

VR Vocational Rehabilitation

Let's go to work



Helping people with disabilities become and stay employed.
Helping businesses find and keep talent.

scvrd.net

Through hard work and timely delivery of individualized services,

VR prepares and assists eligible South Carolinians with disabilities to achieve and maintain competitive employment. Our Quality One (Q1) initiative focuses on meeting the specific needs of our clients and business partners. Our goal is to ensure that “quality happens one person at a time.”

Through counseling, career guidance and vocational assessment, we help clients identify their abilities and develop skills so that they are empowered to choose a career to be successful and independent. This includes strengthening our partnerships in schools and dedicating additional resources and support to students and young adults with disabilities who need pre-employment services to become career ready.

Employment enhances the quality of life for our clients and their families as they earn paychecks and increase their self-sufficiency, thereby decreasing the need for government assistance. This also stimulates the state’s economy through taxes and purchases, ultimately contributing to the state’s return on investment in VR services.

We are fortunate in South Carolina to have a business environment that continues to grow and generate new job opportunities, creating a demand for an expanded talent pipeline. VR adds value by equipping clients to become qualified, job ready candidates to build a stronger and more diverse workforce. Through our job retention services we also help employers retain their most valuable asset, their employees, by assisting those who are experiencing physical or emotional concerns jeopardizing their employment (including alcohol and other substance abuse). There is no cost for this service, which allows our business partners to maintain the leverage needed to stay competitive.

In collaboration with community partners and agencies, technical colleges and universities, and non-profit organizations, VR offers a customized approach to employing people with disabilities. Please join us in our mission to help South Carolinians attain independence and success through employment.

Let’s go to work!

Turning statistics into success

People with disabilities want to be employed, educated and participate in their communities.

More than 20 million Americans, ages 18-64, have a disability. That’s almost 10% of the population. More than 13 million of them are unemployed.

In South Carolina we have more than 360,000 citizens, ages 18-64, with a disability, more than 250,000 of whom are unemployed.

Many of these individuals would like to go to work, but need assistance to prepare for and achieve that goal. They represent one of our nation’s most significant resources, and each year we help thousands find jobs paying competitive wages.

These new workers become taxpaying citizens, proud of what they are achieving: building fulfilling lives for themselves and their families.

Client Services

clients.scvrd.net

Recovery leads to success

"The most important thing I got was a plan," says Leanne Taylor. "I didn't know how to function anymore. Addiction took that away. I didn't know how to make it better and I didn't want to be the way I was."

VR's residential substance abuse treatment services offer help for people who are unable to get or keep a job because of drugs or alcohol. Clients are referred by VR counselors at any of our offices.

Leanne worked closely with the treatment staff to build the foundation for her recovery, which included exploring career opportunities and setting goals for her future.

"What I learned in those 28 days will help me for the rest of my life," she says.

After completing the program, clients continue to receive support from their VR counselor and local VR office.

Currently employed by an optometrist, Leanne continues to achieve her personal and career goals.

"I'm excited for my future. The possibilities are endless for what I can do."

treatment.scvrd.net

VR services are available to South Carolinians with disabilities

If you have a disability, we can help you understand the options available in becoming or staying employed through individualized services provided at offices around the state.

Benefits Specialists are on hand to counsel recipients of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and/or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) on work incentives and other benefits of working while educating them on the effects of earnings as they plan for employment.

Your vocational goal

Once eligibility is established, and depending on your need, services are available to assist you in preparing for, obtaining, retaining, or regaining employment. You participate fully in your rehabilitation, with your counselor serving as a guide to help you navigate all of the services we offer.

Assessment is the first step. Your strengths, abilities, interests, types of jobs you are best suited for, and the services required to help you achieve employment success are

evaluated. This may involve job shadowing, working with a mentor or a work experience. This process identifies a specific vocational goal and the services needed to reach it.

Although most assessments are done in your local office, you may be referred for comprehensive evaluation services for a more in-depth assessment if needed.



