providing training on the techniques to prepare for, secure, retain, advance in, or regain competitive integrated employment.
- Placement services (PBA) include the development of a resume, interviewing practice, cover letter and reference development, etc.
- Extensive support and ‘light touch’ support

# Placement Plan Meeting

- Placement Professional comes prepared
- Roles and responsibilities of Job Seeker, Placement Professional, VRS Counselor and Waiver Case Manager (if E1PBA) are discussed
- Placement Plan is signed by all core team members (Waiver Case Manager not required to sign)
- Use the VRS Placement Plan or your own; complete only one Placement Plan
- Provide VRS a signed copy of Placement Plan
- 60 Day Meeting is scheduled

Part of all PBAs

## Follow-Up Services

- After job placement the Placement Professional provides follow up services to the individual from the first day of employment until Placement and Follow Up Services close
- Requires regular check-ins with the individual to assist the person's adjustment to competitive integrated employment (at minimum bi-weekly)
- Could include communicating with the employer to ensure that essential performance standards are being met and offer assistance and resources to facilitate adjustment to the new position
- Monthly Progress Reports are submitted

## Follow-up

- Provided to all new employees
- Assistance with new employee orientation, initial paperwork
- Getting feedback from the employer on work performance (if they have disclosed)
- Identifies services needed to maintain or advance in employment, Orientation and paperwork assistance

## Job Coaching

- Considered intensive training and supports specific to the individual's learning needs
- Facilitating communication with the employer
- Educating the employer about individual needs and accommodations
- May also include assistance with the use and creation of:
  - Visuals aids & Checklists
  - Assistance with apps and timers
  - Hand over hand instruction

- Updated training:
  - Partners can view the new PBA webinar here:  
[https://www.zoomgov.com/rec/share/G4\\_9DT8dT04tXcEblsPdvknF17DOPSRQae8CwxIVEqKlgX7qmXLWYfVJMRGG9sS0.pxHq9w7MtTftjv6S?startTime=1733162903000](https://www.zoomgov.com/rec/share/G4_9DT8dT04tXcEblsPdvknF17DOPSRQae8CwxIVEqKlgX7qmXLWYfVJMRGG9sS0.pxHq9w7MtTftjv6S?startTime=1733162903000) Passcode: %Kh\$g9Mu
  - VRS Staff have been giving access to this webinar in YesLMS!

- Job Shadow / Informational Interviews – aligning billable services

A change from the information presented at the 10/1/2024 Forum:

Job Shadows and Informational Interviews will **ALSO** allow some site development time.

1. This is to allow better alignment between these two services and all other Job-Related Services
2. Each Job Shadow and Informational Interview event must be individualized to the person served, but if service hours will exceed 10 hours, then supervisor consult/approval is required.
3. A review was conducted by the Placement Specialists after a question/comment came in on our 10/1/24 Forum, so THANK YOU and keep the questions coming

# Reminders and VRS updates



# Reminders and VRS updates

**CP Conversations:** Monthly office hours for Community Partner staff to meet with VRS Community Partner Program Specialists. Next session is:

- Friday, December 13th, 9:00a.m. - 9:30a.m. [Here is the recurring Zoom link](#)

**Next VRS + CRP Forum:** bi-monthly forums to discuss topics related to both the work of VRS staff and our Community Partners. Next Forum is:

- February 4, 2025, 10:30a.m. – 12:00p.m.
- [Registration](#)

# Online VRS Interest Form

## **ONLINE Vocational Rehabilitation Services Interest Form!**

- Anyone interested in applying for VRS services can fill out an online VR Interest Form
- The form is listed on the Vocational Rehabilitation Services website: [Counseling, Training, and Job Skills / Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development](#)
- The VR Interest Form will be directed to the VRS office serving that area, and a VR staff will contact the individual to schedule a VRS intake

