# Vocational Rehabilitation Services Manual Section D-500

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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 D-500: Business Procedures for VR Staff

## Introduction

Texas Workforce Commission Vocational Rehabilitation (TWC-VR) staff must follow TWC business procedures. However, some TWC-VR business procedures do not have a TWC equivalent. Business procedures that apply specifically to TWC-VR were previously captured in the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) Business Procedures Manual (BPM), which was transferred into relevant sections throughout the Vocational Rehabilitation Services Manual (VRSM). The DARS BPM has been retired.

Staff members using the material covered in this chapter should address questions through their chain of management to VR executive management.

## D-501: Ethics Policy

All VR staff must adhere to the ethical standards stated in the [Code of Professional Ethics for Rehabilitation Counselors (PDF)](https://crccertification.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/2023-Code-of-Ethics.pdf) (the Code), the TWC Personnel Manual: Ethics and Standards of Conduct (PDF), and the TWC Ethics Policy, which are both located on the intranet.

The Code comprises the following six basic principles of ethical behavior:

* Autonomy: to honor the right to make individual decisions
* Beneficence: to do good to others
* Nonmaleficence: to do no harm to others
* Justice: to be fair and give equal justice to all
* Fidelity: to be loyal and keep promises
* Veracity: to be honest

VR counselors who violate the Code are subject to the actions defined by TWC performance management policies. If the VR counselor is certified through Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC), violations of the Code are also subject to CRCC action.

Solution-focused, respectful, nonexploitative, and empowering counseling relationships are built on high ethical standards. Understanding the principles listed in the Code is at the heart of the ethical decision-making process. The Code reflects the level of competency needed in professional relationships to promote and protect the spirit of caring and respect for individuals with disabilities.

High ethical standards also are involved in best-value purchasing and the wise use of funds. See VRSM D-200: Purchasing Goods and Services for additional information.

VR is committed to helping all staff make ethical decisions. It is essential that VR staff:

* adhere to the ethical standards stated in the Code as well as in all VR policy, procedure manuals, and all agency standards; and
* be accountable for those standards in the organization.

### D-501-1: Other Professional Codes of Ethics

Employees who work in a professional area with its own code of ethics (for example, counseling, legal, medical, or internal auditing) must abide also by the ethical conduct requirements of that professional field.

### D-501-2: Personal Relationships

Employees must exercise sound judgment in all relationships with customers and other employees by:

* displaying professional decorum; and
* refraining from personal involvement of any kind that would discredit or embarrass the agency or the individual involved.

Employees must not fraternize with or engage in personal relationships with customers. Employees must not attend social events for a customer unless it is part of their job duties, is included in the normal workday, and is approved in writing by the supervisor.

When dealing with customers, vendors, service providers, grantees, subrecipients, or other third parties doing business with TWC-VR, a TWC-VR employee, and his or her spouse or other individual with whom the employee cohabits, must not:

* provide personal loans of money or property, real or personal;
* benefit from contracts with TWC-VR or other state government entities that do business with TWC-VR (for example, bidding on TWC-VR office space);
* serve as a representative for active or former TWC-VR customers (except that employees may represent their own family members or customers with approval of the management chain pursuant to division policy);
* display or distribute advertisements for a vendor that suggest a TWC-VR preference for one vendor over another for personal business interests;
* lend his or her name in connection with any organization, facility, or vendor providing goods or services to TWC-VR or its customers;
* solicit or conduct business for any organization during TWC-VR work hours, except for voluntary, nonprofit, disability-related organizations (applicable to TWC-VR employees only); or
* attempt to evade or circumvent these restrictions by acting indirectly through someone else.

### D-501-3: Family Members as Customers

The term "family" includes one's:

* spouse;
* child;
* parent;
* grandparent;
* brother;
* sister;
* cousin;
* aunt;
* uncle;
* niece;
* nephew;
* any other individual related by:
	+ kinship;
	+ adoption; or
	+ marriage (such as a step relative, for example, stepchild, stepparent);
* all related individuals who are dependent upon the employee or employee's family member for personal care or services on a continuing basis; and
* all individuals living in the same household with the employee or with an employee's family member (regardless of kinship).

TWC-VR employees must not:

* directly provide or influence the provision of services for any member of their own families as defined above;
* access their own customer records or those of family members; and
* gain access to any customer records for which they do not have an official state business need.

For more information on ethics, refer to the TWC Personnel Manual, 1.9 Ethics Policy (PDF) and the TWC Ethics Policy, which are located on the intranet. Also refer to the [2023 Code of Professional Ethics for Rehabilitation Counselors (PDF)](https://crccertification.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/2023-Code-of-Ethics.pdf).