Your Individualized Plan for Employment

Your plan will list the services you need to help you prepare for your chosen vocation. The specific services provided are based on your individual financial and employment needs and may include:

Disability management through speech, hearing, physical, occupational, muscular or aquatic therapy; diagnosis and treatment for mental or emotional disorders like substance abuse; prosthetics, orthotics, podiatry or dentistry; or rehabilitation technology, such as worksite assessment, assistive devices, technological adaptations and aids for daily living.

Training to enhance and increase your professional skills; demand driven training to develop job specific skills; business or information technology training; hands on training; or post secondary training, including vocational or technical schools, colleges and universities.

Job search to help you identify and secure competitive employment. In some cases, you may receive on-site job coaching to help get started on the job.

Follow-up, post-employment and job retention services help if your job is jeopardized because of disability-related factors.

You may receive VR services if you have a physical or mental impairment that substantially impedes employment, and you are able to benefit from VR services that can lead to gainful employment.

I'm proud to be a part of VR, knowing that I'm not out there alone. That's a scary thing for somebody with a disability: to not have a support system.

—Brian Denny, former VR client



Youth Services

VR provides services to help young adults with disabilities build self-esteem, learn teamwork and communication, develop leadership skills, and prepare for employment success and life as adults.

This includes individuals who may be:

- Out of school
- Low income
- English language learners
- Juvenile offenders
- Homeless
- Current or former foster care recipients
- Pregnant or parenting

To take advantage of these services, contact your local VR office.

For students

VR also provides pre-employment training for students with disabilities, including:

- Job exploration counseling
- Work-based learning experiences
- Counseling on post-secondary education
- Workplace readiness training
- Instruction in self-advocacy

These services may be provided in an individual or group setting, and do not require the student to be a VR client. A VR counselor is available in most schools. To get started, talk with them, a teacher, guidance counselor or school nurse.

youthservices.scvrd.net



Business Services

businesses.scvrd.net

Training partnerships

Many skills are best learned in a work-based environment.

Our statewide network of training centers are a unique system for training VR clients while providing you with a flexible outsource alternative.

While meeting your business needs, our clients learn skills through tasks such as:

- assembly
- fabrication
- inspection
- building
- packaging
- recycling

Many clients also earn industry recognized certifications.

We are committed to:

- quality
- cost-efficiency
- flexibility
- quick turnaround time

Together we prepare skilled employees for your workforce.

trainingcenters.scvrd.net

Business leaders save time and money while expanding their customer base

As a workforce development partner, VR can help your business achieve its competitive advantage by developing qualified job candidates who are trained in a wide variety of skills and have the good work habits that you value.

Employers from every job sector, including federal contractors, indicate that hiring VR clients helps them reduce training costs and increase job retention rates, while improving workforce diversity.



Through individualized assessment, we get to know our clients so that we can assist you to find the right person for the right job.

Find talent

VR provides a pipeline of talented individuals to meet your workforce needs. Our Business Development Specialists (BDS) introduce you to the benefits of hiring these individuals.

Job matching starts when you notify us of an open position. We assess your requirements and identify matches using individualized career assessment tools. Finally, we pre-screen qualified candidates, saving you time and money.

Train talent

Through job preparedness instruction in our training centers, our clients learn the fundamental skills needed to work for you.

Job readiness training helps you assess a person's potential with no obligation, while we can help offset your initial training costs.

Our clients participate in customized training where they become competent in all aspects of the job, including knowledge, skills and company culture.

After hire, we continue to provide assistance to both you and the client for at least 90 days.

***This is one of the best programs I've ever seen.
VR is changing people's lives and helping
businesses thrive in the community.***

—Jeff Mang, Plant Manager, HBD Thermoid

Working with VR has opened a great door of opportunity for a labor force that I need.

***—Charlie Weston, Owner,
Guardian Fence Suppliers***

Keep talent

Post employment services, which may include assistive technology and additional education, are available to clients you hire who may require services to maintain, regain or advance in employment.

