

# Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)- Important Information You Need to Know When Writing Your Own IPE

## Development and Review of Your Plan

### General Information

Your *Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)* is a flexible, working plan. Your IPE has 3 main parts:

- *Individualized Plan for Employment Job Goal*
- *Individualized Plan for Employment Services & Supports*
- *Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)- Important Information for You*

### Developing Your Plan

You have 90 days to complete your *Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)* from your date of eligibility.

You have the right to do your IPE on your own.

You have the right to receive help from a qualified VR staff member to do all or part of your plan.

You can decide to work out your plan by yourself. If you want, you can have a parent, family member, guardian, advocate, or other person help you write your IPE.

### ***Individualized Plan for Employment Job Goal***

Your job goal is the job you want to get.

The purpose of your plan is to help you prepare for, get, and keep this job.

You will reach your job goal when:

- You finish the steps in your plan (or you decide you don't need more services).
- You've worked at least 90 days in your job goal (or a similar job in line with your strengths, abilities, capabilities, and interests).
- Your work is satisfactory and you perform well on the job.

### Progress Toward Your Job Goal

VR staff will stay in regular contact as you work towards your goal; plus we will do a review once a year. You will be an active participant in these reviews.

To review your progress toward your job goal, VR looks at:

- Your views of your progress.
- Your satisfaction with the services you receive.
- Progress reports from your service providers.
- Grade reports from post-secondary training.

Based on this review, you and VR can agree to continue your plan or to make changes in it.

### Funding Your Plan

#### What services, supports, or goods do I need?

You and your VR staff member will research and have discussions about the required services, supports, or goods you need in order to reach your job goal.

#### Who will provide or where will I get them?

You can get some services from VR staff. You also can get services, supports, or goods from employers, schools, colleges, universities, agencies, or businesses in your community. You can pick any qualified provider for the services, supports, or goods you need. If you pick someone or something costing more than VR allows, you will pay the extra cost.

You can find VR guidelines of services, supports, and goods and what VR will pay for, in Rule 72 (Title 92 Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 72). You may ask for a copy of this rule or you can view it, as well as, VR policies and procedures at: <http://vr.is.vr.ne.gov/> under the heading *Rules and State Plans*.

## Who will pay?

Services from VR staff will not cost you anything. If there is a cost for other needed services, supports, or goods, this part of your IPE will tell who will pay for them. VR may help you pay for services, supports and goods; however, there are limits:

- VR can only help with the cost of the goods or services listed on your approved IPE. You will pay for any goods or services you get that are not on your approved IPE.
- VR limits its help to the amounts in Rule 72.
- VR limits its help for post-secondary training up to 12 credit hours per semester or quarter and cannot exceed the amount of your unmet need reported by the Student Financial Aid Office at the school you attend.
- VR cannot use its money to replace money you can get from public programs (like Medicaid, TANF, Developmental Disabilities, and Mental Health), or programs that have written agreements paid for by VR.
  - If a public program can provide the services, supports, goods, or pay for what you need, you will need to apply for their help and benefits.
  - If you can get their help and benefits, you will need to use them.
  - If you do not use their help and benefits, you will pay the cost.
- VR cannot help you pay for services, supports, or goods if we do not have the money.

**Your services may be delayed or interrupted if we do not have the money to help you pay for them.**

## Nebraska VR Cost Sharing

If VR will share in the cost of services, supports, or goods you will get in your community, you usually can choose how VR will help you pay:

- **Cash Advance:** You and VR agree in advance on how much you can spend to buy the agreed on services, supports, or goods. This can be based on VR's guidelines, past costs, cost estimates, or price quotations. VR gives you a check before you buy anything. You use the money to buy the agreed on services, supports, or goods. You

can shop, and buy from the provider or business you choose. If what you buy costs more than what VR gave you, you pay the difference. VR will require verification of the purchase.

- **Reimbursement:** You and VR agree in advance on how much you can spend to buy the agreed on services, supports, or goods. This can be based on VR's guidelines, cost estimates, or price quotations. You shop and buy what is needed, using your money. You give VR itemized receipts for what you spent. VR sends you a check for what you and VR agreed to in advance.
- **Nebraska VR Purchase:** You and VR agree on a provider or business for the agreed on services, supports, or goods. VR must get price quotations and use the lowest cost provider or business for some services, supports, or goods. VR sends the provider or business an authorization to give you the services, supports, or goods. You go to the provider or business that has the authorization to get your services, supports, or goods. The provider or business bills VR for the cost.

## Financial Accountability

When VR funds are provided, you must use those funds only for the services or goods intended and agreed to in the IPE. If you do not, you are liable for the full repayment of those funds. Failure to repay misused funds could result in the discontinuation of VR services, use of collection procedures, referral to law enforcement, and/or reporting to credit agencies

## Sharing in the Cost of Your Plan

If you can, VR expects you and your family to share in the cost of services, supports, or goods you get in the community. There is no mandatory cost sharing! However, VR has found clients who financially participate in the cost of their plan are more invested and are more successful in completing their plan and becoming successfully employed.

