# VR Services Manual Part E, Chapter 7: Glossary

## Glossary Crosswalk Per Parts

### Part A: Overview of Vocational Rehabilitation

#### Part A: Introduction – Table of Contents

N/A

#### Legal Authority and Purpose

N/A

#### Who We Serve:

##### Basic Rights and Non-Discrimination

Gender Expression: How a person publicly expresses or presents their gender.

Gender Identity: A person's internal and individual experience of gender.

Nondiscrimination: Ensures that no one is denied their rights because of factors such as race, religion, gender, sexuality, etc.

##### Citizenship and Authorized Identification

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the VR program's rules. This includes the option to refuse providing identification or authorization to work in the U.S. while understanding the potential implications of doing so.

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI): Financial assistance to individuals who are unable to work due to a significant disability. Designed as a safety net for workers who have paid into the Social Security system through payroll taxes, SSDI benefits are based on an individual's work history and earnings record.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI): Needs-based disability benefits paid to disabled individuals who have limited income and resources. Disability benefits under SSI include 1) Childhood SSI (for those under age 18) and 2) SSI Adult Disabled/Blind (for those age 18 to 65).

##### Specific Populations

**3.3.a Specific Populations – Overview**

Blindness: Visual acuity with best correction of 20/200 or less in the better eye, a visual field of 20 degrees or less, or a combination of both.

Low Vision: Visual acuity with best correction of 20/70 or less in the better eye, a visual field of 30 degrees or less in the better eye, or a combination of both.

Neurodevelopmental Disorders: Term that encompasses autism, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, intellectual disabilities, or specific learning disabilities.

Significant Visual Impairment: A disease or condition of the eye that does not meet the definitions of blind or low vision but does create a significant impediment to employment and cannot be corrected with glasses or contact lenses.

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI): Financial assistance to individuals who are unable to work due to a significant disability. Designed as a safety net for workers who have paid into the Social Security system through payroll taxes, SSDI benefits are based on an individual's work history and earnings record.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI): Needs-based disability benefits paid to disabled individuals who have limited income and resources. Disability benefits under SSI include 1) Childhood SSI (for those under age 18) and 2) SSI Adult Disabled/Blind (for those age 18 to 65).

Veteran: An individual who served in the active military, naval, or air service and was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable. This includes a member of the National Guard or reserve components who is activated for Federal military service and serves the full period of activation.

Visual Impairment: Global term that encompasses blindness, low vision, and significant visual impairment.

**3.3.b Subminimum Wage – Section 511**

Career Counseling and Information and Referral (CCI&R): A discrete set of activities, different from counseling and guidance, that are mandated by WIOA that must be completed by TWC-VR staff for all individuals earning subminimum wage (SMW) in Texas, regardless of their state of residence or severity of disability.

14(c) Certificate Holder: Any employer that receives a certificate from the Department of Labor (DOL) Employment Standards Administration's Wage and Hour Division to pay workers with disabilities SMW.

Piece Rate: A type of subminimum wage.

Point of Contact: TWC-VR staff assigned to provide CCI&R services to individuals who are working for SMW for a 14(c) certificate holder.

Subminimum Wage (SMW): Less than the minimum wage established by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) or, where applicable, less than the prevailing wage required by a McNamara-O'Hara Service Contract Act wage determination. SMW must be a commensurate wage, based on the productivity of the worker with a disability (no matter how limited), in proportion to the productivity of experienced workers who do not have disabilities that impact their productivity when performing essentially the same work in the same vicinity.

**3.3.c Social Security Recipients**

Benefits Planning Query (BPQY): A report generated by the Social Security Administration (SSA) that provides detailed information about a customer’s Social Security disability benefit.

Presumptive Eligibility: Presumption of eligibility for TWC-VR services predicated on an individual receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or a Title II benefit based on disability.

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI): Financial assistance to individuals who are unable to work due to a significant disability. Designed as a safety net for workers who have paid into the Social Security system through payroll taxes, SSDI benefits are based on an individual's work history and earnings record.

Subject-Matter Utilization Resource Facilitator (SMURF): A TWC-VR staff member trained in the basics of SSI and Title II benefits based on disability.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI): Needs-based disability benefits paid to disabled individuals who have limited income and resources. Disability benefits under SSI include 1) Childhood SSI (for those under age 18) and 2) SSI Adult Disabled/Blind (for those age 18 to 65).

Title II: Disability benefits under Title II -- 1) Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), 2) Childhood Disability Benefits aka Disabled Adult Child (CDB/DAC), and 3) Disabled Widow/Widower Benefits (DWB).

Work Incentive Liaison (WIL): An SSA employee within a local SSA office who specializes in issuing BPQYs and approving requested work incentives other than Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS).

**3.3.d Ticket to Work Program**

Cognosante: The Ticket Program Manager (TPM) that carries out the daily administration of the Social Security Administration (SSA) TTW Program; responsible for marketing the Ticket Program, administering payments to service providers, and monitoring and ensuring that all Ticket Program participants adhere to the rules of the law and the Ticket to Work legislation.

Diary Date: Date set by SSA for a medical review evaluating a recipient’s disability or blindness status.

Employment Networks (EN): Public or private groups that contract with Social Security to provide free job support services to people who receive Title II and/or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits aged 18 to 65 who are interested in working towards the goal of replacing their benefits with income from a job. ENs may offer career planning help, job leads and job placement, ongoing employment support, and benefits counseling.

Individual Work Plan (IWP): A written and signed agreement between the beneficiary and the EN. The IWP describes the beneficiary’s specific employment goal(s) and the TWC-VR services and other employment-related supports and services that the EN will provide to help the beneficiary enter, maintain, advance to, and sustain self-supporting employment.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules. This includes the decision regarding to whom their Ticket is assigned.

Medical Continuing Disability Reviews (MCDR): A periodic review ("diary date") by SSA that determines if the customer continues to have a disabling condition under SSA rules. SSA disability benefits will stop if SSA determines the customer is no longer disabled or blind.

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI): Financial assistance to individuals who are unable to work due to a significant disability. Designed as a safety net for workers who have paid into the Social Security system through payroll taxes, SSDI benefits are based on an individual's work history and earnings record.

Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA): A benchmark number SSA uses to describe a level of work activity and earnings.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI): Needs-based disability benefits paid to disabled individuals who have limited income and resources. Disability benefits under SSI include 1) Childhood SSI (for those under age 18) and 2) SSI Adult Disabled/Blind (for those age 18 to 65).

Timely Progress: Regular timely progress reviews conducted by SSA to determine Ticketholders' progress towards specific work goals.

Title II: Disability benefits under Title II include 1) Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), 2) Childhood Disability Benefits aka Disabled Adult Child (CDB/DAC), and 3) Disabled Widow/Widower Benefits (DWB).

**3.3.e Veterans**

Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (DD 214): U.S. Department of Defense certificate, issued upon a military service member's retirement, separation, or discharge from active duty.

Service-Connected Disability: Disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty in active military, naval, or air service.

Service-Disabled Veteran: Veteran with a disability that is service-connected.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA): Provides health care services to eligible military veterans at medical centers and outpatient clinics; offers several non-health care benefits including disability compensation, vocational rehabilitation, education assistance, home loans, and life insurance.

Veteran: An individual who served in the active military, naval, or air service and was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable. This includes a member of the National Guard or reserve components who is activated for Federal military service and serves the full period of activation.

Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E): Program administered by the VA that provides services to eligible service members and veterans with service-connected disabilities to help them prepare for, secure, and maintain employment or achieve independence in daily living.

##### Voter Registration

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the VR program's rules, as it relates to the right to vote and assistance with voter registration.

#### Appeals and Due Process

Appeal: A request for a due process hearing to resolve disputes about determinations made by TWC-VR personnel that affect the provision of TWC-VR or Older Individuals who are Blind (OIB) services.

The Appellant: An applicant, eligible individual, authorized representative, or parent who has initiated formal procedures.