Job Retention Services help you retain valuable employees who need help due to a disability that might be jeopardizing their employment.

Whether it's anxiety, depression, substance abuse, physical impairments, or one of more than 130 other disabilities, our goal is to help a person minimize or eliminate the impairment interfering with their job performance.

For you, the benefits include better retention, less absenteeism and tardiness, an improved safety record, better quality and quantity of work, less disciplinary action and less turnover.

These confidential services help your employees through counseling and guidance, medical or psychological evaluation and/or treatment, training in personal and social skills, job-site modifications, or accommodations and referrals to other service providers.

Tax credits and other financial incentives are available to help with training, orientation and accommodation.



Business Partnership Network

Each of our Business Development Specialists leads a local network of business partners called the Business Partnership Network, a joint effort of public and private employers and VR.

Benefits of the BPN include:

- recognition as a leader in community workforce development
- the opportunity to teach classes on fundamental life skills and job preparedness
- helping shape in-demand training
- networking with other businesses
- sharing best practices

Find out more about the BPN at bpn.scvrd.net

Find your local BDS at bds.scvrd.net

Business partners

Some of the business partners who hire our clients and outsource work to our training centers include:

3D Systems
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of South Carolina
Boeing South Carolina
Bridgestone Americas Tire Operations, LLC
Eaton Corporation
Electrolux Home Products
Embassy Suites
Freightliner Custom Chassis
INA Bearings
LeCreuset of America
Lowe's
Michelin North America
North American Rescue
Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, LLC
Siemens Energy & Automation, Inc.
TD Bank
TE Connectivity
Verizon Wireless
Walgreens



Enduring Partnerships

A great return on investment

VR clients become taxpayers instead of tax consumers when they become employed, reducing their reliance on government disability benefits.

Many receive health insurance coverage through their new jobs and no longer rely on Medicaid.

Competitively employed clients pay back about \$4 in taxes for every \$1 spent on their rehabilitation.

Employed clients repay the cost of their vocational rehabilitation in less than 5 years.

South Carolina taxpayers receive more than a 19 percent annual rate of return on their investment.

Love Chevrolet has been an indispensable partner for more than 18 years

"A lot of VR clients have become part of our family," says a smiling Mark Williamson, Service Director at Love Chevrolet in Columbia.

More than 65 VR clients have been hired for diverse positions such as cashiers, customer service representatives, business development, housekeeping, lube technicians, sales, maintenance, and information technology. They receive competitive salaries, benefits and exceptional opportunities for advancement within the organization.



Bradley Green is one of those clients. Six years ago he was employed as a porter, parking cars for customers and driving the courtesy vehicle. His real interest

was in computers, however, and today he is the IT Supervisor for the Love Automotive organization, which includes four dealerships and two insurance agencies.

"He kept earning his way up," says Ben Hoover, Love Chevrolet General Manager. "I'm not sure what he can't do."



Wendell Thurmond, a Swansea High School student, wanted to become a mechanic. Working with Wendell's transition counselor, Nasser Sartip, a VR Vocational Assessment and Career Specialist, arranged a job shadow for Wendell at one of Love's Quick Lube locations. After two weeks of training, Wendell moved to the Love Chevrolet dealership, and now he has his own service bay at Love Buick GMC.

Francis Looper began as a receptionist 11 years ago. Now

VR offers business owners the opportunity for a tremendous relationship. You're stacking the deck in your favor for success. That's what we've had: a lot of success.

—Ben Hoover, General Manager, Love Chevrolet

the Business Development Manager, she manages Love's websites and all internet correspondence, assigns customers to salespeople, makes service appointments, and handles online advertising.



"She coaches my entire sales team each morning," adds Hoover. "She has their utmost respect."

"When we get a client from VR we know that this is where that person wants to be," adds Williamson. "When we have a job opening, sometimes I don't even post an ad; I call Nasser first."

Sartip's goal is not simply finding someone a job. "I want to make sure the employer is happy with who they hire and I want to make sure the client is happy with their job."

