# Vocational Rehabilitation Services Manual C-100: Counseling and Guidance

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## C-102: Individualized Plan for Employment Requirement

C&G is a core VR service and must be included in the customer's IPE. Only VR counselors can provide C&G.

### C-102-1: Frequency of Counseling and Guidance

C&G needs to be included on the customer’s IPE as a specific service that is provided by TWC-VR. The frequency of C&G is also captured on the IPE and individualized to meet the customer’s needs.C&G frequency can change as needed throughout the life of the case. If C&G frequency changes from a lower number of days to a higher (less frequent) number of days, an IPE amendment is required. If C&G frequency changes from a higher number of days to a lower (more frequent) number of days, an IPE amendment is not required.

For example, if the frequency of C&G on the IPE is identified as 60 days, but the customer needs weekly C&G for a period of time, then C&G can be provided weekly and the IPE does not need to be changed since this is within the minimum threshold of the timeframe selected on the IPE.

The minimum frequency of C&G with the customer should be clearly stated on the customer's IPE.

C&G must be provided to each eligible customer at least every 180 days. Any exception to the 180-day C&G frequency requirement must be justified clearly by the VR counselor in ReHabWorks (RHW).

For information on documenting C&G refer to E-300: Case Note Requirements.

### C-102-2: Non-Counseling and Guidance Contacts

Substantive customer contacts that are not C&G may be made by any TWC-VR staff member. These contacts are made as often as necessary to advance the customer's program of services. The contacts are documented in RHW with the appropriate case note topic heading. These non-C&G contacts meet the requirement for maintaining the frequency of contact that is identified on the IPE, but they do not meet the 180-day requirement for C&G. For frequency of contact refer to B-504-9: Frequency of Contact.

## C-103: Communication Strategies

C&G may be provided in person, by phone, and/or through secure electronic communications.

The VR counselor is expected to communicate in ways that are developmentally, cognitively, functionally, and culturally appropriate for the customer. This can include the use of translators, interpreters, and other forms of communication assistance. Refer to C-300: Communication Services for more information.

The VR counselor must ensure that all communication with the customer remains confidential and is conducted within the requirements outlined in A-200: Customer Rights and Legal Issues.

## C-104: Documentation Requirement

C&G services must be documented in a case note or series of case notes with the topic heading "Counseling and Guidance" in RHW. The documentation must be done in a timely manner to ensure that an accurate and complete record of services is maintained. The number and frequency of C&G sessions are tracked as a federal reporting requirement.

These case notes must include:

* issues related to the impediments to employment, IPE, and/or participation in VR services;
* strategies for resolution of the issues to include description of decision-making processes involved;
* the customer's participation in the resolution;
* the customer's reaction; and
* actions required of the customer or VR counselor.

### C-104-1: Counseling and Guidance as a Substantial Service

C&G is considered a substantial service when the VR counselor addresses one or more of the following topics and there is documented evidence that the topic had a substantial impact on the outcome of the case.

The VR counselor:

* helps the customer understand his or her strengths and limitations in relation to his or her disability and impediments to employment;
* explores with the customer transferable skills and how they might be applied to overcome impediments to employment;
* helps the customer select and/or maintain a competitive integrated employment goal by providing information that allows the customer to make appropriate informed choices;
* maximizes the customer's self-awareness regarding barriers to productivity and possible reasonable accommodations at the customer's place of employment;
* helps the customer develop the self-advocacy skills needed for taking responsibility for continued career success; and
* provides the customer with information about relevant support services and facilitates access to those services for continued success in employment.

For more information about the definition of "substantial service," see B-601: Closing a VR Case.

### C-104-2: Closing a Counseling and Guidance-Only Case

C&G must be provided and documented as a service in all VR cases, along with all other substantial services that influenced the outcome of the case. In some cases, C&G might be the only substantial service that the customer needs to achieve a competitive integrated employment outcome.

If C&G is the only substantial VR service provided to the customer and the case meets the other criteria for a successful closure, the case can be closed successfully.

For more information about successful closure requirements, see B-600: Closure and Post-Employment Services.

## C-105: Essential Aspects of Counseling and Guidance

The essential aspects of C&G include, but are not limited to:

* developing rapport with the customer;
* keeping the customer engaged in the VR process;
* continually assessing the customer's progress throughout the VR process;
* identifying the rehabilitation needs and providing information to meet those needs;
* helping the customer develop compensatory strategies to reach a successful outcome;
* addressing issues as they arise;
* helping the customer learn about the options and resources available for achieving success; and
* helping the customer develop an IPE.

### C-105-1: Counseling and Guidance Techniques and Modalities

The [Code of Professional Ethics for Rehabilitation Counselors](https://www.crccertification.com/filebin/pdf/ethics/CodeOfEthics_01-01-2017.pdf) offers the following information about C&G techniques and modalities.

"The specific techniques and modalities utilized within the rehabilitation counseling process may include, but are not limited to:

* assessment and appraisal;
* diagnosis and treatment planning;
* career (vocational) counseling;
* individual and group counseling treatment interventions focused on facilitating adjustments to the medical and psychosocial impact of disability;
* case management, referral, and service coordination;
* program evaluation and research;
* interventions to remove environmental, employment, and attitudinal barriers;
* consultation services among multiple parties and regulatory systems;
* job analysis, job development, and placement services, including assistance with employment and job accommodations; and
* provision of consultation about and access to rehabilitation technology."

(Code of Professional Ethics, January 1, 2017, page 1)

**C-105-2: Counseling and Guidance Topics**

C&G includes helping the customer to:

* understand his or her disability and related impediments to employment;
* understand physical and mental restoration procedures;
* get accurate information to make an informed choice;
* make informed choices from among alternative employment goals, objectives, services, and service providers;
* identify strengths on which to capitalize to achieve the vocational goal;
* identify and use transferable skills;
* acquire new skills;
* develop a realistic action plan to address a problem;
* use rehabilitation technology;
* develop residual capabilities;
* understand work requirements, the work environment, and/or work culture;
* identify and use community resources and relevant support services;
* resolve barriers affecting the employment outcome, such as transportation issues, child care issues, or family issues;
* modify his or her attitudes and behaviors;
* develop self-advocacy skills;
* cope successfully with on-the-job stressors;
* explore occupational and labor market information;
* disclose his or her disability;
* stay employed; and/or
* make progress toward the employment goal.

### C-105-3: Counseling and Guidance Ethics

For more information about C&G ethics and the role of the VR counselor, refer to the [Code of Professional Ethics for Rehabilitation Counselors](https://www.crccertification.com/filebin/pdf/ethics/CodeOfEthics_01-01-2017.pdf).