Welcome To

Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission
What Is MRC?

- MRC is a state agency that provides services to persons with disabilities.
- Established in 1956 by an act of the Massachusetts Legislature.
- Has three divisions:
  - Community Living
  - Disability Determination Services
  - Vocational Rehabilitation
Vocational Rehabilitation Mission

- To provide vocational counseling and other support services to people with disabilities to assist them in obtaining or retaining employment.
What is Vocational Rehabilitation?

- Counseling and Guidance
- Interest and Aptitude Testing
- College or Vocational Training
- Diagnostic Evaluations
- Vehicle Modifications
- Housing Modifications
- Assistive and/or Rehabilitation Technology
- Transitional Services for High School Students
- Consultation to Employers
- Job Placement Assistance
- Job Coaching
What is Vocational Rehabilitation?

- Services provided will reflect the individual’s unique aptitudes, interests, needs, and goals.
Who can receive services?

To receive vocational rehabilitation services, you must meet the following criteria:

✓ Have a physical, mental, emotional or learning disability which severely limits your ability to get and keep a job
✓ Have motivation to work and keep a job
✓ Be a U.S. citizen or have authorization to work
✓ If you have a substance abuse history it is important to have a sustained amount of sobriety and ongoing supports before referring yourself for services.
How We Are Funded

- MRC is funded by both the State of Massachusetts and the Federal Government under the Rehabilitation Act.
Area we serve

- 24 offices throughout Massachusetts
  - Downtown Boston
  - Cape & Islands
  - Framingham
  - Lawrence
  - Milford
  - Pittsfield
  - Salem
  - Sturbridge
  - Brockton
  - Fall River
  - Greenfield
  - Lowell
  - New Bedford
  - Plymouth
  - Somerville
  - Taunton
  - Braintree
  - Fitchburg
  - Holyoke
  - Malden
  - North Adams
  - Roxbury
  - Springfield
  - Worcester
While on the 30 day Processing List...

• It is important to stay connected to health care providers, for example, primary care physician, therapist, psychologist or any other supports that oversee your treatment.

• Other supports may include AA/NA (12 Step Programs), Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, speech and language therapy and any other supports you have to keep on track.

• Obtain medical and/or mental health records if possible.

• Obtain proof of benefits if you are receiving Social Security Benefits
Meeting Your Counselor

During the 1st meeting, the counselor will do an initial interview asking for the following information:

• Education & work history
• Medical data (your disabilities, doctors, medications, hospitalizations)
• Income sources and amount of support
• Criminal history
• Goals and services you are interested in pursuing
• General family information
Eligibility

- After the initial interview is completed, the counselor will determine your eligibility based on:
  - Your major barriers to employment caused by a disability based on medical records, proof of benefits, and diagnostic assessments.
  - A reasonable expectation that a positive employment outcome will occur as a result of receiving vocational rehabilitation services.
Eligibility

- The counselor has 60 days from the initial interview to gather documentation from doctors, therapists, psychological assessments, etc., to determine your eligibility.
You may have difficulty in three or more of the following categories:

- Mobility
- Communication
- Self-Care
- Self-Direction
- Interpersonal Skills
- Work Tolerance
- Work Skills
Relationship Between You and Your Counselor

• You will work with your counselor to create an employment plan that is in your best interest.
• Your counselor will help you explore appropriate employment and other community resources.
• It is your responsibility to be active in the vocational process and to keep regularly scheduled appointments with your counselor.
Determining Your Vocational Goal

• Once found eligible for services, your counselor will work with you to develop your vocational goal and plan.

• If you have some job goals in mind, your counselor will help you explore their feasibility.

• If you do not have clear career/employment direction, your counselor may recommend that you participate in some type of vocational/career assessment.
Your Individual Plan for Employment

• Once determined eligible, an appointment will be set up with your counselor to discuss your Individual Plan for Employment (IPE).

• You and your Counselor have 90 days from the time you are made Eligible for MRC to write your IPE.

• The IPE is a written document that outlines and reflects your vocational/employment goals and all services that will be provided to achieve your goal, such as physical and emotional treatment services, adaptive services, case management, vocational/college training, job seeking skills preparation, job placement & follow up.
Your Individual Plan for Employment

- It will also document the time frame to meet these services and the cost breakdown.
- Your IPE is developed cooperatively between you and your counselor, and is based on your vocational goal, strengths/skills, interests and employment outlook for that job.
Vocational Training & Education

- If your vocational goal requires that you obtain additional training, we can assist you in going to college, technical training school, or licensure programs.
- MRC can possibly provide a wide array of training options to assist you in preparing for employment.
- We can assist with college degree and certificates programs at any state school.
Vocational Training & Education

- To receive financial assistance from MRC, you must be found financially eligible for paid services.
- Typically we do not assist with degree programs at private schools unless a particular program is not available at a state college.
- We require all students to apply for financial aid services.
- In some situations we can contribute towards school expenses.
Job Placement Services

- Once you are job ready you may receive assistance with the following:
  - Resume writing
  - Interviewing skills
  - Developing job leads
  - Employer advocacy
  - On-The-Job Evaluation or Training
  - Job Driven Trainings
  - Job coaching (if needed)
Post Employment Services

• MRC will provide you with support, advocacy and follow-up services for at least 90 days after you secure employment.

• You may be eligible to receive post-employment services after you are placed in a job and your case is closed.

• After 3 years, your file will be destroyed if you are not receiving services.
For Further Information

- You can find the VR Consumer Handbook online at:

www.mass.gov/mrc/handbook