# Vocational Rehabilitation Services Manual Section C-900

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## Notes on the Manual

On October 1, 2017, Texas Workforce Commission’s Blind Services Division and Rehabilitation Services Division combined to create a single designated state unit (DSU) to administer the vocational rehabilitation program for Texans with disabilities.

The combined Vocational Rehabilitation Services Manual (VRSM) was initially published on October 1, 2017. The latest update to this manual is reflected in the chapters below.

Please note that VRSM includes links to information that is intended to provide additional decision-making supports to VR staff. Some of this information may not be available to individuals who are accessing the VRSM outside of TWC's firewall. Copies of materials that cannot be accessed directly through links can be made available upon request.

Substantive revisions to the content are noted in the VRSM List of Revisions. Any printed versions may not contain the latest policy changes.

If you have any questions about VRSM content, please contact the TWC Vocational Rehabilitation Division Policy Team at state office by sending an email message to vrsm.support@twc.texas.gov.

## Manual Overview

The VR Services Manual:

* helps ensure VR customers receive quality services to assist them in achieving successful competitive integrated employment outcomes as a result of their participation in vocational rehabilitation services.;
* helps to ensure taxpayer funds are spent wisely and each purchase paid for with public funds represents full value to the taxpayer; and
* provides published policies and procedures for maintaining compliance with federal and state laws, statutes, and rules or regulations.

The latest update to this manual is reflected in the chapters below. Any printed versions may not contain the latest policy changes.

# Vocational Rehabilitation Services Manual C-900: Intensive Work Preparation and Life Skills Training

## Introduction

Intensive Work Preparation and Life Skills Training (IWPLST) is designed to assist in developing practical life skills to increase a customer's social capacity and prepare for the transition to work and independence. Customers receive structured and nonstructured therapeutic intervention each day while participating in the service.

IWPLST includes Life Skills Training, Work Readiness Training, Work Experience, Therapeutic Structure Activities, Community Integration, and Behavior Plans.

IWPLST is geared toward individuals with disabilities, including anxiety disorders, autism, intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), learning disabilities, major depression, mood or thought disorders, schizophrenia, or brain injury.

IWPLST is a contracted service. For more information about this service and related provider requirements, refer to the Vocational Rehabilitation Standards for Providers Manual (VR-SFP) Chapter 23: Intensive Work Preparation and Life Skills Training.

## C-901: Legal Authority

Each facility must obtain and maintain a Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services Assisted Living Facility License. For more information, see <https://www.hhs.texas.gov/providers/long-term-care-providers/assisted-living-facilities-alf/how-become-alf-provider>.

Facilities must be compliant with all rules, laws, codes, and ordinances outlined in:

* [Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Part 1, Chapter 46: Contracting to Provide Assisted Living and Residential Care Services](https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac%24ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=4&ti=40&pt=1&ch=46);
* [Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Part 1, Chapter 49: Contracting for Community Care Services](https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac%24ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=4&ti=40&pt=1&ch=49); and
* [Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Part 1, Chapter 92: Licensing Standards for Assisted Living Facilities](https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac%24ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=4&ti=40&pt=1&ch=92).

## C-902: Training Programs Offered

The IWPLST program includes the following services, each defined in the VR-SFP:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Service** | **References in the VR-SFP** |
| Orientation and Assessment | * 23.4.1: Service Description
* 23.8: Fee Table–Assessment Week
 |
| Structured Interventions | * 23.5.1: Life Skills Training
* 23.5.2: Work Readiness Training
* 23.5.3: Therapeutic Structure Activities
* 23.5.4: Community Integration
* 23.5.5: Behavior Management
* 23.8: Fee Table–Daily Residential and Structured Intervention day rate
 |
| Caregiver Support Training | * 23.6: Caregiver Support Training
* 23.8: Fee Table–Caregiver Support Training
 |

## C-903: Pre-Application Considerations

To be referred to IWPLST, the customer must have completed the Berkman Assessment and a psychological evaluation within the last five years or sooner, if the customer's circumstances have significantly changed.

### C-903-1: Who Can Be Referred?

Eligible customers include those who:

* are referred by a VR staff member;
* have a diagnosis of anxiety disorders, autism, IDD, learning disabilities, major depression, mood or thought disorders, schizophrenia, brain injury, and/or visual impairment;
* have a permanent residence (placement at a facility for IWPLST cannot be used as a permanent residence, which is a "normal living expense" not covered by VR);
* can move about independently or with personal attendant services;
* can travel approximately one-and-a-half miles per day (walking or traveling with the aid of an assistive device or wheelchair is acceptable);
* can perform daily personal care (such as toileting, hygiene, dressing, and feeding) independently or with personal attendant services;
* are willing and able to attend scheduled classes;
* can control their own behavior (not injurious to self or others, nondestructive of property);
* can evacuate a building with or without assistance once oriented;
* have stable health; and
* can independently manage health and medication.

## C-904: Individualized Plan for Employment Requirements

IWPLST services must be included on the individualized plan for employment (IPE).

Contact between the customer and the VR counselor must be maintained every two weeks.

