## VR Services Manual E-300: Case Note Requirements

Revised October 1, 2019

## Overview of Table

This table reflects the content found in the VRSM as of the revision date this document. Unless otherwise specified, the content of more recently updated sections of the VRSM and other relevant policy manuals or guidance memorandums supersede instructions included in this table. Staff are expected to review the referenced policy content before taking any action on a case.

For additional policies and procedures related to case note documentation, refer to D-302-1: Overview of Case Notes and D-302-3: What Not to Include in Case Notes.

## Legal Requirements

Code of Federal Regulations, Title 34: Education, Part 361-State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program, Subpart A-General, §361.47 Record of services.

(a) The designated State unit must maintain for each applicant and eligible individual a record of services that includes, to the extent pertinent, the following documentation:

(1) If an applicant has been determined to be an eligible individual, documentation supporting that determination in accordance with the requirements under §361.42.

(2) If an applicant or eligible individual receiving services under an individualized plan for employment has been determined to be ineligible, documentation supporting that determination in accordance with the requirements under §361.43.

(3) Documentation that describes the justification for closing an applicant's or eligible individual's record of services if that closure is based on reasons other than ineligibility, including, as appropriate, documentation indicating that the State unit has satisfied the requirements in §361.44.

(4) If an individual has been determined to be an individual with a significant disability or an individual with a most significant disability, documentation supporting that determination.

(5) If an individual with a significant disability requires an exploration of abilities, capabilities, and capacity to perform in realistic work situations through the use of trial work experiences to determine whether the individual is an eligible individual, documentation supporting the need for, and the plan relating to, that exploration and documentation regarding the periodic assessments carried out during the trial work experiences in accordance with the requirements under §361.42(e).

(6) The individualized plan for employment, and any amendments to the individualized plan for employment, consistent with the requirements under §361.46.

(7) Documentation describing the extent to which the applicant or eligible individual exercised informed choice regarding the provision of assessment services and the extent to which the eligible individual exercised informed choice in the development of the individualized plan for employment with respect to the selection of the specific employment outcome, the specific vocational rehabilitation services needed to achieve the employment outcome, the entity to provide the services, the employment setting, the settings in which the services will be provided, and the methods to procure the services.

(8) In the event that an individual's individualized plan for employment provides for vocational rehabilitation services in a non-integrated setting, a justification to support the need for the non-integrated setting.

(9) In the event that an individual obtains competitive employment, verification that the individual is compensated at or above the minimum wage and that the individual's wage and level of benefits are not less than that customarily paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by non-disabled individuals in accordance with §361.5(c)(9)(i).

(10) In the event an individual achieves an employment outcome in which the individual is compensated in accordance with section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act or the designated State unit closes the record of services of an individual in extended employment on the basis that the individual is unable to achieve an employment outcome consistent with §361.5(c)(15) or that an eligible individual through informed choice chooses to remain in extended employment, documentation of the results of the semi-annual and annual reviews required under §361.55, of the individual's input into those reviews, and of the individual's or, if appropriate, the individual's representative's acknowledgment that those reviews were conducted.

(11) Documentation concerning any action or decision resulting from a request by an individual under §361.57 for a review of determinations made by designated State unit personnel.

(12) In the event that an applicant or eligible individual requests under §361.38(c)(4) that documentation in the record of services be amended and the documentation is not amended, documentation of the request.

(13) In the event an individual is referred to another program through the State unit's information and referral system under §361.37, including other components of the statewide workforce development system, documentation on the nature and scope of services provided by the designated State unit to the individual and on the referral itself, consistent with the requirements of §361.37.

(14) In the event an individual's record of service is closed under §361.56, documentation that demonstrates the services provided under the individual's individualized plan for employment contributed to the achievement of the employment outcome.

(15) In the event an individual's record of service is closed under §361.56, documentation verifying that the provisions of §361.56 have been satisfied.

## Delegating Required Documentation

Documentation responsibilities cannot be delegated and must be entered in RHW directly by the individual completing the action that is being documented.

## Case Note Requirements

| **Case Note Topic** | **Staff Use**  | **Documentation** | **VRSM Ref.** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| … | … | … | … |
| Approval Request | Any VR staff | A case note or series of case notes entered by the VR staff member requesting an approval.The “Add to Topic” for a request should include the specific good or service, such as “Out-of-state Training.”The case note content must include the following: * what is being requested (include specific good or service, provider, and anticipated dates of service);
* circumstances supporting the request; and
* name and job title of requester.