Discovery: The process by which a party, before a hearing on the merits, may obtain evidence and other information relevant to a claim or defense in the appeal.

Hearing: A formal review, including prehearing conferences.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, including the right to appeal TWC-VR decisions.

Mediation: Voluntary process in which an appellant and a TWC-VR representative may work with a trained mediator, who is not a TWC employee, to try to resolve a dispute prior to the due process hearing.

Witness: An individual with personal knowledge of the facts or special knowledge (i.e., expert) of the facts and issues. It is generally expected that the appellant's VR Counselor will be called as a witness.

#### Protection, Use, and Release of Personal Information

Customer Representative: Any individual chosen by an applicant or eligible individual, including a parent, guardian, other family member, or advocate. If a court has appointed a guardian or representative for an applicant or eligible individual, that person is the individual's representative.

Customer Representative (Child): The customer representative for a child who is less than 18 years old and not emancipated or married. The parent is presumed to be the representative unless provided documentation shows otherwise.

Personally Identifiable Information (PII): Any information connected to a specific individual that can be used to uncover that individual's identity (on its own or together with other relevant data), such as their social security number, full name, maiden name, birthdate, etc.

Release of Information: The process of providing access to protected information (e.g., PII, health and medical information, history) in which the customer determines who, and under what circumstances, can have access to their case record.

#### Access and Accommodations

Access: A means of approaching or entering a place; obtaining, examining, or retrieving information.

Accommodations: Reasonable modifications or adjustments made in various aspects of employment, public services, and facilities to ensure equal opportunities and access for individuals with disabilities. These accommodations are designed to eliminate barriers and provide people with disabilities an equal chance to participate in various activities.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): Prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in several areas, including employment, transportation, public accommodations, communications, and access to State and local government programs and services.

Auxiliary Aids and Services: Devices or services that enable effective communication, typically for people who have difficulty with hearing, seeing, speaking, reading, writing, remembering, or understanding.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, including necessary and reasonable accommodations.

#### Ethical Conduct

Conflict of Interest: A situation in which a person is in a position to derive personal benefit from actions or decisions made in their official capacity.

Ethical Dilemma: A type of ethical issue that arises when the available choices and obligations in a specific situation result in significant consequences for any course of action. An ethical dilemma must be supported by an ethical principle that could be compromised based on the chosen course of action. Ethical dilemmas can surface when there is a conflict of interest.

#### Reporting Fraud, Waste, and Abuse

Abuse: The knowing infliction of physical or psychological harm or the knowing deprivation of goods or services that are necessary to meet essential needs or to avoid physical or psychological harm.

Exploitation: The action or fact of treating someone unfairly in order to benefit from their work or resources.

Fraud: Wrongful or criminal deception intended to result in financial or personal gain.

Misconduct: Unacceptable or illegal behavior by a person or group, especially those in a position of authority.

Neglect: Disregard of duty resulting from carelessness, indifference, or willfulness; failure to care for properly.

Waste: The misuse of funds or resources through excessive or nonessential expenditures.

#### Subrogation

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI): Financial assistance to individuals who are unable to work due to a significant disability. Designed as a safety net for workers who have paid into the Social Security system through payroll taxes, SSDI benefits are based on an individual's work history and earnings record.

Subrogation: A process in which TWC-VR recovers all or part of the costs of services provided to customers as a result of a customer being injured in an accident that was somebody else’s fault and recovering monetary damages in a lawsuit or insurance settlement.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI): Needs-based disability benefits paid to disabled individuals who have limited income and resources. Disability benefits under SSI include 1) Childhood SSI (for those under age 18) and 2) SSI Adult Disabled/Blind (for those age 18 to 65).

#### Services to Business

Business Relations Team (BRT): Team responsible for the delivery of all VR business services, including outreach, consultation, technical assistance, and training to support job placement and job retention for individuals with disabilities.

Job Ready: When TWC-VR customers have the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities needed, with or without supports, to begin seeking employment that is consistent with the employment goal on the customer's Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) or IPE amendment.

Labor Market: Where the supply and the demand for jobs meet, with the workers or labor providing the services that employers demand.

Labor Market Information (LMI): Comprehensive knowledge regarding a specific labor market, including information about occupations, locations, wages, demographics, etc.

The National Employment Team (NET): A national VR business network of VR staff specializing in employer development, business consulting, and corporate relations. The Business Relations Team partners with The NET so they are executing a coordinated approach to serving business customers.

#### WIOA Performance Accountability System

N/A

### Part B: Vocational Rehabilitation Process

#### Part B: Introduction – Table of Contents

N/A

#### VR Process

##### Overview of the VR Process

Good Faith Effort: When TWC-VR staff make three or more attempts to contact the customer, on more than one date, and using more than one method of contact (e.g., phone, email, SARA).

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the VR program's rules, as it relates to all stages of the VR process.

Personal Identification Number (PIN): A numeric or alphanumeric string that is used to authenticate a customer to the RehabWorks (RHW) case management system.

Vocational Rehabilitation Team: A group of individuals who share responsibility for informing, educating, advocating, facilitating, and encouraging the customer to make informed decisions to reach their employment goal.

##### Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE)

N/A

##### Informed Choice

N/A

#### Initial Contacts and Applications

Applicant: An individual who has completed and signed an application for TWC-VR services and has begun the steps necessary to make a determination of eligibility.

Diagnostic Interview: Interview with applicant for TWC-VR services during which a VR Counselor obtains information relevant to the determination of eligibility, while developing a rapport and building trust. It is an opportunity to identify knowledge, skills, abilities, support systems, and key attributes from the applicant's perspective.

Good Faith Effort: When TWC-VR staff make three or more attempts to contact the customer, on more than one date, and using more than one method of contact (e.g., phone, email, SARA).

Initial Contact: When TWC-VR staff confirm with the individual that they want to apply for TWC-VR services; this step prompts the scheduling of the application.

Referral: An individual who has contacted or has been referred to TWC-VR to inquire about the possibility of obtaining TWC-VR services but has not yet applied for services.

#### Eligibility Determination

Eligible Individual: An applicant for TWC-VR services who meets the eligibility requirements outlined in this policy.

Employment Outcome: With respect to an individual entering, advancing in, or retaining full-time or, if appropriate, part-time CIE, (including customized employment, self-employment, telecommuting, or business ownership) or supported employment, that is consistent with an individual's unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice.

Good Faith Effort: When TWC-VR staff make three or more attempts to contact the customer, on more than one date, and using more than one method of contact (e.g., phone, email, SARA).

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules.

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI): Financial assistance to individuals who are unable to work due to a significant disability. Designed as a safety net for workers who have paid into the Social Security system through payroll taxes, SSDI benefits are based on an individual's work history and earnings record.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI): Needs-based disability benefits paid to disabled individuals who have limited income and resources. Disability benefits under SSI include 1) Childhood SSI (for those under age 18) and 2) SSI Adult Disabled/Blind (for those age 18 to 65).

Trial Work Experience (TWE): Provided in CIE settings to the maximum extent possible, consistent with the informed choice and rehabilitation needs of the individual.

#### Order of Selection (OOS)

N/A

#### Trial Work Experience (TWE)

Good Faith Effort: When TWC-VR staff make three or more attempts to contact the customer, on more than one date, and using more than one method of contact (e.g., phone, email, SARA).

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to choosing TWE services and the providers of those services.

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI): Financial assistance to individuals who are unable to work due to a significant disability. Designed as a safety net for workers who have paid into the Social Security system through payroll taxes, SSDI benefits are based on an individual's work history and earnings record.

Sufficient Evidence: The clear (i.e., unequivocal) and convincing evidence required before the VR Counselor can conclude that an individual is incapable of benefiting from TWC-VR services, in terms of an employment outcome. The clear and convincing standard constitutes the highest standard used in the civil system of law and is to be applied on a case-by-case basis.