He keeps in regular contact with clients and is always ready to help them grow and advance in their careers. And he's there to help if a client is having difficulty.

"People are our most important asset," says Hoover. "Nasser gives them advice and guidance, so we're able to retain people and help them grow within the company."

Love works closely with VR clients to provide accommodations they may need, or to adjust schedules so they can keep a recurring medical appointment.

Sartip says that the enthusiasm and work ethic of Bradley, Wendell, Frances and other VR clients resulted in their success. "All I did was open the door for them to get a job. They made these opportunities."

For Hoover, the benefits of the partnership with VR extend far beyond Love Chevrolet, encompassing families, communities and taxpayers statewide.

"VR offers business owners the opportunity for a tremendous relationship," he says. "You're stacking the deck in your favor for success. That's what we've had: a lot of success."



State Agency of Vocational Rehabilitation

The South Carolina State Agency of Vocational Rehabilitation board sets policy under which the Vocational Rehabilitation Department operates. The members, appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the South Carolina Senate, serve seven-year terms.



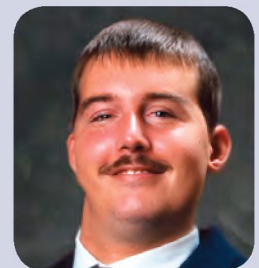
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3rd District



Joseph A. Thomas
Conway
7th District



Ira L. Banks
N. Charleston
1st District



Felicia W. Johnson
VR Interim Commissioner
Board Secretary

Disability Determination Services

dds.scvrd.net

Quality and timely decisions

"DDS employees realize that each of the many thousands of claims received by our offices is of vital importance in the life of the person who submitted it. We are proud of the conscientious and dedicated efforts of our staff to get it right."

—Shirley Jarrett, DDS Director

Responsive, timely and cost-effective services

VR's Disability Determination Services (DDS) unit processes Social Security Disability Insurance claims as well as Supplemental Security Income claims for the Social Security Administration.



You may be eligible to receive benefits from these programs when a physical or mental impairment prevents you from performing any type of work for a sustained

period of time. Highly-trained DDS employees carefully and objectively evaluate medical and vocational factors in making the decision whether documentation meets Social Security guidelines for allowance of benefits.

SC DDS's decisional accuracy surpassed regional and national averages last year. With offices in West Columbia, Charleston and Greenville, the unit handled more than 76,000 claims for SSA.

DDS also processes disability retirement claims for the South Carolina Public Employee Benefit Authority and Medicaid disability claims.

Find out more or apply for SSI or SSDI at your local Social Security Administration office, or at ssa.gov.

VR Overview is a free publication of the SC Vocational Rehabilitation Department. Requests for copies may be sent to:

Public Information / Outreach
P.O. Box 15
West Columbia, SC 29171-0015

Or contact us at 803-896-6500 or info@scvrd.net.

Electronic copies are available at publications.scvrd.net.

In accordance with federal and state law, the SC Vocational Rehabilitation Department does not discriminate against any race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age or disability in employment or in provision of services. The SC Vocational Rehabilitation Department printed 10,000 copies of *VR Overview*. Money earned by the department from outsource agreements with employers paid for the printing. The total cost of printing this publication was \$4,988.00, or about \$0.50 per copy.



The *VR Overview* received a Notable State Documents Award from the SC State Library.

VR Offices

offices.scvrd.net

Aiken

Serving Aiken, Barnwell and Edgefield counties

855 York St. N.E.
Aiken, SC 29801
803-641-7630 (Office/TDD)
800-861-9410 (Toll free)

Anderson

3001 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Anderson, SC 29625
864-224-6391 (Office/TDD)

Beaufort

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747 Robert Smalls Parkway
Beaufort, SC 29906
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Rock Hill, SC 29732
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Walterboro, SC 29488
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888-577-3549 (Toll free)

Williamsburg*

405 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue
Kingstree, SC 29556
843-354-5252 (Office)

*This office has multiple locations.
See offices.scvrd.net for details.



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