Staffing with the customer, the case manager, and the VR counselor must occur every 28 days.

No more than three months of service for IWPLST can be listed on the IPE or on an IPE Amendment. For each additional three-month period, manager review and approval is required and an IPE Amendment must be completed.

## C-905: Admissions Process

The process for admission to IWPLST is as follows:

* VR staff sends a referral (using Form VR3386, Intensive Work Preparation and Life Skills Training Referral) service authorization. Documentation that will prepare the contractor to work with the customer, such as medical or psychological reports, school records, and Birkman results, accompany the referral.
* The IWPLST provider conducts the assessments within the first seven days of the admission.
* The IWPLST case manager contacts the customer's VR counselor and reviews the assessment results and recommendations.
* If the assessment does not recommend attendance in the IWPLST program, the case manager and the VR counselor inform the customer and his or her legally authorized representative of the results. The VR counselor works with the customer to identify and set up future services.
* If the assessment recommends IWPLST, upon completion of the seven-day assessment period, the IWPLST interdisciplinary team drafts the Form VR3391, IWPLST Staffing Report.
* The customer's VR employment goal and discharge status are identified. When the customer's discharge plan is to return home with family, the Form VR3391, IWPLST Staffing Report and Form VR3390, IWPLST Family and Caregiver Support Training Plan must be completed.
* Form VR3387, Intensive Work Preparation and Life Skills Training Inventory (PDF), is completed at the entrance and at the conclusion of the customer's participation in IWPLST so that entrance and exit scores can be compared.

For more information, see VR-SFP Chapter 23: Intensive Work Preparation and Life Skills Training.

### C-905-1 Referral Packet Required Information:

* General physical information (or comparable documentation) from a medical professional within the past 12 months that includes TB test results within the past 12 months.
* Special circumstances information. If a customer meets one or more of the following criteria, he or she must also submit the information indicated below.

### C-905-2: Minors or Customers with Legal Guardians

If the customer is under age 18 or has a legal guardian, the VR counselor submits:

* legal guardianship papers (if applicable);
* VR2050, CCRC Parent or Guardian Consent Form; and
* VR2051, CCRC Medical Authorization Form.

### C-905-3: Probation or Parole

If the customer is on parole or probation, the VR counselor submits:

* the name, address, and phone number of the parole or probation officer; and
* court documents indicating conditions of parole or probation.

### C-905-4: Substance or Alcohol Abuse

If the customer has had a substance or alcohol issue at any time in the past, the VR counselor submits the Substance Use Contract found on the Substance Use Disorders Intranet page.

### C-905-5: HIV or AIDS

If the customer has an HIV or AIDS diagnosis, the VR counselor contacts the facility admissions coordinator before submitting any referral information to ensure protection of confidential information as mandated by federal law.

For additional information on protection of HIV information, see VRSM A-206-4: Release of Customer Records and Information.

### C-905-6: Mental Health or Behavioral Health Diagnosis

If the customer has a mental health diagnosis, the VR counselor submits a mental health stability statement from the customer's mental health provider stating that the customer:

* is stable;
* can manage his or her mental health issues independently; and
* can participate in an intensive rehabilitation training program.

### C-905-7: Customers without a Permanent Residence

If the customer does not have a permanent residence, the VR counselor submits written documentation from the residential provider or family member that includes:

* the customer's name;
* address;
* phone number; and
* a statement that the customer can return to this residence at any time.

### C-905-8: Criminal Background Checks for IWPLST

Participation in IWPLST requires that a criminal background check (CBC) be completed before referral to an IWPLST provider. The VR counselor completes the Form VR1510, Request for Computerized Criminal History (CCH) Search, and sends it to the regional point of contact before running the CBC. The CBC results are not to be released and must be stored following the procedures noted in VRSM B-405: Criminal Background Checks, Obtaining, Maintaining, and Releasing CBC Results.

## C-906: Intensive Work Preparation and Life Skills Training Program Details

See VR-SFP Chapter 23: Intensive Work Preparation and Life Skills Training for additional details and provider requirements for IWPLST.

IWPLST provides intensive and comprehensive short-term VR training for adults and youth transitioning to an adult program.

IWPLST includes:

* Life Skills Training,
* Work Readiness Training,
* Work Experience,
* Therapeutic Structure Activities,
* Community Integration, and
* Behavior Plans.

All customers participating in IWPLST must have a discharge plan. This will provide the foundation for customizing training to meet customers' unique post-discharge needs throughout their participation in IWPLST.

The discharge plan must identify:

* where the customer will live and work after completion of IWPLST;
* who will receive the Caregiver Support Discharge Training; and
* specific supports that will be necessary for maintaining the skills gained in IWPLST.