**TIP:** Verify the required management approval level per applicable policy prior to documenting the request to ensure that it is routed to the correct approver in a timely manner.**TIP:** Ensure that each of the requirements that are being reviewed by the approver (see Approval Response” below) are clearly addressed in the case prior to requesting approval. **TIP:** Purchasing approvals must be completed using the RHW Purchase Approval process. Refer to E-200: Summary Table of Approvals, Consultations, and Notifications for additional details.  | E-200 |
| Approval Response | Any VR staff | A case note entered by VR staff member that is approving or denying the request. The “Add to Topic” for an approval or denial should include the specific good or service and the decision (“approved” or “denied”), such as “Out-of-state Training – Approved.”The case note content must include the following:* the parameters of the approval or denial (include specific good or service, provider, and when applicable, the date range of the approval);
* type of review completed in TxROCS (if applicable); and
* name and job title of staff making decision.

As part of the approval decision, the VR staff member that is approving or denying the request should ensure that: * the good or service is clearly connected to and supportive of vocational objective;
* purchase is included in IPE, IPE amendment, or in a case note with all service justification elements included;
* exploration and application of available comparable benefits is documented; and
* required consultations and approvals have been completed, when applicable.

**TIP:** Verify the required management approval level per applicable policy prior to documenting the approval or denial to ensure that you are the correct approver. | E-200 |
| **…** | … | … | … |
| Diagnostic Interview | VR counselor use only | A case note or series of case notes that describes pertinent information garnered from the customer, the customer's family or representative, and any available records during the Diagnostic Interview meeting with the VR counselor.The case note must include, from the customer’s perspective:* a brief description disability, including relevant history and current treatment;
* current functional limitations and their impact on employment, education, and independence;
* relevant history of access to and current use of rehabilitation technology;
* perception of problems or issues related to his or her disabilities and need for services;
* educational and work history;
* general knowledge, skills, and abilities;
* available resources and comparable benefits (or the need to apply for benefits); and
* SSI or SSDI status (including verification of benefits or a note about the need to verify benefits).

The case note must also include:* the VR counselor’s observations of the customer through the interview as it relates to the customer’s ability to participate in and benefit from VR services; and
* a statement of the next actions needed to move the case through the VR process.
 | B-205 |
| … | … | … | … |
| Purchasing Pre-review | Administrative supervisor or purchasing specialist | A case note that confirms that: * the purchase is clearly connected to and supportive of vocational objective;
* policies and procedures for type of purchase have been applied correctly;
* purchase is included in IPE, IPE amendment, or in a case note with all service justification elements included;
* exploration and application of available comparable benefits is documented;
* BLR has been calculated and applied correctly;
* correct specification levels are used to create service record; and
* required consultations and approvals have been completed, when applicable.

**TIP:** When a RHW Purchase Approval is required, the pre-purchase review is completed AFTER the RHW Purchase Approval is completed. **TIP:** If an approver has reviewed and documented an element of the pre-purchase review requirements as part of their approval prior to the pre-purchasing review, the staff completing the pre-purchase review does not have to duplicate these efforts during their review or documentation of the review.  | D-205-2 |
| … | … | … | … |
| IPE/ILP Amendment | VR counselor or IL staff use only | A case note that describes:* review of all information captured in RHW under the following menus:
	+ Initial Contact;
	+ Application (including financial information and BLR requirements); and
	+ Plan;
* review of each section of the existing plan or amendment;
* progress in achieving the identified goals (including review of intermediate goals and educational goal);
* the reason for the amendment;
* the nature and scope of the changes, and
* a description of how informed customer choice was included in the development of the IPE/ILP Amendment.

**TIP**: This case note is also used to document post-employment services since an IPE amendment must be completed to provide post-employment services. **TIP:** The education history (including training information, and semester/grading period pages) under the Plan menu in RHW needs to be updated when the IPE is reviewed or updated to capture measurable skills gains and credential attainment for federal reporting.**TIP:** When an IPE/ILP amendment is completed, this resets the date for the next joint annual review to be completed. **TIP:** When completing an IPE/ILP amendment, review all release forms and work authorization documents to ensure that they are current.  | B-505-2 |
| Joint Annual Review | VR counselor use only | A case note that describes:* review of all information captured in RHW under the following menus:
	+ Initial Contact;
	+ Application (including financial information and BLR requirements); and
	+ Plan;
* review of each section of the existing plan or amendment; and
* progress in achieving the identified goals (including review of intermediate goals and educational goal).

**TIP:** When completing a JAR, review all release forms and work authorization documents to ensure they are current.**TIP:** The education history page (including training information, and semester/grading period pages) under the Plan menu in RHW also needs to be updated when the IPE is reviewed or updated to capture measurable skills gains and credential attainment for federal reporting.  | B-505-1 |
| … | … | … | … |