Sufficient Period of Time: An individualized amount of time, based on the unique circumstances of the individual, to provide enough services and supports to make a determination of eligibility.

Sufficient Variety: An individual must receive, at minimum, two TWEs in various work settings to make an ineligibility determination based on their disability being too significant to benefit from services.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI): Needs-based disability benefits paid to disabled individuals who have limited income and resources. Disability benefits under SSI include 1) Childhood SSI (for those under age 18) and 2) SSI Adult Disabled/Blind (for those age 18 to 65).

Trial Work Experience: Provided in competitive integrated employment settings to the maximum extent possible, consistent with the informed choice and rehabilitation needs of the individual.

Trial Work Plan: Similar to an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), a Trial Work Plan (TWP) is used to provide services, including TWEs, needed to assess an individual's abilities, capabilities, and capacity to perform in competitive integrated work situations.

#### Comprehensive Assessment

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and TWC-VR rules. The information discovered in the comprehensive assessment equips the customer with more data to further identify an optimal employment outcome and the services needed to achieve that outcome.

Integrated Setting: A work environment, typically found in the community, where individuals with disabilities work alongside their non-disabled peers in jobs that are typical for that industry or workplace. In an integrated setting, individuals with disabilities have equal opportunities for employment, access to the same benefits, resources, and training, and are fully included in all aspects of the workplace culture.

Labor Market Information (LMI): Comprehensive knowledge regarding a specific labor market, including information about occupations, locations, wages, demographics, etc.

#### Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)

Client Assistance Program (CAP): Advocacy resource for people with disabilities who are seeking, receiving, or have been denied services from State VR agencies.

Good Faith Effort: When TWC-VR staff make three or more attempts to contact the customer, on more than one date, and using more than one method of contact (e.g., phone, email, SARA).

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the VR program's rules. The information in the IPE helps the customer and their VR Counselor together construct the customer's best path forward to achieving their employment outcome.

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI): Financial assistance to individuals who are unable to work due to a significant disability. Designed as a safety net for workers who have paid into the Social Security system through payroll taxes, SSDI benefits are based on an individual's work history and earnings record.

Substantive Changes: Modifications that constitute an IPE amendment due to the significant impact to the employment goal, the TWC-VR services to be provided, or the providers of those services.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI): Needs-based disability benefits paid to disabled individuals who have limited income and resources. Disability benefits under SSI include 1) Childhood SSI (for those under age 18) and 2) SSI Adult Disabled/Blind (for those age 18 to 65).

#### Computerized Criminal History (CCH)

Computerized Criminal History (CCH): Statewide repository of criminal history information reported to the Department of Public Safety (DPS) by local criminal justice agencies in Texas, as defined by the Code of Criminal Procedure.

Criminal Background Premium: A payment made to a contractor in addition to the base rate paid for services to work with a customer who has a qualifying criminal background.

Criminal History Record Information (CHRI): Information collected by criminal justice agencies consisting of personally identifiable descriptions and notations of arrests, detentions, indictments, information, or other formal criminal charges, and any disposition arising therefrom, including acquittal, sentencing, correctional supervision, and release. The term does not include identification information (e.g., fingerprint records) if such information does not indicate the individual’s involvement with the criminal justice system.

Criminal Justice Information (CJI): Abstract term used to refer to all of the data provided by the Criminal Justice Information Services Division (CJIS) necessary for law enforcement agencies to perform their mission and enforce the laws. This data includes, but is not limited to, biometric, identity history, person, organization, property (when accompanied by any personally identifiable information), and case/incident history data. In addition, CJI refers to the CJIS-provided data necessary for civil agencies to perform their mission (e.g., data used to make hiring decisions). Transaction control type numbers (e.g., ORI, NIC, UCN) when not accompanied by information that reveals CJI or Personal Identifiable Information (PII) are exempt from the protection levels required for CJI.

Fingerprint-Based Search: A search of information using both an individual’s biometric information (e.g., fingerprint) and PII (e.g., legal name on identification documents). It is the most accurate method available for returning records based on matching fingerprints.

Name-Based Search: A search for information based on an individual’s name and date of birth. It is considered a "possible match" to the person about whom the search is being conducted. Search results may include partial name or date‐of‐birth matches.

Personally Identifiable Information (PII): Any information connected to a specific individual that can be used to uncover that individual's identify, such as their social security number, full name, maiden name, birthdate, etc.

Requestors: TWC-VR staff members who are authorized to request CCH records.

Secure Site Users: Designated Regional and State Office points of contact for CCH records responsible for confirming CCH record requests from TWC-VR staff are vocationally relevant, or conducting the CCH search and furnishing the CCH record to VR Counselors.

#### VR Case Closure

Case Closure: When a customer has been referred to, applied for and/or received services from TWC-VR and, for whatever reason, their case is closed. They can no longer receive services but may reapply in the future.

Employment Stability: When a customer is maintaining consistent and satisfactory employment for a specified period of time, with regular work hours, satisfactory job performance, employer and customer satisfaction, and financial independence, without immediate threats to continued employment. The customer has likely finished services in the IPE and no longer requires TWC-VR services to maintain employment.

Good Faith Effort: When TWC-VR staff make three or more attempts to contact the customer, on more than one date, and using more than one method of contact (e.g., phone, email, SARA).

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR program's rules, including case closure.

Potentially Eligible Student with a Disability Closure: When a potentially eligible student with a disability is no longer interested in receiving Pre-Employment Transition Services, is unable to locate, or does not pursue TWC-VR application, their case is closed.

Standard Occupational Classification System: Federal statistical standard used by Federal agencies to classify workers into occupational categories for the purpose of collecting, calculating, or disseminating data.

Successful Closure: When a customer has received services under an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) and achieved their employment goal in competitive integrated employment (CIE), in addition to criteria outlined in this policy, and their case is closed.

Unsuccessful Closure: When a customer has been determined eligible for TWC-VR services and/or received services under an IPE but did not successfully achieve an employment outcome and their case is closed.

### Part C: Vocational Rehabilitation Services

#### Part C: Introduction – Table of Contents

N/A

#### Vocational Rehabilitation Services

##### Overview of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from available options based on their needs and circumstances and the VR program's rules, as it relates to choosing services and the providers of those services.

Integrated Setting: Setting typically found in the community in which the customer interacts with non-disabled individuals, not including non-disabled individuals who are providing their services (e.g., job coach).

##### Comparable Services and Benefits

Best Value Purchasing: Purchasing the least expensive services that meet the customer's vocational needs. Also known as the acquisition cost. Determining the acquisition cost ensures staff consider all factors that influence the total cost and value to both the customer and TWC-VR.

Normal Living Expenses: Items such as housing, food, clothing, and transportation, and whatever additional expenses would be considered necessary to those broad categories (not directly associated with the receipt of VR services), such as utility costs and vehicle insurance.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, including seeking the availability of comparable services and benefits.

##### Customer Financial Participation (Basic Living Requirements)

Basic Living Requirements (BLR): The framework for determining whether the customer must contribute to the cost of certain TWC-VR services. BLR is applied uniformly to ensure that all customers in similar circumstances receive equitable treatment.

Best Value Purchasing: Purchasing the least expensive services that meet the customer's vocational needs. Also known as the acquisition cost. Determining the acquisition cost ensures staff consider all factors that influence the total cost and value to both the customer and TWC-VR.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rule’s, including choosing services, the providers of those services.

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI): Financial assistance to individuals who are unable to work due to a significant disability. Designed as a safety net for workers who have paid into the Social Security system through payroll taxes, SSDI benefits are based on an individual's work history and earnings record.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI): Needs-based disability benefits paid to disabled individuals who have limited income and resources. Disability benefits under SSI include 1) Childhood SSI (for those under age 18) and 2) SSI Adult Disabled/Blind (for those age 18 to 65).