Because VR has limited funds it is not possible to serve all Nebraska citizens who experience a disability. The more clients contribute to their own plans the more funds are available to serve additional individuals who like you have the potential to work but need VR assistance to be successful!

VR staff will ask how you will share in the cost of your plan. VR wants you to make an informed decision regarding your financial participation.

### **Timelines**

These tell when you expect to begin working on this service and when you expect to finish it.

### **Approving and Changing Your Plan**

Before VR can begin services to you, or help pay for the costs of your services, supports, or goods, you must be in agreement with and sign your IPE. A VR staff member must also be in agreement with your plan and sign it. A VR staff member can approve your plan if:

- There are reasonable chances you will get hired in your job goal in your local labor market or an area you are willing to relocate to.
- Your job goal will give you the wages and benefits you need.
- Your plan includes all the services you need to meet education, experience, skill, or other requirements employers want in a person they will hire for a job in your goal.
- There are providers available for each service or support in your plan, either in your local area or a community you are willing to relocate to.

### **Effective Date**

Your IPE takes effect on the day the VR staff member approves and signs it.

### **Changing Your Written Plan**

A change to your written IPE must be made if:

- You want to change your job goal.
- VR is terminating a planned service.
- A provider is terminating a planned service.

### **Approving Changes to Your Written Plan**

You and a VR staff member must be in agreement with the changes to your written IPE and sign the revised IPE.

### **Effective Date of Changes**

The changes to your written IPE take effect on the day the VR staff member approves and signs them.

## **Rights and Responsibilities**

### **Your Rights**

**Respect:** You have the right to expect VR will respect your personal dignity and assist you in pursuit of a meaningful career based on informed choice.

**Privacy:** You have a right to your personal privacy. VR staff members share information about you with each other. They release it to other parties only according to federal and state laws and regulations.

**Informed Choice:** You have the right to take part in any decisions about your job goal, services, and service providers.

### **You can expect VR staff to:**

- Respond to your needs in a timely manner
- Help you understand our services
- Be honest with you
- Provide and/or help you get the services and supports you need to become successfully employed

### **Review of Your Plan**

You have the right to review your plan with VR at least once a year. You can ask for changes at any time.

### **Integration**

You have a right to get services in a place where you can be with people who do not have disabilities.

### **Client Assistance Program**

You can get in touch with the Client Assistance Program if you need information or help to:

- Understand vocational rehabilitation services.
- Get advice about services or benefits that may be available to you.
- Get advice about your rights and responsibilities.
- Deal with problems with a program that is providing you with vocational rehabilitation services.
- Ask for mediation or a review of a VR decision:

Call 1.800.742.7594 (toll free)  
471.3656 (Lincoln) TT Available  
Write to PO Box 94987  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509

## Mediation

If you want mediation of any decision about the vocational rehabilitation services you will get, you may contact the Regional Mediation Center serving your county. You can ask VR or the *Client Assistance Program* for a list.

Both you and VR must volunteer to take part in mediation. A qualified and impartial mediator who is trained in effective mediation techniques will do the mediation.

## Review of Decisions

If you want a review of any decision about your vocational rehabilitation services, you may file a petition for an impartial review. An impartial hearing officer using the Nebraska Department of Education's Rule 71 (Title 92 Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 71) will do this review. You can ask VR or the Client Assistance Program for a copy of this rule, or get a copy at <http://vris.vr.ne.gov/>. The copy will include a sample petition form.

Your petition must tell the factual reasons why you want the review and concisely tell the solution you want. You must send in your petition within 30 calendar days of the date you get the written decision. Send your petition with a copy of the written decision you want reviewed to:

Impartial Hearing Coordinator  
Nebraska VR  
PO Box 94987  
Lincoln NE 68509

You can ask the *Client Assistance Program* for help.

## Post-Secondary Training

### Initial Term

- To receive VR financial assistance for the initial term of training, you must have your *Individualized Plan for Employment* containing post-secondary training approved at least sixty (60) calendar days before the date the training will begin.
- You must complete the financial aid application to allow the school to provide VR with the required financial aid award information no later than 5 business days before the start of the first term of a new financial aid year.

- You must provide VR with a copy of your registration for the upcoming term no later than 5 business days before the start of the term.
- VR requires a copy of your grade report for the previous term as soon as it is available from the school.

**We may delay or suspend our financial aid to you if you do not give us this information.**

- To continue VR financial aid after your first year at school, we expect you to:

Keep your overall grade point average at "C" or better unless a higher GPA is required by your program of study.

Finish at least 24 semester hours of credit each academic year (or 48 quarter hours if your school uses quarter hours, or 36 hours if your school is on a 3 semester system), unless a lower number of credit hours is in your IPE.

Finish your coursework and class assignments on time.

**We may delay or suspend our financial aid to you if you do not meet these expectations.**