

GENERAL CASEWORK GUIDELINES

A. Definition: Casework includes the provision of all services, consistent with agency expectations, from application to closure, including intake and eligibility, arranging and providing direct services and appropriately recording provision of those services. The case work reflects the engagement of the job candidates in IVRS services. These are items which apply to all or most statuses. They may require review of more detailed instructions elsewhere in this manual, or in the agency Reference Manual.

B. Scope of Services: A broad range of issues are documented in the case record that impact service provision in many parts of the vocational rehabilitation process. These issues are addressed through motivational interviewing techniques with the job candidate, interactions with business and industry, and involvement of partners with a focus on the vocational outcome.

C. Agency Expectations:

1. Frequency of Contact

The agency expectation for frequency of contact with Job Candidates is that each Job Candidate will have at least one contact per month until their case is closed for any cases not on the waiting list. The only exception will be for those job candidates participating in an academic or vocational term. In the cases that are in 18-3, 18-4, and 18-7 the expectation is that we are meeting with them once per academic or vocational term, semester or based on when funding for the next part of the program is required. The contacts for students may be face to face, over the phone, or through email when appropriate. This is the minimum frequency of contact for a Job Candidate. Cases that require more contact is dependent upon the needs of the job candidate, the service and contact needed to progress and as such would be more frequent than one time per month. Nothing in this policy negates the expectation that staff should meet with a job candidate more than one time per month when necessary.

2. R-413 Recording

R-413 case notes meet agency needs through completion of appropriate forms and provide other facts necessary to ongoing casework. In achieving these purposes, duplication of documentation should be eliminated. Information written on the forms need not be repeated in a 413 entry. The emphasis of case recording should be on concise reporting of objective and behavioral data for the use of other staff who may serve the job candidate. Narrative entries should be recorded within two working days after meeting with a job candidate. Case note recording should state the issues, decisions made during the session, progress and next steps. The hard copy file is the official file for RSA reporting purposes.

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- a. Instructions specific to all R-413 entries:
 - 1) **A case note can be a summary of several contacts or attempted contacts.**
 - 2) Each entry will be followed by the name or initials of the author, with the typist initials following the author. Some entries include the initials "DD" which represents that the case note was transcribed using Dragon Naturally Speaking and was only proofread for spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors by a word processor.

- b. This part of the case file is for:
 - 1) Summaries of Information – what must be included in each is found under the appropriate status in the following pages.
 - 2) Counseling Notes - Information which relates to the ongoing attempt to resolve barriers to employment,, but does not constitute a program review. The focus of counseling sessions is on employment and how the services connect to the employment outcome.
 - 3) Status Movements - Status movements are recorded by IRSS to provide a chronological record of activity. The 413 narrative should reflect the status of the case when it changes.
 - 4) Authorization Data – IRSS tracks authorization information so no 413 entry is necessary summarizing it. The reasons for cancellations and amendments should be noted in a 413 section.
 - 5) Eligibility - The R-413 Face Sheet is updated as information is received and is completed no later than 60 days of the IPE-1 completion date, without an extension. If the job candidate does not agree to the extension the decision must be made based on the information in the case record.
 - 6) Justification of Eligibility – The narrative that justifies the decision of eligibility is not a duplication of information but explains the reasons why the individual requires IVRS services as it relates to the disability and the need to prepare for, obtain or maintain employment.

3. Use of Material from Closed Files

It is not unusual for an individual to have an open case file on multiple occasions. Collecting and recording the same information multiple times is not a good use of the time of the job candidate or counselor.

If the closed file is obtained prior to the new intake being done, the old material can simply be updated and put in the new file. If the closed file was available in time, a copy of the old application and Health Assessment Questionnaire could be sent to the job candidate with a request that they be updated. In many cases the old application, intake summary, and Health Assessment Questionnaire, with updates, can be put directly into the new case file, without redoing them. .