#### VR Counseling and Guidance Services

Counseling: Assisting the customer through appropriate modes of communication to deal effectively with important issues or concerns related to their vocational rehabilitation program to help them achieve employment. This involves communication, goal setting, and beneficial growth or change through self-advocacy, and through psychological, vocational, social, and behavioral interventions.

Guidance: Giving the customer information and acting as a coordinator and advocate; less formal than counseling. Guidance involves providing information on available TWC-VR services and other comparable benefits provided by community organizations, supports needed to exercise informed choice, and assistance in understanding rights, responsibilities and the expectations of TWC-VR.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules. Informed choice is facilitated by VR counseling and guidance to help customers obtain the knowledge, skills, and experiences needed for career choice, preparation, and advancement.

#### Information and Referral Services

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules.

#### Restoration Services

##### Restoration Services Overview

Best Value Purchasing: Purchasing the least expensive services that meet the customer's vocational needs. Also known as the acquisition cost. Determining the acquisition cost ensures staff consider all factors that influence the total cost and value to both the customer and TWC-VR.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the VR program's rules, as it relates to choosing restoration services, both physical and mental, and the providers of those services.

Neurodevelopmental Disorders: Group of conditions with onset in the developmental period, typically early in development.

##### Physical Restoration Services

**5.2.a Medical Services**

Best Value Purchasing: Purchasing the least expensive services that meet the customer's vocational needs. Also known as the acquisition cost. Determining the acquisition cost ensures staff consider all factors that influence the total cost and value to both the customer and TWC-VR.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the VR program's rules, as it relates to choosing medical services and the providers of those services.

**5.2.b Clinical Settings Services**

Best Value Purchasing: Purchasing the least expensive services that meet the customer's vocational needs. Also known as the acquisition cost. Determining the acquisition cost ensures staff consider all factors that influence the total cost and value to both the customer and TWC-VR.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the VR program's rules, as it relates to choosing physical restoration services in various clinical settings.

**5.2.c Medical Services with Special Requirements**

Best Value Purchasing: Purchasing the least expensive services that meet the customer's vocational needs. Also known as the acquisition cost. Determining the acquisition cost ensures that staff consider all factors that influence the total cost and value to both the customer and TWC-VR.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the VR program's rules, as it relates to choosing medical services with special requirements, and the providers of those services.

L Codes: Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) codes that bill for orthotics and prosthetics provided to patients.

**5.2.d Durable Medical Equipment Services**

Best Value Purchasing: Purchasing the least expensive services that meet the customer's vocational needs. Also known as the acquisition cost. Determining the acquisition cost ensures that staff consider all factors that influence the total cost and value to both the customer and TWC-VR.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the VR program's rules, as it relates to choosing medical equipment and devices and the provider of the equipment and devices.

**5.2.e Employment Supports for Brain Injury**

Best Value Purchasing: Purchasing the least expensive services that meet the customer's vocational needs; also known as the acquisition cost. Determining the acquisition cost ensures staff consider all factors that influence the total cost and value to both the customer and TWC-VR.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules.

**5.2.f Hearing Aids**

Best Value Purchasing: Purchasing the least expensive services that meet the customer's vocational needs. Also known as the acquisition cost. Determining the acquisition cost ensures staff consider all factors that influence the total cost and value to both the customer and TWC-VR.

Dispenser: A licensed professional in the State of Texas. Licensed audiologist, assistant in audiology, licensed physician, Hearing Aid Specialist or Hearing Instrument Fitter and Dispensers. Dispensers must meet the Texas Administrative Code regulations and licensing for the State of Texas.

Frequency Modulation (FM) System: Used to help a person with hearing loss listen in noisy environments; consists of a 1) microphone and transmitter worn by the person speaking and 2) the receiver used by the listener.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, including hearing aid services and the provider of those services.

Telecoil: Small copper wire built into a hearing aid that works as a receiver that picks up signals, which are then turned into sound.

**5.2.g Cochlear Implants and Bone-Anchored Hearing Aids**

Best Value Purchasing: Purchasing the least expensive services that meet the customer's vocational needs. Also known as the acquisition cost. Determining the acquisition cost ensures staff consider all factors that influence the total cost and value to both the customer and TWC-VR.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, including surgery and processor services and the provider of those services.

**5.2.h Eye Medical Services**

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the VR program's rules, as it relates to eye medical services and the providers of those services.

**5.2.i. Low Vision Services**

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the VR program's rules, as it relates to choosing low vision services and the providers of those services.

##### Mental Restoration Services

**5.3.a Psychological Services**

Detoxification: Process used to assist the recovering individual through the acute effects of the substance used. Usually consists of hospitalization, medication, and nutritional assistance.

Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5): Handbook published by American Psychiatric Association (APA) widely used by clinicians and psychiatrists in the United States to diagnose psychiatric illnesses. Covers all categories of mental health disorders for both adults and children.

Dual Diagnosis: Term used to describe the condition of an individual who is diagnosed with both a psychological disorder and a substance use disorder. Often used interchangeably with the terms comorbidities, co-occurring illnesses, concurrent disorders, comorbid disorders, co-occurring disorder, or dual disorders.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the VR program's rules, as it relates to choosing psychological services and the providers of those services.

Methadone Treatment: Daily doses of methadone to replace the drug in order to prevent withdrawal symptoms and relapse. This is usually performed at medically supervised clinics. Methadone treatment does not include AA or NA practices.

Sobriety: The state of living without substances (i.e., drugs, alcohol); process of transitioning from addiction to recovery (i.e., healing mentally, physically, and emotionally from substance abuse and its causes).

Substance Use Disorders: A pathological pattern of behaviors related to the use of a substance or substances, per the DSM-5.

**5.3.b Autism Spectrum Disorder Supports**

Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5): Handbook published by American Psychiatric Association (APA) widely used by clinicians and psychiatrists in the United States to diagnose psychiatric illnesses. Covers all categories of mental health disorders for both adults and children.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the VR program's rules, as it relates to choosing Autism supports and services and the providers of those services.

**5.3.c Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) Services**

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the VR program's rules, as it relates to ABA services and the providers of those services.

**5.3.d Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) Services**

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the VR program's rules, as it relates to choosing psychological services and the providers of those services.

**5.3.e Supported Residential Services for People in Recovery**

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the VR program's rules, as it relates to choosing psychological services and the providers of those services.

#### Blind and Visually Impaired Specialty Services

##### Assistive Technology for Blind and Visually Impaired

**6.1.a AT BVI Provided Services**

Assistive Technology (AT): Equipment, devices, and software that help individuals who are blind or have visual impairments with everyday tasks, communication, and accessing information.

Assistive Technology Evaluation: A structured process that allows a customer to compare different AT products with the unbiased guidance of an AT evaluator.

Assistive Technology Purchase Plan (ATPP): A template Employment Assistance Services (EAS) uses to organize all the elements on the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) related to purchasing AT goods and services, including the consultation reports, AT evaluation report, products, price quotes, and vendors.

Basic Consultation: An interview the Vocational Rehabilitation Teacher (VRT) conducts with the customer to identify the product categories the AT Evaluator will demonstrate in an AT evaluation.

Best Value Purchasing: Purchasing the least expensive services that meet the customer's vocational needs. Also known as the acquisition cost. Determining the acquisition cost ensures that staff consider all factors that influence the total cost and value to both the customer and TWC-VR.

BVI Assistive Technology Workbook: EAS staff resource to assist in finding products for blind and visually impaired customers that have been tested by TWC-VR to meet the AT needs of BVI customers.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to choosing AT services and the providers of those services.

Initial Consultation: An interview the EAS conducts with the customer to identify the product categories the AT Evaluator will demonstrate in an AT evaluation.

**6.1.b AT Contracted Services**

TBD

##### Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center (CCRC)

Career Focus Training Program: Individualized training that prepares the customer for employment by developing, implementing, and applying employment readiness skills and capabilities based on the customer's personal career goals.

