



# Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired Fact Sheet

The Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities Agency (OOD) is the state agency that partners with Ohioans with disabilities to achieve quality employment, independence and Social Security disability determination outcomes through its Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR), Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired (BSVI) and Division of Disability Determination (DDD).

## Who do we serve?

OOD's vocational rehabilitation (VR) bureaus (BVR/BSVI) serve Ohioans with disabilities to help them obtain and keep a job. OOD begins working with individuals at age 14 to assist them as they transition into high school, college and the workplace.

BSVI assists eligible people with low vision and blindness by providing direct, personalized services to assist them in finding and retaining meaningful work and personal independence.

## Eligibility

Eligibility for services is based on three factors:

- Individual has a physical or mental impairment that constitutes or results in a substantial barrier to employment,
- Individual can benefit from OOD services in terms of an employment outcome, and
- Individual requires VR services to gain or retain employment.

## Order of Selection (OOS)

When all consumers eligible for VR services cannot be served due to limited resources, federal law requires OOD to define categories which establish the order in which consumers are served. This ensures that consumers with the Most Significant Disabilities (MSD) are served first.

A counselor must assign one of these priority categories based on how significantly the consumer's disability(ies) impacts his/her ability to work. The categories are:

- Most Significant Disability (MSD – first priority category) refers to an individual who needs multiple VR services over an extended period of time and whose disability seriously limits three or more functional capacities in terms of an employment outcome.
- Significant Disability (SD – second priority category) refers to an individual who needs multiple VR services over an extended period of time and whose disability seriously limits one or two functional capacities in terms of an employment outcome.
- Other Eligible Individuals (Other – third priority category) refers to an individual who does not need multiple services over an extended period of time or who does not have limitations to functional capacities in terms of an employment outcome.

## **Statewide Waiting List**

At this time, consumers with the MSD are being served immediately. Consumers with SD are placed on the statewide waiting list where they will experience a delay in receiving services. Currently, individuals in the "Other" category are not being served.

## **The Planning Process**

Once assigned to a caseload for services, an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) is created with a counselor. The IPE is an agreement between the consumer and OOD describing services which will be provided. Counseling and guidance to jointly choose an appropriate employment goal based on the consumer's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, capabilities and interests will be provided. A counselor helps the consumer access the services listed in the IPE. The counselor will continue to work with the consumer during this process to make certain that the services meet the consumer's needs and that the consumer is progressing toward the employment goal.

When the consumer is ready for employment, the counselor and other OOD staff will assist the consumer prepare for the job search. The counselor can also help with job site modifications for accessibility and efficiency, if it is needed, and can provide supportive services to assist in keeping the job once obtained.

## **Applying for Services**

An individual can complete an application for services by visiting our website at [www.ood.ohio.gov](http://www.ood.ohio.gov) or contacting OOD at 800. 282. 4536 toll-free.

## **Confidentiality**

OOD is required by law to maintain the consumer's confidentiality. All personal information provided by the consumer or any other source is strictly confidential and will not be released to anyone (other than the consumer's legal guardian, if applicable) without the consumer's written consent.