## D-502: Accessibility

For information about TWC's accessibility policy, refer to the [TWC Accessibility Policy](https://www.twc.texas.gov/agency/twc-accessibility-policy).

## D-503: Office of General Counsel

The TWC Office of General Counsel (OGC) provides legal and ethical advice to TWC-VR staff in the performance of their duties. Refer to the TWC Office of General Counsel intranet page for more information.

OGC does not provide advice to:

* Individual employees for personal matters (for example, wills or divorces); or
* Any individual or organization outside of TWC.

Advise or legal opinions prepared by OGC must not be released outside of TWC-VR without the specific consent of the General Counsel.

### D-503-1: Access to TWC Office of General Counsel

Depending on the situation, TWC-VR staff may contact OGC directly or through the chain of management.

OGC can be contacted through one of the following options:

* Legal Request Portal at https://twcgov.service-now.com/ogc
* Phone: 512-463-7902
* Email: twcogc@twc.texas.gov

#### Direct Access

TWC-VR staff has direct access to OGC staff for guidance about:

* an urgent legal situation (for example, a law enforcement official requesting information);
* receipt of a lawsuit or subpoena involving TWC-VR or its employees;
* notice of involvement in an administrative hearing;
* questions about subrogation;
* questions regarding subpoenas and releases for customer records and information; and
* requests for release of personnel information.

When a customer, a customer's representative, or a customer's lawyer requests that TWC-VR staff verbally discuss a customer's case with a lawyer, the TWC-VR employee:

* notifies the employee's immediate supervisor; and
* contacts OGC before speaking with a customer's lawyer.

#### Access through the Chain of Management

TWC-VR employees must contact OGC through the chain of management for:

* an interpretation of a law, regulation, or executive order;
* a legal opinion;
* assistance with an employee grievance, disciplinary action, or other action involving an employee;
* assistance in drafting or interpreting contracts;
* assistance relating to the Texas Register; or
* legal questions regarding policy.

### D-503-2: Texas Public Information Act

The OGC is the TWC administrator for the Texas Public Information Act. The Act requires that TWC-VR provide access to information that is collected and retained during the conduce of TWC-VR business.

When a member of the public submits a written request for public information to TWC-VR, TWC-VR must release the information to the extent provided by law.

A TWC-VR employee who receives a request for public information must coordinate with OGC through the chain of management.

For additional information, refer to the TWC OGC Open Records intranet page and the TWC Open Records Unit Manual (Word).

## D-504: Inventory Control for Customers

Refer to VR Guidance Memorandum 20-01: Customer Inventory Tracking Requirements, which is located on the VRD Guidance Memorandum intranet page.

Additional resources include the VR Customer Inventory Tracking List and VR Customer Inventory Points of Contact (POC) and Office Profile (Word); both on located on the TWC SharePoint.

## D-505: Cash Receipts

### D-505-1: Refunds

When receiving a refund from a vendor or customer, the unit purchasing specialist or the designated VR staff member for that office location must:

* document the receipt of the check or money order in a case note in RHW;
* complete the TWC1770, Cash Receipts and Returned Warrants Log;
* complete the TWC1769, Cash Receipts Transmittal Memo;
* e-mail the completed TWC1769 and scanned checks or money order to TWC Revenue and Trust Management (revenuetrust.mgmt@twc.texas.gov) within two business days after the mail was opened or the check was hand delivered to the office (copy the Regional Director, Deputy Division Director of Field Services Delivery, and VR Division Director);
* make a paper copy of the check or money order and the TWC1769;
* file the copies in the case file; and
* mail the original check or money order and the TWC1769 to:

Texas Workforce Commission
Revenue and Trust Management
PO Box 322
Austin, Texas 78767

For questions, contact the TWC Revenue and Trust Management Depository section at 512-463-2611.

## D-506: Payment Research

### D-506-1: Researching a Payment

"Warrant Number" and "Payment Number" are used interchangeably to mean warrant number (nine digits) or direct deposit number (seven digits) for payment.

When a vendor contacts Texas Workforce Commission Vocational Rehabilitation Services (TWC-VRS) for payment status, the TWC-VRS staff member advises the vendor that the status of payments that the state makes to vendors may be checked on the Texas State Comptroller website at: <https://mycpa.cpa.state.tx.us/securitymp1portal/displayLoginUser.do>.