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Old medical, psychological, school, and other records still relevant to the case are routinely brought forward to the new file. The remainder of the old case file material is placed at the bottom of the new file under the "Old Case file Material" divider.

4. Significance of disability (SD) – An individual may be determined to be SD or Most SD at any time after eligibility is determined. Additional assessments for purposes of determining the proper waiting list placement can be done in Status 04. Once determined to be SD or Most SD, an individual's classification is never downgraded during the time that file is open, except to correct a recording error.
5. Individual Plan for Employment (IPE)–
 - a. There should be a justification of the IPE goal explaining how the goal was derived without reiterating information already contained in the case record, connecting information from intake and eligibility in the plan. A counselor should never agree to an IPE they believe to be unachievable
 - b. An IPE must be developed and signed with a high school student prior to graduation. Staff should work to achieve the same standard of planning with transition students that exists for non-transition students.
 - c. An IPE should be developed and signed with an adult within 120 days of eligibility determination, unless there is an extension agreed to by the job candidate.
 - d. The total program must be reviewed by the counselor with the job candidate at least annually on the IPE-3. The job candidate should be informed in counseling and through the IPE-3 when satisfactory progress is not being achieved, as well as strategies to improve.
 - e. To completely redevelop a program, use a new IPE-2 if an Amendment does not meet the needs of the case. Because IRSS allows for entry of only one IPE-2, a new IPE-2 would be entered in IRSS as an IPE-3.
 - f. Significant changes in objectives, activities, or the division of responsibilities will be done on an IPE-3.
 - g. At the time of closure the job candidate must have worked on that job for 90 days and it must be the same goal as listed on the IPE-3.
6. Active status – When an individual is receiving services that could fall under two or more of the active statuses (Status 14-22) the counselor should use the status that they have determined is the most important service in achieving the vocational goal.
7. Confidential Cases – There are times when it is necessary for IVRS to protect the confidentiality of a job candidate beyond the scope afforded to all agency clientele--particularly when the job candidate is an employee of IVRS or has a family member who is an employee of IVRS. In these instances, hard copy and electronic information will be accessible only to those individuals necessary to conduct IVRS business with the job candidate.

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- a. Protecting the hard copy case file. Store the case file in a secure location where only authorized individuals have access.
- b. Protecting the R413 case notes. The office supervisor will notify the IVRS Help Desk so a secure shared folder can be created with access given only to authorized individuals identified by the office supervisor.
- c. Protecting IRSS data. The office supervisor will send an e-mail to IRSSsupport and the ASB Bureau Chief notifying them that a confidential case exists. Include the job candidate name, case file number, and an explanation of the need for confidentiality in the e-mail. The office supervisor identifies staff members in the area office who need access to the data in IRSS. The ASB Bureau Chief identifies appropriate ASB and PDT staff to be excluded from the authorized staff members list. Names of ASB and PDT staff Members who are excluded will be communicated to the office supervisor by the ASB Bureau Chief.
- d. Transferring confidential files. When it is necessary to transfer a case that has been identified as confidential to another office, the office supervisor will notify the supervisor of the receiving office that the file will be transferred and the nature of its confidentiality. The receiving supervisor will follow the steps listed in 6a through c above. The receiving supervisor identifies staff members in the new area office who need access to the data in IRSS. Mailing instructions should be provided to assure that the confidential file will not be seen by unauthorized personnel.
- e. Closing confidential files. Write the word "CONFIDENTIAL" across the front of the case file to alert PDT staff. Before sending the confidential file to Des Moines, clerical staff contacts their office supervisor to determine whether the file can process through the normal case closure personnel or if another process needs to be determined based on ASB and/or PDT staff members who should not see the file due to its confidentiality.
- f. Re-opening a confidential file.
 - a. RSB staff: When an IRSS search for social security number or name returns a confidential case, the area office supervisor is notified to determine whether the returned case is a match to the applicant. If the supervisor determines that a match exists, complete steps 6a-c above to ready the office for receipt of the confidential case. The area office supervisor contacts IVRS Closed Records to request the closed file noting that it is a confidential case and steps have been taken to maintain its confidentiality.
 - b. Closed Records Staff: When a case is reopened and it is clear that the case is confidential, PDT staff contacts the office supervisor to coordinate appropriate mailing procedures to assure that the confidential case will not be seen by unauthorized personnel.