For a customer to be eligible and remain eligible for IWPLST, the customer must:

* not have a history of extreme violent or sexual criminal offenses;
* not abuse drugs or alcohol before or while participating in IWPLST;
* be able to engage in therapeutic activity during the assessment period and when participating in the residential program, for a minimum of 12 hours each day;
* have a discharge plan identified and available at the beginning of and throughout IWPLST;
* manage daily personal care, such as bathing and/or hygiene, dressing, and toileting;
* attend and participate in classroom instruction, as required;
* demonstrate measurable progress toward goals and/or objectives in the IPP.
* be able to transfer skills from the training environment to the discharge setting that is identified on the discharge plan;
* be willing to proactively set and reach goals for a successful program exit and long-term self-sufficiency; and
* have family or caregivers who actively participate in Caregiver Support Discharge Training when the customer's discharge plan is to return home to the family.

#### Orientation and Assessment

Before admission into IWPLST, the customer must complete the seven-day Orientation and Assessment at the IWPLST facility to determine the appropriateness of IWPLST for the customer.

Assessments include:

* Environmental Work Assessment (see VR-SFP Chapter 4: Employment Assessments, 4.5 Environmental Work Assessment);
* Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales;
* Behavior Assessment System for Children (for customers ages 25 and younger);
* the Form VR3387, Intensive Work Preparation and Life Skills Training Inventory (PDF); and
* other assessments as deemed appropriate and necessary.

The assessment must identify the customer's life skills, social skills, community integration skills, vocational interests, barriers, strengths, motivators, and employment conditions. When IWPLST is deemed appropriate, the assessment results must identify goals, objectives, and interventions for the customer's IPP.

To be referred to IWPLST, the customer must have a:

* Birkman Assessment that was completed within the past 12 months; and
* psychological evaluation that was completed within the last five years.

If the customer's circumstances have significantly changed at any time since the completion of either assessment, the assessments must be repeated to provide current information.

The VR counselor completes Form VR3386, Intensive Work Preparation and Life Skills Training Referral (PDF), and a service authorization with any additional documentation that will assist the IWPLST program.

If the customer will be returning to live at the same location that he or she lived before participation in the program, the customer's caregivers will be expected to participate in monthly caregiver training to ensure that skills gained are not lost upon dismissal from the program. Form VR3390, IWPLST Family and Caregiver Support Training Plan will outline the intervention to be taught.

When a customer requires a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) and/or a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP), the VR counselor must monitor the customer plan and progress monthly, providing feedback as appropriate.

The IWPLST program presents a draft IPP, after the assessment for customers participating in the program. The IWPLST program presents the draft plan to the customer's team comprising the VR counselor, the case manager, other IWPLST staff members when appropriate, the customer, the customer's legally authorized representative, and any extended long-term support providers. In the meeting, the team reviews the plan and updates Form VR5163, Individualized Plan for Employment, indicating agreement with the plan.

The IWPLST interdisciplinary team routinely evaluates the customer's status and progress toward the IPP goals.

The case manager prepares Form VR3388, Intensive Work Preparation and Life Skills Training Program Plan and Monthly Report (PDF), 5 to 10 days before the end of the 28-day reporting period.

The case manager, the customer, the customer's legally authorized representative, and the VR counselor review the staffing report via either an in-person or teleconference meeting. The results of this meeting will determine whether VR will continue to authorize the customer in IWPLST or establish a discharge date before the end of the reporting period month.

When VR agrees to continue to authorize the customer in IWPLST, a service authorization for the upcoming month is issued before the last business day of the month.

Form VR3388, Intensive Work Preparation and Life Skills Training Program Plan and Monthly Report (PDF) is updated and submitted to the VR counselor no later than the fifth business day of the following month.

Form VR3387, Intensive Work Preparation and Life Skills Training Inventory (PDF) is completed at the conclusion of the customer's participation in IWPLST so that an entrance and exit score can be compared.

### C-906-1: Length of Intensive Work Preparation and Life Skills Training

The typical length of stay for residential services is three months. Attendance longer than three months requires approval from the VR manager. The customer must demonstrate progress toward goals to continue attendance in the program.

When a customer's circumstances indicate a length of stay longer than three months, the VR Supervisor must review the case each additional month the customer attends the program. A case note must be written by the VR manager that justifies the vocational need for the customer to continue in the program. This must be done before a service authorization is issued.

#### Absences from Residential Intensive Work Preparation and Life Skills Training

When a customer is absent from the program for any reason, no fees are to be paid.

#### Attendance Requirements

If the customer does not actively participate in the program and make significant progress toward goals established in the IPP, the customer will be discharged from the program.

## C-907: Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Responsibilities

The VR counselor or his or her designee must attend the monthly staffing meeting via phone conference or in person to:

* obtain updates on the customer's progress toward the goals and objectives identified in the customer's IPP and IPP Monthly Report;
* make a determination if the customer requires:
	+ another month of service from the IWPLST residential program;
	+ transfer to the IWPLST nonresidential program; or
	+ discharge from the IWPLST program;
* document the approval of the IWPLST program for each month in a ReHabWorks case note;
* ensure that the service authorization for the upcoming month is issued after the monthly staffing meeting in a timely manner and is not back-dated;
* review the IPP monthly updates, including the narrative report, before authorizing payment of invoice; and
* ensure that the customer is ready for entrance into the IWPLST residential program.

Note: If a service authorization for the upcoming month is not received by the IWPLST program by the end date of the current service authorization, IWPLST may stop services and discharge the customer.