If the vendor insists that the staff member verify payment information, the TWC-VRS staff member performs the following actions in ReHabWorks (RHW), using information from the Service Authorization (SA):

1. In the horizontal menu bar, select Purchasing; then, from the left menu, select Purchasing and Search by SA Number. The Search by SA Number page opens.
2. Enter the SA number in the SA Number field and click Search. The SA Detail for: page opens.
3. Click on the Go to Receive/Pay Detail button for payment information. The SA Receive/Pay Detail page opens.
4. Under Payment Information, find the Voucher #; follow the column down to Warrant Information and find Warrant Date and Warrant #.
	* Payments by direct deposit are indicated by a seven-digit warrant number in the Warrant # field.
	* Payments by paper warrant are indicated by a nine-digit warrant number in the Warrant # field.

#### Payment by Direct Deposit

If the payment was made by direct deposit, the TWC-VRS staff member:

* provides the vendor with the direct deposit warrant number;
* provides the vendor with the date that the deposit was issued; and
* advises the vendor to contact the vendor's bank with the direct deposit information to locate the payment. If the vendor's bank cannot locate the payment, the vendor sends an inquiry to payables.rhwconsumers@twc.texas.gov and includes the SA, warrant number, and amount of the payment. The Accounting Payables unit can be reached directly at 512-463-1671, option 4.

Wire transfers from the Comptroller's office typically appear in a vendor's bank account approximately two business days from the warrant date.

#### Requesting a Warrant Cancellation

If a vendor does not receive a payment made via paper warrant and 30 or more days have passed since the warrant issue date, TWC-VRS staff member emails payables.rhwconsumers@twc.texas.gov to request a warrant cancellation. This message must include the:

* SA number;
* voucher number;
* voucher amount;
* warrant number; and
* reason for the warrant's cancellation.

The TWC-VRS office is responsible for reissuing any warrant that is requested to be canceled.

#### Determining Warrant Status

TWC Accounting can research the warrant through the Treasury to see whether the warrant has been cashed or is on hold.

If the warrant has been cashed, the TWC-VRS staff member:

* requests a copy of the cashed warrant if a copy is not readily available (It can take between seven and 10 days to receive.); and
* emails a copy to the individual that initiated the email request.

If the warrant has not been cashed, the TWC-VRS staff member:

* proceeds with warrant cancellation; or
* responds to the inquiry if the warrant is on hold.

If no payment was issued, the TWC-VRS staff member researches and assists with expediting payment. Payments must be reissued in accordance with the appropriate system of issuance:

* RHW; or
* Workforce Reporting Accounting and Procurement System (WRAPS).

#### Forgery Claims

If a payee claims forgery, the TWC-VRS staff member emails payables.rhwconsumers@twc.texas.gov, and RHW accountants will follow current Comptroller Forgery Notification Procedures.

### D-506-2: Payments Issued in Error

It may be necessary to recover state warrants or payments that were issued in error. Email payables.rhwconsumers@twc.texas.gov and request warrant cancellation.

If a warrant was issued:

* TWC Accounting retrieves the warrant before mailing and cancels the warrant through the Comptroller's office; or
* the issuing VR office contacts the vendor for return of the warrant before cashing.

If the vendor cashed the warrant, the issuing VR office requests a refund from the vendor, explaining that the funds were paid in error. Vendor contacts must be documented in the payment documentation, and each contact must be at least 30 days apart.

To show due diligence, the issuing VR office must give a vendor ample time to comply, using the following procedures:

* The first contact request may be made by phone.
* The second contact must be made in writing and sent via certified mail with tracked receipt.
* The third contact must be made in writing and sent via certified mail with tracked receipt.

Thirty days after the third notification has been sent, if the vendor does not respond with the requested refund, the issuing VR office:

* sends an email notification to payables.vendorholds@twc.texas.gov, including the vendor's tax identification number; and
* forwards documented contact attempts to payables.vendorholds@twc.texas.gov.

TWC Accounting proceeds with the vendor hold process.

If the payment was made by direct deposit and the date is six or fewer days ago, TWC Accounting:

* completes a callback request form; and
* submits the form to the Comptroller's office.

If the payment date is seven days ago, the issuing VR office requests a refund from the vendor, explaining that the funds were paid in error.

Vendor contacts must be documented in payment documentation and be at least 30 days apart. To show due diligence, the issuing VR office must give a vendor ample time to comply, using the following procedures:

* The first contact request may be made by phone.
* The second contact must be made in writing and sent via certified mail with tracked receipt.
* The third contact must be made in writing and sent via certified mail with tracked receipt.

Thirty days after the third notification has been sent, if the vendor does not respond with the requested refund, the issuing VR office:

* sends an email notification to payables.vendorholds@twc.texas.gov, including the vendor's tax identification number; and
* forwards documented contact attempts to payables.vendorholds@twc.texas.gov.

TWC Accounting proceeds with the Comptroller's vendor hold process.