DeafBlind Training Services: Provides an array of individually targeted services to students who are DeafBlind/hard of hearing and who may need specialized training in the area of DeafBlind resources, hearing aid management, hearing lost strategies, communication and advocacy. This service is provided as an extension of CCRC training programs.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to choosing to participate in services offered by CCRC.

Non-Visual Training: A training approach which requires the use of blindfolds as a tool for learning alternative techniques.

Proficiency Training Program: Individualized training that builds skills based on the customer's current capabilities and vocational goals. The customer will participate in a variety of classes; the length of training is an average of six to nine months based on the customer's needs.

##### DeafBlind Services

Audiological Evaluation: An audiological evaluation is a series of tests administered by an audiologist that is used to determine the type, degree, and configuration of hearing loss.

Blind: A visual acuity with best correction of 20/200 or less in the better eye; a visual field of 20 degrees or less; or a combination of both.

Communication Cards: Low-tech or no-tech tool that helps a person who DeafBlind communicate their needs or ask for assistance.

DeafBlind: A person is DeafBlind if the person has a visual impairment or eye condition that will lead to blindness, and the person’s hearing loss is medically documented or suspected, or if the person is functioning as a person who is DeafBlind.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to choosing DeafBlind services and the providers of those services.

Low Vision: A visual acuity with best correction of 20/70 or less in the better eye; a visual field of 30 degrees or less in the better eye; or a combination of both.

Significant Visual Impairment:A disease or condition of the eye that does not meet the definitions of Blind or Low Vision but does create a significant impediment to employment and cannot be corrected with glasses or contact lenses.

##### Diabetes Self-Management Education (DSME) Services

Bilateral Contractor: A service contractor that agrees to specific duties or deliverables under the terms of a contract with TWC-VR.

Diabetes Educator: Individuals trained in diabetes care and education who collaborate to assist the customer with developing personal strategies to manage their diabetes. They have expert knowledge in diabetes medications, diabetes technologies, and lifestyle behaviors and provide motivation and support to encourage self-management modifications.

Diabetes Self-Management Education: Provides knowledge and skills training and to help identify barriers, facilitate problem solving, and develop coping skills to achieve effective self-care and behavioral modifications. Treatment decisions must be made by the customer and their treatment provider. Diabetes education provides context of living with diabetes and assists the customer into breaking self-care tasks into manageable practice/strategies given their vocational/independent living goals.

Diabetes Skills Training: These sessions, whether in-person or virtual, provide the information, resources, and personalized strategies to help the customer better manage their diabetes.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to choosing diabetes education services and the providers of those services.

Initial Assessment: An evaluation of the customer’s current knowledge, resources, and support. An education plan is developed and recommendations for adaptive diabetes equipment are provided.

Post-Training Assessment: Reinforces the self-care advice and assistive devices for diabetes management and outlines any challenges in maintaining diabetes self-care. It specifically advises on what the customer gained from the final training visit and assesses whether the customer will be able to self-manage at structured training programs, including participation at CCRC. Provided at least 30 days after the final training visit.

##### Orientation and Mobility (O&M) Services

**6.5.a O&M BVI Provided Services**

Blind: An individual with visual acuity with best correction of 20/200 or less in the better eye; a visual field of 20 degrees or less; or a combination of both.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to choosing orientation and mobility services and the providers of those services.

Low Vision: A visual acuity with best correction of 20/70 or less in the better eye; a visual field of 30 degrees or less in the better eye; or a combination of both.

Mobility: Moving in the environment using tools for travel assistance.

Orientation: Using senses to understand one’s position and relationship to the environment.

Significant Visual Impairment: A disease or condition of the eye that does not meet the definitions of Blind or Low Vision but does create a significant impediment to employment and cannot be corrected with glasses or contact lenses.

White Cane: A long, rigid, non-folding, fiberglass white cane with a metal tip used in Orientation and Mobility (O&M) services.

**6.5.b O&M Contracted Services**

TBD

##### Vocational Diagnostic Unit (VDU) Services

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to choosing to participate in VDU services.

##### Vocational Rehabilitation Teacher (VRT) Services

Basic Consultation: An interview the vocational rehabilitation teacher (VRT) conducts with the customer to identify the product categories the AT evaluator will demonstrate in an AT evaluation.

Blind: A visual acuity with best correction of 20/200 or less in the better eye; a visual field of 20 degrees or less; or a combination of both.

Braille: Tactile writing system used by people who are visually impaired.

Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center (CCRC): Vocational training center that serves Texans who are blind and visually impaired. Customers can participate as residential or day students.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to choosing VRT services and the providers of those services.

Low Vision: A visual acuity with best correction of 20/70 or less in the better eye; a visual field of 30 degrees or less in the better eye; or a combination of both.

Orientation and Mobility (O&M) Services: Evaluation and training services delivered by a certified O&M specialist that promotes independent travel skills for individuals who are blind.

Significant Visual Impairment:A disease or condition of the eye that does not meet the definitions of Blind or Low Vision but does create a significant impediment to employment and cannot be corrected with glasses or contact lenses.

White Cane: A long, rigid, non-folding, fiberglass white cane with a metal tip used in Orientation and Mobility (O&M) services.

#### Transition Services for Students and Youth

Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Process: Meeting held to develop, review, or revise an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Generally involves a child’s parent or guardian, the child’s teacher, a school administrator, a special education coordinator, a school psychologist, and other professionals as needed.

504 Plan: A way for schools to provide support and accommodations for students with disabilities who do not receive special education services so that they can learn effectively in a regular classroom. The name 504 plan comes from Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act that provides for nondiscrimination for students with disabilities.

Individualized Education Program (IEP): Plan or program required by the Individuals Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) developed to ensure that a child with an identified disability who is attending an elementary or secondary educational institution receives specialized instruction and related services.

Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE): Outlines the nature and scope of TWC-VR services required to help a customer prepare, gain, maintain, or advance in a specific competitive integrated employment outcome.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules.

Local Education Agency (LEA): A public board of education or other public authority legally constituted within a State for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public elementary schools or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a State, or for a combination of school districts or counties as are recognized in a State as an administrative agency for its public elementary schools or secondary schools.

#### Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)

##### Pre-ETS for Students with Disabilities

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to choosing Pre-ETS services and the providers of those services.

##### Pre-ETS Group Skills Training (GST)

Bilateral Contractor: A service contractor that agrees to specific duties or deliverables under the terms of a contract with TWC-VR.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to choosing Pre-ETS services and the providers of those services.

Non-Traditional Provider: An individual who does not have a bilateral contract and who can help a customer achieve an employment goal.

Transition Educator: An individual who is not a provider with a bilateral contract, holds a master's or bachelor's degree in rehabilitation, psychology, education, or a related field (including certified Texas Educators), and is currently or has been employed by a school system, Texas Education Service Center, college, or university within the past fiscal year.

##### Pre-ETS Pathways to Careers Initiatives

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to choosing Pre-ETS services and the providers of those services.

##### Contracted Pre-ETS

TBD

#### Self-Employment and Small Business Services

##### Self-Employment Services

Certified Business Technical Assistance Consultant (CBTAC): A proprietary training and consultative system developed and implemented by Griffin-Hammis Associates (GHA) to address the needs of state TWC-VR and other disability agencies as they increase their use of self-employment and microenterprise to meet the needs of their customers.

Community Work Incentives Coordinator (CWIC): Trained and certified by the Social Security Administration (SSA) to provide accurate and comprehensive information about Social Security work incentives, benefits, and employment support programs to beneficiaries with disabilities.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to choosing Self-Employment as an employment goal and services and the providers of those services.

Self-Employment: When a customer solely owns a business and is responsible for all business operations, including management (even if the customer hires, contracts out, or has natural supports to perform some business functions).

Single Member LLCs: A single-member limited liability company considered a "disregarded entity," meaning there is no separation between the business and its owner.