8. Authorizations –At closure the case should be checked to make sure that all outstanding authorizations have been paid or canceled. Purchases

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should be made through Vendors and not job candidate reimbursement unless there is no other way.

9. Transfer of Case files

a. Transfers Out of the Office:

- 1) Transfer Summary - The counselor will briefly summarize the current case situation, stating why the case is being transferred and what the next actions are expected to be, including the current disability issues, any program issues, and financial issues. If the transfer is due to a job candidate's change of residence, the new address and phone number should be included. Whenever possible, include the full name and telephone number of relevant contacts, such as Case Managers, County Central Point of Coordination (CPC), or other contact persons. Authorizations which will not be claimed should be canceled. Case records should not be transferred without information on how to contact the job candidate by the receiving office. Send an e-mail to the receiving office regarding the transfer of the case.
- 2) R-412 Application - The original copy is located in the front of the case file.
- 3) Make cover letter and place original on top of the case file. Retain a copy for tracking purposes.
- 4) Prepare label and mailing envelope.
- 5) Send a letter to the job candidate informing them of the location of the new office.

b. Transfers Received

- 1) Make R-413 entry, using date of reassignment and to whom.
- 2) Contact job candidate informing them of the names of the members of their rehabilitation team including telephone numbers.
- 3) A future appointment should be set up within two weeks of the transfer by the receiving office.

c. Transfers to Another VR Agency

- 1) Iowa Department for the Blind - If the job candidate applies for services from the Iowa Department for the Blind, or requests that the IVRS file be transferred there, the VR counselor will arrange a discussion with the Department representative to determine which agency should be providing the services. If services are to be provided by the Department, the case may be closed in the appropriate status and a photocopy of the material in the file sent to the Department for the Blind, unless the case is served through a jointly operated/provided program such as ISE and TAP. . . Original case files are never sent outside the agency. Approval to serve a job candidate whose disability is a vision impairment or blindness must be obtained from the Chief of Rehabilitation Services.

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- 2) Rehabilitation agencies in other states - If a release of information is received from the job candidate or from the VR agency in another state, for the IVRS casefile to be transferred to that state, the case will be closed in the appropriate status and a photocopy of the material in the file will be sent to the requesting state VR agency. Original case files are never sent outside the agency. A case may be served by both agencies as long as there is an agreement regarding the services provided to avoid double dipping, and both agencies receive copies of the IPE and authorizations. Supervisors must be involved in the discussions when a case is served by two state agencies. The supervisor notifies the Chief of Rehabilitation Services.
 - d. Transfer at job candidate request – If a job candidate requests a change of counselor, the request should be directed to the area office supervisor for review. Supervisors may grant requests as appropriate to do so without incurring additional cost to the agency.
 - e. IVRS staff may not at any time serve a person with whom they are related. All staff follow the code of Ethics. The direct supervisor should be notified immediately when a family member applies for services.
10. Iowa Client Assistance Program – At application, closure, and at significant decision-making points while the file is open the job candidate should be told about their right to contact and possibly receive assistance from the Iowa Client Assistance Program (ICAP). Inform the job candidate that ICAP is located at the Iowa Commission of Persons with Disabilities, Department of Human Rights, Lucas State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319, and telephone contact can be made toll free by calling 1-800-652-4298, or in Des Moines 281-3656 (voice) or 281-3164 TTY).
11. Appeal – A job candidate has the right to appeal within 90 days, any decision or action related to their case with which they disagree. They should be told about this right at the time of application, closure, and at significant decision-making points while the file is open.
12. Mediation – A job candidate has the right to request mediation within 90 days for any decision or action related to their case with which they disagree. They should be told about this right at the time of application, closure, and at significant decision-making points while the file is open.
13. Correcting Dates of Case Actions
 - a. No back dating is allowed without supervisory approval. The staff person should explain to the Supervisor the reasons for the backdating and what will be done to avoid this from happening in the future.