### D-506-3: Reissuing a Warrant

A payment cannot be reissued to a vendor until:

* TWC VR receives the original warrant for cancellation; or
* the warrant cancellation is confirmed. Once a warrant is canceled, staff will see the Warrant Cancel Date on the SA directly under the Warrant # in RHW.

### D-506-4: Warrant Hold

#### Verification of a Customer Payee's Hold Status

VR staff members are required to verify a customer's hold status before making payments to the:

* customer;
* parent of the customer; or
* guardian of the customer.

Payments made to a customer who is on hold are kept and held by the Comptroller's office. This policy applies only to payments made using a Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) or a Texas Identification Number (TIN) that is based on a Social Security number. Payments made in whole or in part with federal funds may be returned to TWC-VR upon submitting the required support documentation.

The Texas Identification Number System (TINS) is the system of record for accessing customer hold information. Field staff members unable to access TINS may send an email to payables.vendorholds@twc.texas.gov mailbox with "RUSH Warrant Hold Status" in the subject line, provide the payee number, and ask if that payee number is on hold.

#### Vendor Payee's Hold Status

This hold policy does not apply to vendors. There is no need to verify vendor (provider) hold status. The system automatically checks the hold table and identifies payments issued to vendors, individuals, and entities that have outstanding state debts.

#### Payments Subject to Warrant Hold

Information about the held payment is recorded in TINS and a Notice of State Payments Held letter is mailed to the payee. This letter advises the [payee](https://fmx.cpa.state.tx.us/fmx/pubs/hold_guide/10-glossary.php#payee) that payment is being held by the Comptroller's office because of his or her debt to the state of Texas. The payee is advised upon receipt of this letter to contact The State of Texas Comptroller's office at 512-936-8138 for additional information.  The letter also notifies the payee that the held warrant will be offset (applied to the liability owed) 30 days after the issue date on the Notice of State Payments Held letter if:

* the debt is not paid; or
* the warrant is not released at the request of the paying or hold source agency.

#### Holding a Payment

When a payment is issued to a payee on hold, the following actions occur:

* A warrant is printed and held at the Comptroller's office.
* The Notice of State Payments Held letter is generated by the Comptroller's office and mailed to the payee.
* The PYWRNT and PYWTHD screens are updated in TINS.
* The TINS 6206 and 6204 held warrant registers are generated.

When a payment is made and on hold to a payee, who is also set up for direct deposit, the direct deposit instructions are overridden, and a warrant is generated instead. The direct deposit instructions remain in suspense until the hold record is released. Direct deposit resumes automatically when the payee is released from hold, as long as the direct deposit instructions have not been deleted by the custodial agency.

#### Procedure to Release a Held Warrant

To release a warrant on hold, a TWC-VRS staff member must complete Form1777, Held Warrant Release Request, and submit it to payables.vendorholds@twc.texas.gov for processing. Note that in the 1777 Approvals section, the requestor and approver must be two different VR staff members. When the released warrant is received, Revenue and Trust Management (RTM) mails the warrant to the address shown on the warrant unless a Special Handling request has been received before the release of the held warrant.

## D-507: Payment Scheduling, Prompt Payment, and Provider Invoicing

### D-507-1: Payment Scheduling

Texas Government Code §2155.382(d) authorizes the Comptroller to allow or require state agencies to schedule payments the Comptroller makes to a vendor. All payment transactions contain a calculated due date of 30 days, as documented by date stamps on all payment documentation, after the later of:

* date invoice received by the agency; or
* date goods and/or services received and/or completed.

#### Exemptions

Payments exempt from mandatory scheduling include:

* employee payments and/or reimbursements;
* customer maintenance payments and/or reimbursements;
* respite care reimbursements to parents and/or guardians of customers;
* Business Enterprises of Texas (BET) manager payments and/or reimbursements;
* payments made to other state agencies;
* vendor billings offering early payment discounts; and
* single invoices totaling $5,000 or less.

All other payments fall under mandatory prompt payment scheduling.

### D-507-2: Prompt Payment Act

#### Introduction

Texas Government Code, Chapter 2251, Prompt Payment Law, requires the state Comptroller's office to automatically compute and pay interest owed to vendors for late payments processed through the Uniform Statewide Accounting System (USAS).

Interest will not accrue for replacement of a warrant when the original warrant is lost or stolen. Payments reissued are:

* flagged as reissued; and
* exempt from accruing interest penalties.

TWC-VR must make every effort to avoid penalty payments. Vouchers that incur interest payments reduce the agency's available money for other purposes.

#### Deadline

The prompt payment clock begins on the later of the date:

* service performed;
* receipt of goods and/or required report received;
* a valid invoice received; or
* notification that payment by a third party (insurance carrier and/or Medicare) will not be made (for VR vouchers only).