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI): Financial assistance to individuals who are unable to work due to a significant disability. Designed as a safety net for workers who have paid into the Social Security system through payroll taxes, SSDI benefits are based on an individual's work history and earnings record.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI): Needs-based disability benefits paid to disabled individuals who have limited income and resources. Disability benefits under SSI include 1) Childhood SSI (for those under age 18) and 2) SSI Adult Disabled/Blind (for those age 18 to 65).

##### Business Enterprises of Texas (BET)

Legally Blind: Having not more than 20/200 visual acuity in the better eye with best possible correction or visual acuity greater than 20/200 but with a limitation in the field of vision such that the widest diameter of the visual field subtends an angle no greater than 20 degrees.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to choosing to be self-employed and to receive BET services and the providers of those services.

#### Education and Training Services

##### Education and Training Services Overview

Best Value Purchasing: Purchasing the least expensive services that meet the customer's vocational needs. Also known as the acquisition cost. Determining the acquisition cost ensures that staff consider all factors that influence the total cost and value to both the customer and TWC-VR.

Computerized Criminal History (CCH): Statewide repository of criminal history information reported to the Department of Public Safety (DPS) by local criminal justice agencies in Texas, as defined by the Code of Criminal Procedure.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the VR program's rules, as it relates to choosing education and training services and the providers of those services.

Normal Living Expenses: Items such as housing, food, clothing, and transportation, and whatever additional expenses would be considered necessary to those broad categories (not directly associated with the receipt of VR services), such as utility costs and vehicle insurance.

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI): Financial assistance to individuals who are unable to work due to a significant disability. Designed as a safety net for workers who have paid into the Social Security system through payroll taxes, SSDI benefits are based on an individual's work history and earnings record.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI): Needs-based disability benefits paid to disabled individuals who have limited income and resources. Disability benefits under SSI include 1) Childhood SSI (for those under age 18) and 2) SSI Adult Disabled/Blind (for those age 18 to 65).

##### Postsecondary: College and University Training

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the VR program's rules, as it relates to choosing education and training services and the providers of those services.

##### Postsecondary: Proprietary Schools

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the VR program's rules, as it relates to choosing education and training services and the providers of those services.

##### On-the-Job Training (OJT)

1099 Employee: Freelancer, independent contractor, or other self-employed worker who completes particular jobs or assignments; not employees of the company.

Essential Job Duties: Basic job tasks that an employee must be capable of performing, with or without reasonable accommodation.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the VR program's rules, as it relates to choosing the training services and the providers of those services.

Non-Essential Job Duties: Tasks that are not necessary to perform the job and can be reassigned to another employee or performed by someone else.

On-the-Job Training (OJT): Vocational training service for which VR compensates an employer to train a VR customer, who has been hired by the business in a competitive integrated position and receives equal pay and benefits as other non-disabled employees in the same or similar roles. The employer trains the customer in both essential and non-essential job tasks required for the position.

On-the-Job Training Employee: Paid employee on the payroll of the OJT employer; is not a 1099 employee. The employer or its representative provides on-the-job training for essential and nonessential job duties. In this policy, an OJT employee is an eligible VR customer.

On-the-Job Training Employer: Company or organization that hires and provides OJT to its OJT employees. This training equips workers with the knowledge and skills necessary to perform their jobs effectively.

##### Registered Apprenticeship Training

N/A

##### Project SEARCH Training

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to choosing to participate in Project SEARCH services and the providers of those services.

##### Other Education and Training Services

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the VR program's rules, as it relates to choosing education and training services and the providers of those services.

#### Benefits and Work Incentives Counseling Services

##### BWIC TWC-VR Provided Services

Benefits Planning Query (BPQY): A report generated by the Social Security Administration (SSA) that provides detailed information about a customer’s Social Security disability benefit.

Benefits Summary and Analysis/Work Incentive Plan (BSA/WIP): An evaluation of how desired or actual monthly gross earned income impacts Federal and State benefits.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to choosing to participate in Benefits and Work Incentives Counseling Services and the providers of those services.

Medicaid: Free, comprehensive health insurance provided through Texas Health and Human Services for those receiving Title XVI benefits, also known as Supplemental Security Income (SSI); Medicaid coverage begins the date SSI is approved by SSA.

Medicaid Buy-In (MBI): A program that offer customers with disabilities who are working the opportunity to purchase Medicaid coverage; refer to [Texas Health and Human Services’ website](https://www.hhs.texas.gov/services/health/medicaid-chip/medicaid-chip-programs-services/programs-children-adults-disabilities/medicaid-buy-adults) for more information on Medicaid Buy-In.

Medicare: Health insurance coverage that comes with a Title II disability cash benefit. Coverage begins 24 months from the date the first Title II cash benefit is due; Medicare is not free, but customers can apply for Texas Health and Human Services’ Medicare Savings Program to see if they qualify for assistance with Medicare costs.

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI): Financial assistance to individuals who are unable to work due to a significant disability. Designed as a safety net for workers who have paid into the Social Security system through payroll taxes, SSDI benefits are based on an individual's work history and earnings record.

Subject-Matter Utilization Resource Facilitator (SMURF): A TWC-VR staff member trained in the basics of SSI and Title II benefits based on disability.

SSA Work Incentives: Special rules for customers receiving SSI or a Title II benefit based on disability that may allow continuation of the monthly cash benefit and/or Medicare and/or Medicaid.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI): Needs-based disability benefits paid to disabled individuals who have limited income and resources. Disability benefits under SSI include 1) Childhood SSI (for those under age 18) and 2) SSI Adult Disabled/Blind (for those age 18 to 65).

Title II: Disability benefits paid to disabled individuals who are insured under the Social Security Act by virtue of their contributions to the Social Security trust fund through the Social Security tax on their earnings, as well as to certain disabled dependents of insured individuals. Disability benefits under Title II include 1) Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), 2) Childhood Disability Benefits, also known as Disabled Adult Child (CDB/DAC), and 3) Disabled Widow/Widower Benefits (DWB).

Work Incentive Liaison (WIL): An SSA employee within a local SSA office who specializes in issuing BPQYs and approving requested work incentives other than Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS).

##### BWIC Contracted Services

TBD

#### Employment Services

##### Employment Assessments

**12.1.a Career Planning Assessments (CPA)**

Bilateral Contractor: A service contractor that agrees to specific duties or deliverables under the terms of a contract with TWC-VR.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to choosing employment assessment services and the providers of those services.

Trial Work Experience (TWE): Exploration of an individual's abilities, capabilities, and capacity to perform in realistic work situations in order to determine whether or not there is clear and convincing evidence to support a determination that an individual with a disability is incapable of benefiting from VR services in terms of an employment outcome.

**12.1.b Environmental Work Assessments (EWA)**

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to choosing employment assessments and the providers of those services.

Trial Work Experience (TWE): Exploration of an individual's abilities, capabilities, and capacity to perform in realistic work situations in order to determine whether or not there is clear and convincing evidence to support a determination that an individual with a disability is incapable of benefiting from VR services in terms of an employment outcome.

**12.1.c Vocational Evaluation**

Bilateral Contractor: A service contractor that agrees to specific duties or deliverables under the terms of a contract with TWC-VR.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to choosing employment assessments and the providers of those services.

Trial Work Experience (TWE): Exploration of an individual's abilities, capabilities, and capacity to perform in realistic work situations in order to determine whether or not there is clear and convincing evidence to support a determination that an individual with a disability is incapable of benefiting from VR services in terms of an employment outcome.

**12.1.d Vocational Evaluation - Situational Assessment and Work Sample Services**

Bilateral Contractor: A service contractor that agrees to specific duties or deliverables under the terms of a contract with TWC-VR.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to choosing employment assessments and the providers of those services.

Trial Work Experience (TWE): Exploration of an individual's abilities, capabilities, and capacity to perform in realistic work situations in order to determine whether or not there is clear and convincing evidence to support a determination that an individual with a disability is incapable of benefiting from VR services in terms of an employment outcome.

