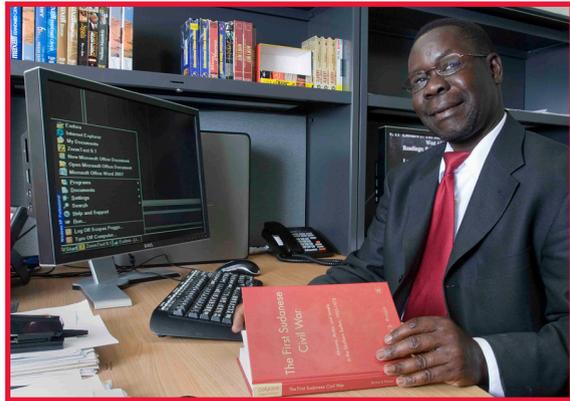




Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities

John R. Kasich, Governor
Kevin L. Miller, Executive Director



Finding a job
should be about

ABILITY

800. 282. 4536
www.ood.ohio.gov

We help people become successfully employed

If you want to work but are having trouble because of your disability, you may qualify for vocational rehabilitation services from the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities Agency (OOD).

What is vocational rehabilitation?

Vocational rehabilitation (VR) provides direct, personalized services to help people with disabilities obtain or retain jobs. The VR counselor works with you on a one-on-one basis to plan an individualized program leading to gainful employment.



Professionals ready to serve

Ohioans with disabilities who want to work can rely on one of two OOD bureaus:

- **Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR)** assists people with physical, mental and emotional disabilities through vocational rehabilitation and other services.
- **Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired (BSVI)** assists with vocational rehabilitation and other services for Ohioans who are blind or have a visual impairment.

OOD partners with a statewide network of community rehabilitation providers. These professionals may assist you in:

- Acquiring personal habits, attitudes and skills (including social skills) to function effectively on the job;
- Increasing your work tolerance;
- Developing work habits and better understanding the work world;

- Learning ways to adjust for loss of a bodily or sensory function such as mobility or sight; and/or
- Job placement, resume development and practice interviews.

How do I apply?

An application can be submitted by telephone, email, fax or by visiting the nearest OOD regional office. Offices you can call to have a counselor assigned to you are listed on the back of this brochure. You can also call the OOD headquarters in Columbus toll-free at 800. 282. 4536.

Application information should include the applicant's name, address, age, nature of disability, Social Security number, sex, referral source and, if needed, directions to the home.

Eligibility

After an application is completed, an interview is set up between you and a counselor. A friend or family member may accompany you. A counselor talks with you about career plans, work history, education, disability and the services necessary to reach an employment goal. Eligibility is based on three factors:

- You have a physical or mental impairment which causes or results in a substantial impediment to employment,
- You can benefit from services that lead to employment, and
- You require VR services to prepare for, secure, retain or regain employment.



Information for the eligibility interview

If possible, bring reports (medical, psychological, etc.) related to your disability from people who have previously provided services to you. If you are receiving Social Security benefits, please bring the letter you received from the Social Security Administration. These help your counselor determine your eligibility for OOD services. OOD may also require medical or psychological examinations, vocational testing, additional documents and the assistance of other professionals to determine eligibility.

To speed up the eligibility process, urge hospitals, physicians and social service agencies to respond quickly to OOD information requests.

Service is available to any eligible person with a disability living in Ohio, including foreign persons with visas that do not prohibit work.

If you are denied services, your counselor will explain the appeal process.

After a consumer is determined eligible, an order of selection decision is made. Those who meet criteria for a most significant disability are given priority if there is a waiting list for services.

Planning for your employment

Your individualized plan for employment (IPE) is based on your strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, capabilities and interests. An understanding of your personal strengths, limitations and employment opportunities is part of the plan.

The IPE also lists all of the services necessary to achieve your employment goal and your rights and responsibilities.

While no two rehabilitation programs are alike, the goal is always the same – to become employed!

Confidentiality

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

Follow-up

OOD follows up to ensure that you are successful and that both you and the employer are satisfied. If so, your case will be closed. Additional OOD services can be provided later, if needed.



Other OOD Services

Business Enterprise Program empowers people who are legally blind to become self-employed managers of food service facilities.

Community Centers for the Deaf provide interpreter services, counseling, advocacy, referral aid and other assistance to people who are deaf or have hearing impairments.

Independent Living Centers (IL) help people with significant disabilities function independently in their communities and be employed.

Ohio's Brain Injury Program was created in 1990 to promote the return of each person with a head injury to a participatory and productive role in society.

Personal Care Assistance (PCA) helps people with severe disabilities perform activities of daily living.

Rehabilitation technology is provided to modify equipment, a task or workplace to meet the needs of eligible individuals.

Services for young adults (transition youths) involve OOD collaborations with schools and other agencies to help youths with severe disabilities cross the bridge from secondary school to employment, higher education and independence.

Supported Employment offers people with severe disabilities an opportunity to work in their communities and become self-reliant.



OOD's **Division of Disability Determination (DDD)**, under an agreement with the Social Security Administration (SSA), processes Social Security disability determinations for all Ohioans who have applied for benefits under Supplemental Security Income, a needs-based income supplement program and/or Social Security Disability Insurance.

Several types of disability claims are Fast Tracked through claims processing. These include:

- Claims filed by a military service member who is seriously injured or disabled while on active duty (on or after Oct. 1, 2001), regardless of where their disability occurred;

- The Compassionate Allowances (CAL) initiative speeds SSDI applications for individuals whose disabilities are so severe that they clearly meet established medical criteria (this includes 88 conditions ranging from adult brain disorders to rare diseases that predominantly affect children);
- Quick Disability Determination (QDD), is a predictive computer model that analyzes specific data within electronic claim files to identify cases where there is a high potential that the claimant is disabled and where Social Security can quickly obtain evidence of the person's allegations; and
- Claims received from a local SSA field office which have been identified by the SSA office as persons whose disabilities are severe but have not been flagged for CAL or QDD.

DDD's Special Projects Unit serves individuals with criminal records, people who are homeless or at risk for homelessness and those with severe and persistent mental disorders. The Ohio Department of Mental Health has developed screening criteria and an application process to help citizens with disabilities apply for Social Security and Medicaid benefits. Claims are referred through its homeless advocate partners, including the Ohio Benefit Bank. Through a partnership with the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections, DDD processes prison pre-release cases. Local SSA offices have developed relationships with providers across the state, who identify people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness due to their disabilities and lack of insurance.

OOD has counselors located statewide. To have a counselor assigned to you, contact one of the offices listed below or visit OOD's Web site at www.ood.ohio.gov.

Cincinnati

513. 852. 3260 voice/TTY
513. 651. 3309 fax
800. 686. 3323 toll-free

Cleveland

216. 227. 3250 voice
216. 227. 3292 TTY
216. 227. 3293 fax
866. 325. 0026 toll-free

Columbus

614. 466. 4575 voice
614. 466. 9846 TTY
614. 985. 9806 fax
800. 430. 6940 toll-free

Toledo

419. 866. 5811 voice/TTY
419. 866. 6526 fax
800. 589. 5811 toll-free

The vocational rehabilitation program administered by OOD is a partnership between state and federal government. Each state dollar draws more than \$3.00 from the federal Rehabilitation Services Administration.

OOD does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, disability, genetic information, military status, veterans' status, national origin/ancestry, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation. Written allegations of violations may be filed directly with the OOD Diversity and Inclusion Office and/or the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Dept. of Education, as appropriate.