Because this notification may occur verbally, communications with the vendor must be documented in the case record (include name of the individual spoken with and date contacted). The date payment confirmation is obtained will become the new invoice receipt date.

The payment processing period ends on the date the Comptroller mails or distributes payment.

#### Penalty for Exceeding 30 Days

The Comptroller automatically calculates interest penalty at current rate. The calculation begins on the date after payment is due, as noted above.

To verify payment due date, the Comptroller has a Prompt Payment Interest Calculator at <https://fmx.cpa.texas.gov/fm/usas/prompay/ppicalc.php>. This calculator computes the:

* payment due date; and
* amount of interest owed.

#### Payment Documentation

The office initiating payment maintains documentation for VR purchases in accordance with the published retention schedule. Documentation must include, at a minimum:

* WRAPS requisition number or service record information;
* service authorization number; and
* receipt information, including:
	+ packing slip date-stamped when received;
	+ receipt number entered into WRAPS or date receipt entered into customer system;
	+ if applicable, physician's report received and date-stamped upon receipt by the office;
	+ if applicable, Medical and Health Explanation of Benefits (EOB) date-stamped upon receipt by the office;
	+ documentation of requested services completed and accepted by TWC-VRS, including date of completion and acceptance;
	+ original vendor invoice date-stamped upon receipt by the office (if original is unavailable, the invoice of record must contain the statement "ORIGINAL INVOICE UNAVAILABLE");
	+ complete documentation on all disputed invoices; and
	+ payment voucher number.

Note:  This policy applies to all payment vouchers and includes both subsystem vouchers and purchase vouchers.

## D-508: Payment After Close of a Fiscal Year and Miscellaneous Claims

After the close of a fiscal year, Texas Workforce Commission has 23 months to process all payments for goods and services received during that state fiscal year. For example, goods and services provided during Fiscal Year 2019, which ended on August 31, 2019, must have been paid for by July 31, 2021, unless otherwise directed by Finance department staff. If payment is not processed within this time, the vendor must follow current Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts procedures regarding miscellaneous claims in order to receive payment.

Invoices for services to customers may arrive after the state fiscal year in which the purchase was authorized in RHW has ended. The procedure for paying these invoices differs depending on the amount of time that has elapsed since the end of the fiscal year in which the SA was issued.

* Invoices for SAs issued during the previous fiscal year may be paid in RHW through August 31 of the current fiscal year. These invoices must be authorized in RHW in sufficient time for the Comptroller to issue payment on or before August 31.
* For invoices for SAs issued during the year before the previous fiscal year, VR staff should send payment requests using the following procedures:
	+ Send a request for payment, along with a copy of the SA and the invoice, to VR.Budget@twc.texas.gov. The invoice should be signed, and the payment amount should match the payment requested on the invoice.
	+ Send a separate request for each invoice for which you are requesting payment.
	+ Include the following information for each payment request:
		- SA Number
		- Cost Center
		- Approval to Pay
		- Customer Name
		- RHW Case ID
		- Amount to Pay
		- Invoice Number
		- Reason for late payment request
* Any invoice received for services and/or goods authorized before the timeframes listed above may be processed by the Comptroller's office only upon submission of a Miscellaneous Claims application.
	+ It is the vendor's responsibility to submit the Miscellaneous Claim Application to the Comptroller's office. (Instructions for completion and submittal of the application are contained on the form.)
	+ Once the Comptroller's office receives the application, it will contact the TWC Finance Division for approval of the claim.
	+ Claimants can contact the Comptroller's office regarding all requests for miscellaneous claims at misc.claims@cpa.state.tx.us or 800-531-5441, ext. 3-4724.misc.claims@cpa.state.tx.us

## D-509: Texas Identification Numbers and Vendor Maintenance

### D-509-1: Overview

Entities (that is, sole owner, individual recipient, partnership, corporation or other organization) billing TWC for goods or services or that receive payment for refunds or public assistance must have a Texas Identification Number (TIN). The State Comptroller requires the TIN on requests from any party receiving payment from the State of Texas. The TIN provides information about:

* who is to receive payment;
* where to send the state warrant; or
* what bank account to deposit funds.

An SA and a payment cannot be processed until the payee is established in WRAPS. WRAPS interfaces the vendor file with:

* Comptroller TINS System;
* RHW; and
* HCATS.

An active TIN is required for:

* IRS reporting;
* procurement reporting;
* contract award;
* award of SA's; and
* payment processing.

### D-509-2: Basis of Identification Number

TINs for individual recipients (customers) are established by using random numbers assigned by the Comptroller, when based on a Social Security number (SSN).

TINs for sole owners may be established using either a:

* random number assigned by the Comptroller, when based on an SSN; or
* Federal Employers Identification Number (FEIN).