##### Work Readiness Services

**12.2.a Personal Social Adjustment Training Services**

Bilateral Contractor: A service contractor that agrees to specific duties or deliverables under the terms of a contract with TWC-VR.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to choosing work readiness services and the providers of those services.

Trial Work Experience (TWE): Exploration of an individual's abilities, capabilities, and capacity to perform in realistic work situations in order to determine whether or not there is clear and convincing evidence to support a determination that an individual with a disability is incapable of benefiting from VR services in terms of an employment outcome.

**12.2.b Work Adjustment Training Services**

Bilateral Contractor: A service contractor that agrees to specific duties or deliverables under the terms of a contract with TWC-VR.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to choosing work readiness services and the providers of those services.

Trial Work Experience (TWE): Exploration of an individual's abilities, capabilities, and capacity to perform in realistic work situations in order to determine whether or not there is clear and convincing evidence to support a determination that an individual with a disability is incapable of benefiting from VR services in terms of an employment outcome.

**12.2.c Vocational Adjustment Training Services**

Flat Fee: A fixed charge for a service or product that does not change regardless of the amount of time or resources used to complete the task.

Hourly Based: A payment structure where services are billed according to the number of hours worked.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to choosing work readiness services and the providers of those services.

**12.2.d JobTIPS Student**

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to choosing work readiness training services and the providers of those services.

##### Work Experience Services

**12.3.a Work Experience Placement (WEP) Services**

Bilateral Contractor: A service contractor that agrees to specific duties or deliverables under the terms of a contract with TWC-VR.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to choosing work experience placement services and the providers of those services.

Non-Traditional Provider: An individual who does not have a bilateral contract and who can help a customer achieve an employment goal.

Transition Educator: An individual who is not a provider with a bilateral contract, holds a master's or bachelor's degree in rehabilitation, psychology, education, or a related field (including certified Texas Educators), and is currently or has been employed by a school system, Texas Education Service Center, college, or university within the past fiscal year.

Trial Work Experience (TWE): Exploration of an individual's abilities, capabilities, and capacity to perform in realistic work situations in order to determine whether or not there is clear and convincing evidence to support a determination that an individual with a disability is incapable of benefiting from VR services in terms of an employment outcome.

**12.3.b Work Experience Training Services**

Bilateral Contractor: A service contractor that agrees to specific duties or deliverables under the terms of a contract with TWC-VR.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to choosing work experience placement services and the providers of those services.

Non-Traditional Provider: An individual who does not have a bilateral contract and who can help a customer achieve an employment goal.

Transition Educator: An individual who is not a provider with a bilateral contract, holds a master's or bachelor's degree in rehabilitation, psychology, education, or a related field (including certified Texas Educators), and is currently or has been employed by a school system, Texas Education Service Center, college, or university within the past fiscal year.

Trial Work Experience (TWE): Exploration of an individual's abilities, capabilities, and capacity to perform in realistic work situations in order to determine whether or not there is clear and convincing evidence to support a determination that an individual with a disability is incapable of benefiting from VR services in terms of an employment outcome.

**12.3.c Wage Services**

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the VR program's rules, as it relates to work experiences either paid or unpaid.

Trial Work Experience (TWE): Exploration of an individual's abilities, capabilities, and capacity to perform in realistic work situations in order to determine whether or not there is clear and convincing evidence to support a determination that an individual with a disability is incapable of benefiting from VR services in terms of an employment outcome.

##### Job Placement Services

**12.4.a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Direct Placement Services**

Competitive Wages: The level of compensation offered to employees that is comparable to or higher than the average wages for similar positions in the same industry or geographic area. These wages are designed to attract and retain skilled workers by providing them with salaries that are attractive relative to what other employers are offering.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to choosing job placement services and the providers of those services.

Integrated Setting: Setting typically found in the community in which the customer interacts with non-disabled individuals, not including non-disabled individuals who are providing their services (e.g., job coach).

**12.4.b Non-Bundled Job Placement Services**

Bilateral Contractor: A service contractor that agrees to specific duties or deliverables under the terms of a contract with TWC-VR.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to choosing placement services and the providers of those services.

Non-Traditional Provider: An individual who does not have a bilateral contract and who can help a customer achieve an employment goal.

Transition Educator Provider: An individual who is not a provider with a bilateral contract, holds a master's or bachelor's degree in rehabilitation, psychology, education, or a related field (including certified Texas Educators), and is currently or has been employed by a school system, Texas Education Service Center, college, or university within the past fiscal year.

**12.4.c Bundled Job Placement Services**

Bilateral Contractor: A service contractor that agrees to specific duties or deliverables under the terms of a contract with TWC-VR.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to choosing placement services and the providers of those services.

Non-Traditional Provider: An individual who does not have a bilateral contract and who can help a customer achieve an employment goal.

Transition Educator Provider: An individual who is not a provider with a bilateral contract, holds a master's or bachelor's degree in rehabilitation, psychology, education, or a related field (including certified Texas Educators), and is currently or has been employed by a school system, Texas Education Service Center, college, or university within the past fiscal year.

**12.4.d Job Skills Training (JST) Services**

Bilateral Contractor: A service contractor that agrees to specific duties or deliverables under the terms of a contract with TWC-VR.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to choosing placement services and the providers of those services.

Non-Traditional Provider: An individual who does not have a bilateral contract and who can help a customer achieve an employment goal.

Transition Educator Provider: An individual who is not a provider with a bilateral contract, holds a master's or bachelor's degree in rehabilitation, psychology, education, or a related field (including certified Texas Educators), and is currently or has been employed by a school system, Texas Education Service Center, college, or university within the past fiscal year.

#### Supported Employment (SE) Services

Career Planning Assessment (CPA): Functional assessment designed to evaluate the customer's work skills, determine support needs, and provide information needed to plan for future employment.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the VR program's rules, as it relates to choosing Supported Employment services and the providers of those services.

Job Stability: When an individual's work performance reaches a performance level acceptable to the employer, and the related ongoing support services have diminished to the level necessary to maintain the individual in employment.

Place, Then Train: Model of employment placement to place customers in a job and then train them in order to help them find and keep long-term competitive integrated employment.

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI): Financial assistance to individuals who are unable to work due to a significant disability. Designed as a safety net for workers who have paid into the Social Security system through payroll taxes, SSDI benefits are based on an individual's work history and earnings record.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI): Needs-based disability benefits paid to disabled individuals who have limited income and resources. Disability benefits under SSI include 1) Childhood SSI (for those under age 18) and 2) SSI Adult Disabled/Blind (for those age 18 to 65).

#### Customized Employment Services

N/A

#### Rehabilitation Technology Services

Best Value Purchasing: Purchasing the least expensive services that meet the customer's vocational needs. Also known as the acquisition cost. Determining the acquisition cost ensures staff consider all factors that influence the total cost and value to both the customer and TWC-VR.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, including accessing and choosing rehabilitation devices and services and the providers of those services.

#### Support Services

##### Personal Support Services

Childcare: The provision of supervision, care, and nurturing for children, typically in the absence of their parents or guardians. Childcare services can be offered in various settings, including daycare centers, preschools, nurseries, family childcare homes, or by individual caregivers. Childcare allows parents or guardians to pursue work, education, or other VR related activities.

Family Member: An individual who is either a relative or guardian of the applicant or customer, or who resides in the same household. This individual must have a significant interest in the well-being of the applicant or customer, and their receipt of TWC-VR services must be essential to the applicant or customer's ability to achieve an employment outcome.

Personal Assistant: An individual who provides a range of supportive services to assist the customer in performing daily living activities, both at home, the community, and in employment. These services are tailored to the specific needs of the customer and may include tasks such as personal care, household chores, transportation assistance, medication management, and other forms of support that enable the person to maintain independence and participate fully in daily life activities.

##### Maintenance Services

Normal Living Expenses: Items such as housing, food, clothing, and transportation, and whatever additional expenses would be considered necessary to those broad categories (not directly associated with the receipt of VR services), such as utility costs and vehicle insurance.