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- 1) Files closed in Status 08 26, 28, 30, or 38 require review and approval by the supervisor. to remove the closure.2) Back dating an IPE-1 beyond 30 calendar days requires a case note and approval by the supervisor.
 - 3) Back dating of any open status (Statuses 04-0 through 22-0) beyond 50 calendar days requires a case note and approval by the supervisor.
 - 4) In IRSS back dating status changes by IVRS staff can be done at the local level if the back date does not exceed 30 calendar days for IPE-1's and 50 calendar days for all other IRSS case events
- b. When a case event needs to be backdated in IRSS, enter the event using the current date. Once the event is entered, the supervisor notifies IRSS Support that the event date needs to be backdated, providing the new date to be entered. Backdating will only be approved if it impacts the progress of the case.
 - c. Once a case has moved to Status 12, it cannot return to Status 10 or below, except by being closed and re-opened.
 - d. Once a case has moved beyond Status 12, it cannot return to Status 12 or below, except by being closed and re-opened.
 - e. If you find you have a duplicate case on the same individual, check IRSS to determine which of the cases does not have any expenditures and close that case immediately. In cases where there are expenditures on both, contact IRSS Support to determine which case should be retained.
14. Transmittal of closures – Send cases to Administrative Services Bureau, ATTN: Statistical Section. Files should be forwarded in small lots, as soon as possible after they are closed, but no later than 20 days after the end of the month in which they are closed.
 15. Confidential information from the case record (to include completed forms, dictations, information from other parties, etc.) may not be removed from the premises unless the following assurances are made:
 - a. The case record is secured and locked such as in a trunk during transport and remains in the possession of the staff person at the destination.
 - b. The case record is returned to the agency premises and placed in a locked file cabinet at the end of the working day.
 - c. The case record is locked in a file cabinet at the end of the work day or whenever staff are leaving for an extended period of time such as vacations, etc.
 - d. Recording devices used for dictation follows the same requirements as above.
- Exceptions:
1. Approval from the Supervisor is required to take job candidate confidential information, which includes digital dictation equipment that will be used to dictate case entries, out of the office overnight.