TINs for partnerships, corporations, or professional associations are established using the FEIN assigned by the IRS for tax purposes.

### D-509-3: TIN Structure

Each 14-digit TIN has the following components:

* Prefix (digit 1)
* Payee number (digits 2–10)
* Check digit (digit 11)
* Mail code (digits 12–14)

The prefix identifies the payee number type:

* 1 = FEIN issued by the IRS.
* 7 = a random number assigned by the Comptroller to be used instead of the payee's SSN when the TIN is based on an SSN.
* 3 = a number the Comptroller assigns for special purposes or temporarily when there is no FEIN or SSN.

The check digit is calculated from the TIN type and payee number. This number is used to verify the correct TIN has been entered.

The mail code is assigned by the Comptroller to identify the payment location. The mail code allows the payee to receive payments at different locations for paper warrants or into different bank accounts for electronic payments.

### D-509-4: Inquiring on a Provider

To inquire whether a provider is active in WRAPS, VR staff should email VR RHW Provider Services at vr.rhw.providerservices@twc.texas.gov.

Provide the vendor TIN and the complete name of the vendor.

## D-510: Retrieving and Disseminating Criminal History Record Information

VR has the authority to obtain customers' computerized criminal history (CCH) records from the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) for the purpose of employment planning (Texas Government Code §411.117). VR must adhere to the requirements contained in this section (VRSM D-510), in VRSM B-405: Computerized Criminal History Checks, in TWC Privacy Manual Appendix G - Criminal History Record Information (CHRI) Proper Access, Use and Dissemination Procedures, and in the TWC Privacy Incident and Response Plan; the last three resources are on the TWC SharePoint.

### D-510-1: Security

Confidentiality of CCH records is required. Only authorized individuals with DPS Secure Site Access can run a search for records. Authorized individuals without DPS Secure Site Access can only request, obtain, and view CCH records for the purpose of vocational rehabilitation and employment planning purposes. All authorized individuals must complete and maintain a valid security level training certificate from the Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Security Awareness Online Training System.

The term "authorized individual" includes:

* Caseload Carrying VR Staff including Unit Support Coordinators, Transition Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, and Caseload Covering Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors.
* Management Unit Staff including Vocational Rehabilitation Supervisors and Vocational Rehabilitation Managers.
* Regional Office Staff including Regional Directors, Deputy Regional Directors, Program Support Managers, Regional Program Specialists, Regional Transition Specialist, Regional Blind Services Specialists, Regional Program Improvement Specialists, Employment Assistance Specialists, and Regional Points of Contact Staff for CCH.
* State Office Staff including the Program Policy and Support (PPS) Program Manager, designated State Office Program Specialist(s) for CCH, and the Director of TWC Business Operations.

An authorized individual must ensure that:

* records cannot be viewed by others, either in hard copy or while visible on the computer screen (hard copies of CCH results obtained prior to 07/01/2022 must be kept in a confidential and secure location); and
* all electronic copies are destroyed by:
	+ deleting them from the Inbox/Sent folder as applicable; and
	+ deleting them from the Deleted folder

Refer to VRSM D-307: Processing Closed Case Files for more information about hard copy destruction requirements.

It is administratively prohibited to access the DPS secure site via a mobile device (for example, a smartphone or tablet).

Employee violations on protecting the confidential nature of customer records are grounds for appropriate disciplinary action. Unauthorized use of the CCH system may result in disciplinary action and/or criminal penalties as outlined in the TWC Privacy Manual and the TWC Personnel Manual, which are both located on the intranet.

### D-510-2: Roles and Responsibilities

DPS account supervisors are responsible for ensuring that DPS Secure Site users are using the site appropriately. Periodic monitoring is required to assess request patterns.

Requestors are VR staff members who request CCH searches. Requestors are responsible for following and complying with VRSM B-405: Computerized Criminal History Checks.

Secure site users ([Points of Contact for Computerized Criminal History Reports](https://intra.twc.texas.gov/intranet/vrs/docs/criminal-history-request-contacts.docx)) are responsible for ensuring that a request is appropriate (for example, confirming that a CCH search request from field personnel is for a legitimate vocational need for a customer assigned to the individual's caseload). Secure site users are responsible for retrieving criminal history record information (CHRI) for requestors from the assigned region. Secure site users must maintain the VR1510, Request for Computerized Criminal History (CCH) Search, as an auditable file for the purpose of DPS monitoring. The VR1510 must include the name of the requestor, the date of the request, and the justification for the request. Customers must have an open case for a CCH search to be run and been determined eligible for VR services. CCH searches must not be run for customers in initial contact or application. Refer to Points of Contact for Computerized Criminal History Reports located on the intranet.