##### Short-Term Housing Services

Normal Living Expenses: Items such as housing, food, clothing, and transportation, and whatever additional expenses would be considered necessary to those broad categories (not directly associated with the receipt of VR services), such as utility costs and vehicle insurance.

Short-Term Housing: Housing that is incurred as a direct result of participation in TWC-VR assessments or services. Short-term housing may be one day to a few weeks or months and must be in excess of the customer's normal living expenses.

##### Transportation Services

Normal Living Expenses: Items such as housing, food, clothing, and transportation, and whatever additional expenses would be considered necessary to those broad categories (not directly associated with the receipt of VR services), such as utility costs and vehicle insurance.

Private Carrier: An individual or private organization that owns a vehicle and is not customarily for hire.

Public Carrier: A vehicle or set of vehicles in the business of transporting the public (e.g., city transit service, airline, bus, taxi).

Transportation: Travel and related expenses necessary to enable an applicant or eligible individual to participate in a TWC-VR service, including expenses for training in the use of public transportation vehicles and systems.

##### Tools and Equipment Services

Equipment: Larger, more complex machinery or apparatus used to perform tasks or operations within an industry or workplace. Equipment may be stationary or mobile and often requires power sources such as electricity, fuel, or compressed air to operate.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the VR program's rules, as it pertains to choosing a trade occupation and the requirements of that industry.

Tools: Handheld or manually operated devices used to perform specific tasks or functions. They are typically smaller in size and are often portable, allowing workers to use them directly on the job site.

##### Occupational Licenses

Occupational License: Any license, permit, or fee for the examination of a license, or other written authorization required by the state, city, or other government unit that must be obtained to work or to run a small business.

Practitioner: An expert who uses that knowledge as part of a profession.

#### Auxiliary Aids and Services

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): The ADA prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in several areas, including employment, transportation, public accommodations, communications, and access to State and local government programs and services.

Auxiliary Aids and Services: Items, equipment, or services that assist in effective communication between a person who has a hearing, vision, or speech disability and a person who does not for purposes of enabling the individual with a sensory disability to access and participate in a service.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to access and choosing auxiliary aids and services, and the providers of those services.

#### Post-Employment Services

N/A

### Part D: Budgeting and Purchasing

#### Part D: Introduction – Table of Contents

N/A

#### Budgeting and Purchasing

Allocation: Amount or portion of Federal and State funds assigned to a particular program, budget, or purpose.

Expenditure: Payment made for goods and services.

Obligation/Encumbrance: Transactional order placed for goods and services, contracts and subawards made, and similar transactions that require eventual payment against the order.

Requisition Budget: Budget from which funds are allocated and spent. In ReHabWorks (RHW), funds move in and out of the requisition budget to an unallocated budget but may never be transferred directly between requisition budgets.

Unallocated Budget: Budget where funds are initially allocated and loaded and moved from level to level. Funds are not spent from this budget; funds may move from the unallocated budget to a requisition budget.

#### Purchasing Goods and Services

Authorization: Basis by which the authority to complete the various stages of a transaction is delegated.

Best Value Purchasing: Purchasing the least expensive services that meet the customer's vocational needs. Also known as the acquisition cost. Determining the acquisition cost ensures staff consider all factors that influence the total cost and value to both the customer and TWC-VR.

Expenditure: Payment made for goods or services.

Informed Choice: The means by which a customer chooses their rehabilitation path, from options based on their needs and circumstances and the TWC-VR rules, as it relates to choosing their services and the providers of those services.

Obligation/Encumbrance: When a Service Authorization (SA) is issued in RHW, it establishes a transactional order for goods and services and it reserves the required funds with which the eventual payment against the order will be made. The issuance of the SA and the resulting reservation of funds create a legally binding agreement between two entities initiating the commencement of the good or service and resulting in, upon proper performance, payment as a result.

Out-of-State Provider: Provider whose point-of-service address or place of doing business is located outside Texas. This term is not intended to describe, define, or include providers whose brick-and-mortar business operations are within Texas, but for whom the payment (remit) address of record is outside Texas.

#### Business Procedures for TWC-VR Staff

Warrant Number: Term used to identify payment made to a specific vendor. This identifier uses a nine-digit format for payments made by check and a seven-digit format for payments made by direct deposit.

#### Vendors

Authorized Individual: An authorized individual includes, but is not limited to, the following:

* Caseload-carrying TWC-VR staff, including VR Counselors, Unit Support Coordinators, and Older Individuals who are Blind (OIB) Workers;
* Management Unit Staff, including VR Supervisors and VR Managers;
* Regional Office Staff, including Regional Directors, Deputy Regional Directors, Program Support Managers, Regional Program Specialists, Regional Transition Specialists, Regional Blind Services Specialists, Regional Program Improvement Specialists, Employment Assistance Specialists, and Regional Points of Contact Staff for CCH; and
* State Office Staff, including the Division Director, the Deputy Division Directors, the Directors, the Program Managers, the Managers, and, as applicable, Program Specialists.

Providers: An individual, business entity, or unit of government from whom TWC-VR purchases goods and services on behalf of customers as a part of the programmatic service delivery process.

Warrant Number: Term used to identify payment made to a specific vendor. This identifier uses a nine-digit format for payments made by check and seven digits for payment made by direct deposit number.

### Part E: Business Procedures and Appendices

#### Part E: Introduction – Table of Contents

N/A

#### Credential Attainment and Measurable Skill Gains

N/A

#### Case Record Management

##### Case Record and Documentation

Case Record: Refers to the entirety of the case record, including electronic data in RHW, the paper file, and virtual case file.

Caseload: Refers to case records assigned to a VR Counselor.

Electronic Case File: Refers to information pertaining to a case entered into RHW, TWC-VR's case management system. Database record that documents the process and contains all the information collected and the documents generated throughout the VR process for an individual customer by TWC-VR staff, such as the Initial Contact, Application, Case Notes, and Plans phases.

Good Faith Effort: When TWC-VR staff make three or more attempts to contact the customer, on more than one date, and using more than one method of contact (e.g., phone, email, SARA).

Paper Case File: The hard copy or printed records associated with a customer’s TWC-VR case.

Virtual Case File: A non-paper version of the case file hosted electronically and ultimately residing in TEAMS. The virtual case file is used to organize and logically provide access to customer-related information obtained from, relevant to, and/or used on behalf of the customer during or as the result of the receipt of TWC-VR or OIB services.

##### Opening, Transferring, and Phase Adjusting Case Records

Case Record: Refers to the entirety of the case record, including electronic data in RHW, the paper file, and virtual case file.

Caseload: Refers to case records assigned to a VR Counselor.

Electronic Case File: Refers to information pertaining to a case entered into RHW, TWC-VR's case management system. Database record that documents the process and contains all the information collected and the documents generated throughout the VR process for an individual customer by TWC-VR staff, such as the Initial Contact, Application, Case Notes, and Plans phases.

Good Faith Effort: When TWC-VR staff make three or more attempts to contact the customer, on more than one date, and using more than one method of contact (e.g., phone, email, SARA).

Paper Case File: The hard copy or printed records associated with a customer’s TWC-VR case.

Phases: Specific points in RHW assigned to track the movement of a case through the VR process (e.g., application); also referred to as a "status."

Phase Adjustments: When changes are made to a closed case (e.g., case was closed but is phase adjusted to “active” status to provide additional services).

Virtual Case File: A non-paper version of the case file hosted electronically and ultimately residing in TEAMS. The virtual case file is used to organize and logically provide access to customer-related information obtained from, relevant to, and/or used on behalf of the customer during or as the result of the receipt of TWC-VR or OIB services.

#### Case Service Report (RSA-911) and Data Validation

N/A

| Document History |  |
| --- | --- |
| Revised Date | 09/03/2024 – VRSM Policy and Procedure Rewrite |