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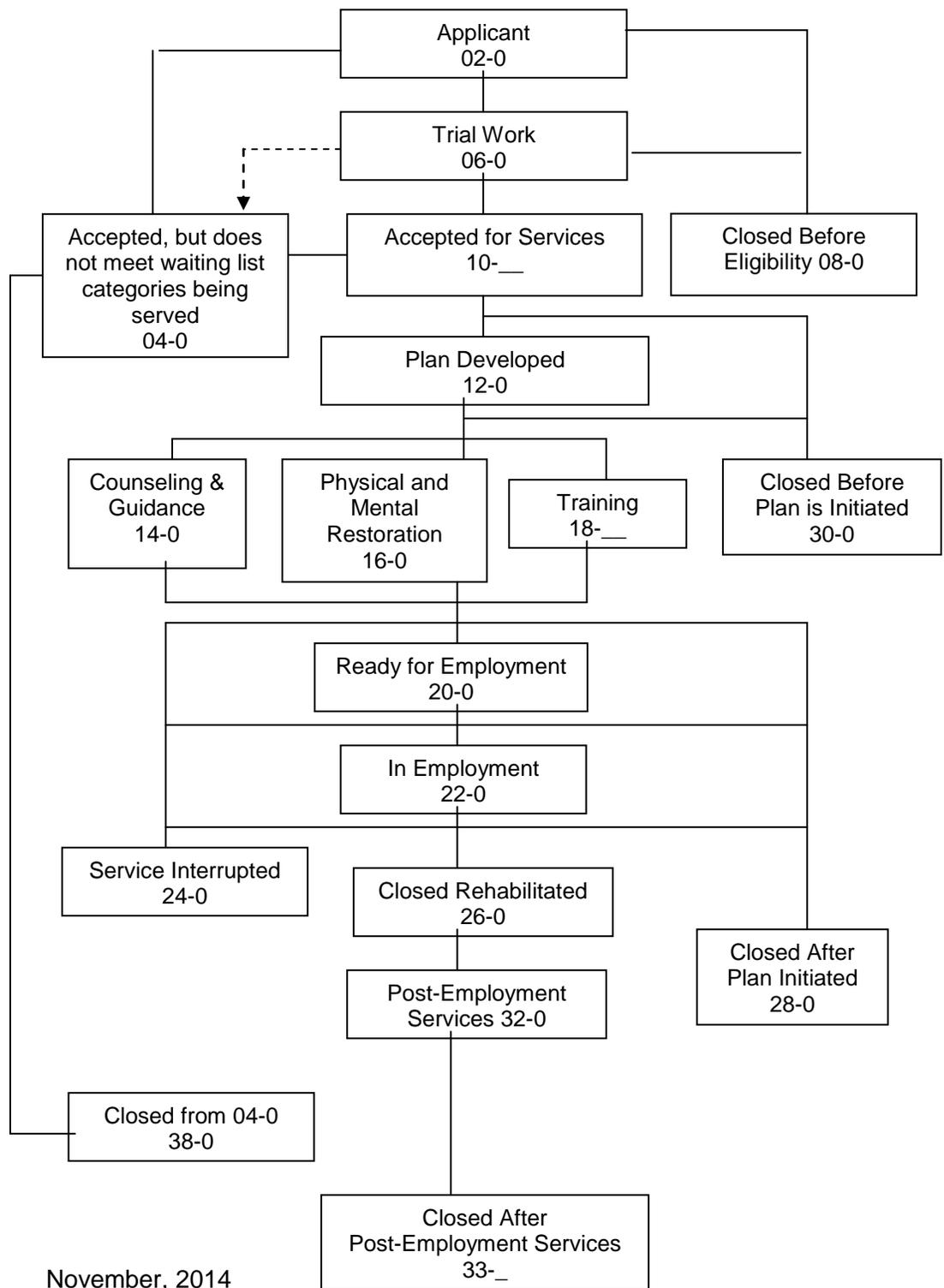


CASE STATUSES

02-0	Applicant (initial interview and opening file)
04-0	Accepted for Services (eligibility), but does not meet waiting list categories being served.
06-0	.....	Trial Work Experiences/Extended Evaluation)
08-0	.....	Closed Before Acceptance (from Status 00-0, 02-0)
10-<u> </u>	.....	Accepted for Services (eligibility) 10-0 Adults 10-1 High School Students
12-0	.....	Plan Developed, awaiting start of services
14-0	.....	Counseling and Guidance Only
16-0	.....	Physical and Mental Restoration
18-<u> </u>	.....	Training 18-1 Workshop/Facility (other than supported employment) 18-2 On-the-job Training 18-3 Vocational-Technical 18-4 Academic 18-5 Correspondence 18-6 Supported Employment 18-7 Other (including non-supported employment job coaching)
20-0	.....	Ready for Employment
22-0	.....	Employed
24-0	.....	Service Interrupted
26-0	.....	Closed Rehabilitated
28-0	.....	Closed After Program Initiated (from Status 14- <u> </u> through 24- <u> </u>)
30-0	.....	Closed Before Program Initiated (from Status 10-0)
32-0	.....	Post-Employment Services (from Status 26-0 <u>only</u>)
33- <u> </u>	Closed After Post-Employment Services (from Status 32)
38-0	Closed from Status 04

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