Information for DVR Consumers with Workers' Compensation Claims

--PLEASE REVIEW THIS INFORMATION CAREFULLY--

Overview

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) encourages you to work closely with our staff, as a partner, to make informed choices about decisions that impact your vocational rehabilitation.

A plan to return to a job with your former employer or a new employer may be your best choice. Perhaps training for a different type of job is a better choice for you. DVR offers services to help you make these decisions and to carry out your plan.

The choices you make in your vocational rehabilitation could affect your workers' compensation claim. Some workers' compensation insurance carriers may question retraining benefits if they believe that you are able to return to suitable employment without additional training. Before you decide to train for a different job, you may want to discuss your plan with the insurance carrier, the Wisconsin Division of Worker's Compensation (608-266-1340), and/or an attorney.

DVR cannot provide money for basic costs of living. You may need to work with the employer, the insurance carrier, or other organizations to request assistance to cover your basic costs of living while participating in the vocational rehabilitation program.

If you are placed on the DVR waitlist, you may still receive rehabilitation services from a private provider. To learn more about this, call 608-266-1340 at the Wisconsin Division of Worker's Compensation and ask to speak to a specialist.

Vocational Rehabilitation and Workers' Compensation Law

- DVR follows the Federal Rehabilitation Act. This law is a separate from and different than the Worker's Compensation Act of Wisconsin.
- DVR staff are not experts in workers' compensation law. Contact the Wisconsin Division of Worker's Compensation at 608-266-1340 if you have questions about your workers' compensation claim.
- The Rehabilitation Act **does not require** that you attempt to return to work with your previous employer or to seek a job with other employers before looking at retraining as a part of your vocational plan. The Worker's Compensation Act of Wisconsin, however, **does require** that you attempt to return to work before a retraining plan is considered.

DVR Roles and Responsibilities Related to Workers' Compensation

- DVR cannot provide money for basic costs of living. To request assistance to cover your basic costs of living while working with DVR, you may need to work with the employer, the insurance carrier, or other organizations.
- DVR will only collect information necessary to develop your Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). We will not collect documentation needed for your workers' compensation claim.
- DVR will only provide evaluations as needed for the vocational rehabilitation process. We will not provide you an evaluation for the purpose of seeking benefits from other agencies.

Consumer Roles and Responsibilities Related to Workers' Compensation

- You are responsible for following the rules of the workers' compensation system. Please discuss any concerns about this with DVR staff.
- You have the right to develop your own vocational rehabilitation plan and participate in the decision-making process, including:
  - Determining a suitable vocational goal with your DVR counselor
  - Making the decision to seek, or not to seek, workers' compensation benefits
  - Reaching agreement about the level of assistance you will need from DVR to manage your vocational rehabilitation program
- You are responsible for managing your workers' compensation claim. You should contact the Wisconsin Division of Worker's Compensation, or others involved in your claim, to determine what is needed in your case. The items needed may include:
  - Documentation that you tried to return to work with your previous employer
  - Documentation that you tried to find a different job
  - Communications with your employer, insurance carrier, and/or the Wisconsin Division of Worker's Compensation
  - Medical records obtained from and/or provided to other parties
  - Documentation of transportation and other costs resulting from medical and vocational rehabilitation services you have received

Federal Funding Disclosure (Stevens Amendment)
The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation program receives 78.7% of its funding through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. For federal fiscal year 2026 (FFY 2026), the total amount of grant funds awarded were $80,383,058, including $12,057,459 reserved for Pre-Employment Transition Services. The remaining 21.3% ($21,755,517) of the costs were funded by Wisconsin state appropriations.