# Online VRS Interest Form

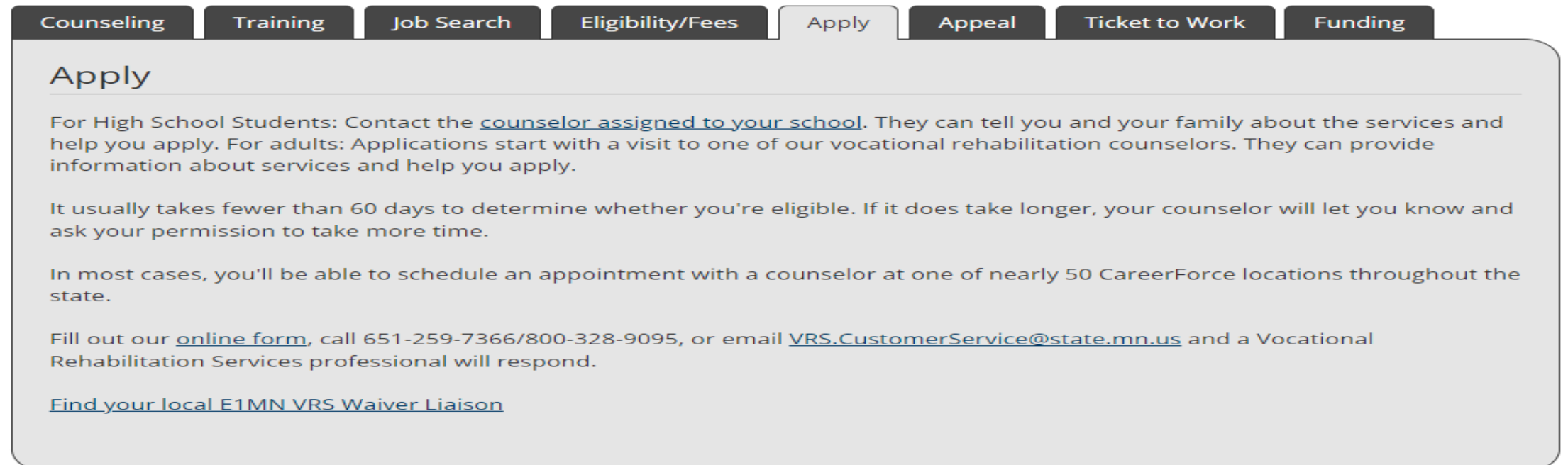
## The form appears under the Apply tab:

### Counseling, Training, and Job Skills

If you have a disability that makes it hard for you to get and keep a job, you may be eligible for a variety of counseling, training, job skills and job placement services.

#### Overview

Services vary according to individual needs. One of our Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) counselors will work with you to explore the choices and determine which are most appropriate for you. Then together you'll develop a plan to help you reach your goals. Learn more about our [Informed Choice policies](#).



The screenshot shows a navigation bar with seven tabs: Counseling, Training, Job Search, Eligibility/Fees, Apply, Appeal, Ticket to Work, and Funding. The 'Apply' tab is currently selected and highlighted. Below the navigation bar, the 'Apply' section is displayed with the following text:

**Apply**

For High School Students: Contact the [counselor assigned to your school](#). They can tell you and your family about the services and help you apply. For adults: Applications start with a visit to one of our vocational rehabilitation counselors. They can provide information about services and help you apply.

It usually takes fewer than 60 days to determine whether you're eligible. If it does take longer, your counselor will let you know and ask your permission to take more time.

In most cases, you'll be able to schedule an appointment with a counselor at one of nearly 50 CareerForce locations throughout the state.

Fill out our [online form](#), call 651-259-7366/800-328-9095, or email [VRS.CustomerService@state.mn.us](mailto:VRS.CustomerService@state.mn.us) and a Vocational Rehabilitation Services professional will respond.

[Find your local E1MN VRS Waiver Liaison](#)

# Invoicing and reporting

## Invoicing and reporting reminders

- All invoices and reports *must* be received within 90 days of the end date on the Authorization for Service, but *please* submit invoices and reports as close as possible to the end date of the services being provided.
- VRS staff will *no longer* be reaching out to ask for invoices and reports, effective immediately. Partner agencies need to promptly submit their invoices and progress reports to be processed.
- Invoices received past 90 days of the end date on the Authorization for Service will not be paid.

# PBA Progress Update Reports

- For Performance Based Agreements (PBAs), the required Monthly Progress Update Report **must** be submitted to VRS by the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the following month for every month an individual is being served in a PBA.
- These reports are due every month and are *not* to be saved up and turned in at Milestone invoicing time.

# Job Coaching - Reporting

**Reminder:** Job Coaching is an hourly service that can be used during the Retention Milestone of a PBA.

- Job Coaching has a required report that is posted here: [Coaching report](#) (found under Job Coaching – time limited). This report is required each time the service is invoiced.
- Job Coaching also requires weekly communication updates with the referring VRS professional.

# Discussion – Questions and Answers

Please submit questions and comments using the Microsoft Form linked in the chat and listed below.

[MS Form for Q&A](#)



# Thank You!



*We'd love to hear your feedback on our VRS Community Partner + VRS Staff Forums.*

*Please provide your thoughts in the Microsoft Form below. The forum feedback questions are at the end of the form.*

[MS Form for Q&A and Forum Feedback](#)



## Funding Notice

*The VR program receives 78.7 percent of its funding through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. For federal fiscal year 2022, the total amount of grant funds is \$44,081,347. The required state match for these funds is \$11,930,529 (21.3 percent). The state of Minnesota has appropriated \$14.3 million to exceed the matching requirement.*