State office staff:

* serve as a backup to the regional points of contact responsible for CCH searches, oversight, and monitoring;
* provide statewide monthly activity reports due to the TWC accounting department;
* act as a conduit for information and support as needed by other authorized DPS system users; and
* process all fingerprint-based CCH requests directly with field staff.

### D-510-3: Receiving Requests

The requestor fills out the VR1510, Request for Computerized Criminal History Search and sends it to the Regional or State Points of Contact for Computerized Criminal History Reports via encrypted email using the subject line <ENCRYPT> Background Check Request.

A copy of the VR1510 must be kept in a confidential and secure location by the secure site user who retrieved the CHRI from the DPS secure site and must be maintained for audit purposes for seven years after the case is closed. The VR1510 must include the name of the requestor, the request date, and the justification for the request.

For more information, refer to VRSM B-405: Computerized Criminal History Checks.

### D-510-4: Conducting a Search

Note: A CCH search must only be conducted through TWC-issued computers. It is administratively prohibited to access the DPS secure site via a mobile device (for example, a smartphone or tablet).

Staff should search all known names and date of birth first, then use the customer's Social Security, Texas driver license, or Texas ID card number to narrow the results. VR staff may need identifying characteristics such as tattoos or eye color to narrow the results.

Once VR staff obtains a record, if there has been no disposition (for example, the case is still in court and no decision has been reached for months) or the customer does not agree with the information on the record, staff refers the customer to the DPS Crime Records Service site to obtain an error resolution form using the "[Help Us Help You](https://www.dps.texas.gov/sites/default/files/documents/administration/crime_records/pages/helpushelpyou.pdf)" link.

If the customer insists that he or she has a criminal record but no record is returned, it is possible that a local arresting authority has not reported the record to DPS. The customer must be directed back to the local authority. If the crime was in another state, the customer will need to be processed via the fingerprint-based CCH method in order to retrieve the record.

Fingerprint search requests must be directed to the State Office Program Specialist(s) for CCH for instructions on that process. These records are subject to the same security procedures and confidentiality restrictions as CCH searches.

### D-510-5: Responding to a Request

All requests made to secure site users must be handled within three business days.

Secure site users should cut and paste the criminal record, or the search result showing that no criminal record was found, into a blank Word document. The document must then be attached and forwarded to the requestor in an email with the subject line <ENCRYPT> CCH Response to ensure that it will be encrypted automatically.

Secure site users should include the following message in the email:

"The CCH record you requested is attached and is for vocational rehabilitation (VR) planning purposes only. The VR counselor can only discuss the fingerprint-based CCH results with the customer. After discussing fingerprint-based CCH results, the VR counselor must immediately destroy the results (for example, deleting them from email and then deleting them from the Deleted folder in the email application, such as Outlook) immediately after the criminal history record has served its immediate purpose. VR may release the fingerprint-based CCH results to the customer or customer’s representative if there is a valid release or written request prior to the destruction of the fingerprint-based CCH results by the VR counselor. The name-based CCH results are not to be discussed or printed for any reason. For information about release of these records, refer to VRSM A-208-2: Release of Customer Criminal History Records. The name-based or fingerprint-based CCH result must not to be stored in a paper case file or the customer’s virtual case file under any circumstances."

A response template must instruct the requestor to use the same process to delete the criminal history information from the electronic system.

### D-510-6: Fingerprint Procedures

If verification cannot be made based on a customer's name, the secure site user instructs the VR staff to submit a completed and signed VR1510, using the standard encryption method, to the State Office Program Specialist(s) for CCH to complete a fingerprint search request.

The state office program specialist(s) for CCH reviews the VR1510 and the case to ensure that all policies have been followed.

VR staff helps the customer schedule the fingerprinting appointment at <https://uenroll.identogo.com/> using the service code provided by the state office program specialist.

VR staff sends an email to the state program specialist with the following information:

* The date and location of the fingerprinting appointment
* The customer's name
* The case ID
* The purpose of fingerprinting (for example, "for customer's practicum")

VR staff directs the customer to take a photo ID and Social Security number in addition to the dates and information on any arrest history when the customer goes to the fingerprinting appointment. Please refer to the list of [acceptable forms of identification for fingerprinting by DPS](https://www.dps.texas.gov/sites/default/files/documents/administration/crime_records/docs/proveidforfingerprinting.pdf).

VR staff informs the customer that a fee (approximately $15–$25) may be required at the time of the appointment. VR pays the balance of the cost at the State Office.

Once the report is obtained from the secure site, the state office program specialist follows the procedures in VRSM D-510-5: Responding to a Request.

### D-510-7: Procedure for CCH Verification Log

The CCH verification log is required by the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to track CCH requests. The log should be maintained by regional and state points of contact for conducting the initial CCH from Audit to Audit.

Regional points of contact (found on the intranet) keep a copy of the VR1510, Request for Computerized Criminal History (CCH) Search received from requestors in a confidential and secure location. Regional points of contact are also responsible for maintaining the CCH verification log. Regional points of contact submit their monthly CCH verification logs to the State Office Program Specialist(s) for CCH.

When conducting a CCH, the CCH verification log should contain the following information elements:

* Name of customer
* Purpose of CCH
* Reference# (ReHabWorks Case ID)
* Check whether CCH Printed/Not Printed
* Date Printed
* Initials of person conducting the CCH

If the CCH is printed, the log must be updated with the following information when the CCH is destroyed.

* Date Destroyed
* Initials of the person who destroyed the CCH.

The State Office Program Specialist(s) for CCH is responsible for maintenance and retention of monthly CCH logs in a confidential and secure location from Audit to Audit. Once the audit has occurred, logs can be destroyed. Any log moving forward from the day of the audit needs to be kept until the next audit.

## D-511: Systems Access—Processing of IT1260 Forms

Hiring managers, supervisors, or other delegated staff members are responsible for completing and submitting IT1260 Information Technology Access Service Request for TxROCS and ReHabWorks to VR RHW Support to add, update, or remove access to VR systems (such as ReHabWorks (RHW), RHW Reports, and TxROCS). The VR RHW Support team in VR Program Operations department is responsible for reviewing submitted IT1260 forms and ensuring that submitted user role requests are accurate and appropriate.

To review current user role assignments in RHW, the staff member selects the Admin tab, selects User Access, and selects User Search.

### D-511-1: Access Control Review

VR RHW Support processes IT1260 forms submitted for new hires and new users, users transferring to a different position or role, interns, volunteers, and temporary employees. For new users and user updates, VR RHW Support reviews and verifies the identified approving manager or supervisor and the user roles selected for the user.

Hiring managers, supervisors, or other delegated staff members send IT1260s for terminations to VR RHW Support to maintain caseload and organizational structure and confirm inactivation.

### D-511-2: Adding New Users Employee User Type

VR RHW Support reviews and compares user roles requested on the IT1260 with the approved user role documents (RHW and TxROCS approved lists).

When corrections are needed, VR RHW Support returns the IT1260 to the staff member who submitted the request, noting the necessary corrections. Once the corrected IT1260 is received, it is submitted to Access and Identity Provisioning (AIP). AIP notifies VR RHW Support when the IT1260 has been processed, after which VR RHW Support verifies the completion of the update in RHW.

Interns, Volunteer, Temporary, and Contractor User Types

Interns, Volunteers, Temporary, and Contractor employees are assigned a unique user type. VR RHW Support reviews the requested user role access and verifies that the correct user roles are included on the IT1260, based on the approved user role documents.

When corrections are needed, VR RHW Support returns the IT1260 to the staff member who submitted the request, noting the necessary corrections. Once the corrected IT1260 is received, it is submitted to AIP. AIP notifies VR RHW Support when the IT1260 has been processed, at which point VR RHW Support verifies the completion of the update in RHW.

### D-511-3: User Transfer/Updating Existing Users

To ensure that old user roles are removed for transferred employees, an IT1260 is submitted to VR RHW Support. VR RHW Support reviews current user role access and verifies that the correct user roles to be added and/or removed are noted on the IT1260, based on the approved user role documents.

When corrections are needed, VR RHW Support returns the IT1260 to the staff member who submitted the request, noting the corrections. Once the corrected IT1260 is received, it is submitted to AIP. AIP then notifies VR RHW Support when the IT1260 has been processed, and then VR RHW Support verifies the completion of the update in RHW.

### D-511-4: Terminating Users

The Supervisor, Manager, or delegated staff follows TWC policy for processing terminations through CAPPS and submits the IT1260 for termination to AIP and VR RHW Support. AIP receives and processes the termination request to disable the account and remove all access. VR RHW Support processes IT1260s for terminations to make necessary updates to caseload and organizational maintenance, as applicable.

VR RHW Support verifies the effective date of the termination in RHW. If the date is not in RHW, VR RHW Support submits the IT1260 to AIP to process the termination.

### D-511-5: User Role Resources

For more information on user roles for VR systems, refer to the following:

* Approved RHW User Roles (located on the intranet)
* TxROCS User Role Table (located on the intranet)
* RUG F-702 Data Configuration Control (located on the TWC SharePoint)
* IT1260 Access Service Request for TxROCS and ReHabWorks (located on the intranet)
* IT1260 Instructions (located on the intranet)