

Revision No. 3 authorized by _____, Commissioner
Rick L. Mitchell

Revision No. 3 authorized by _____, Deputy Commissioner
Matthew H. Koch of Enterprises

Policy: **Trainee Referral**

I. **Application**

The following steps outline the procedures and obligations of the Virginia Industries for the Blind (VIB) and Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI) field staff for referring individuals for assessment, training, or work experience.

Assessment, training, or work experience are available at any VIB location, however for VR funds to be utilized, the location must meet the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) definition of competitive integrated employment (CIE). No wages will be paid using VR funds at any facility for work that is not designated as CIE. Referrals may still be made for non-CIE positions at VIB and VIB will be responsible for paying any wages for those positions.

Any assessment, training, or work experience shall not take the place of a full or part-time VIB employee.

II. **Referral Opportunities**

- Assessment – Period is time limited, typically one to three hours with a non-VIB job coach to try different tasks. Job coach would be observing workplace skills such as dexterity, stamina, critical thinking, asking appropriate questions, following directions, etc.
- Training – The goal of the training period is more focused on individuals who have completed the Assessment phase. Stamina, dexterity, ability to remember instructions/directions, critical thinking, and interactions with others, etc. will be observed to better determine if the individual is best suited for full or part time employment. Non-VIB job coach support would typically not be present for the entire training period, however, in the case of supported employment, would be available to address any issues that arise. Results of training

period will determine if the training experience is continued or discontinued.

- Paid or Unpaid Work Based Learning – Intended for individuals who are ready to work but may need to fine tune the workplace skills of: timeliness, response to management, and interpersonal relationships with peers, etc. These experiences will be coordinated with VIB management through the Counselor. VIB local management would supervise and provide feedback to the individual as if they were an agency employee. The Counselor would meet with the Manager and the individual being served at least once a month to review progress; other meetings can be scheduled if needed. If, at any time, VIB local management determines the experience has not been successful and should not continue for the initially-approved period, the Manager will meet with the Counselor to discuss the situation and what measures have been taken to correct any issues. The Manager and Counselor will then meet with the individual being served to review the experience and it will end at an agreed upon time if the initially approved time period has not been completed.

III. Procedure

The DBVI Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) will determine the needs of the individual based upon counseling and guidance, career aspirations and needed assessments, a review of transferrable skills, gap in employment and other factors. Once the VRC has made the determination of the need for assessment, training, or work experience, the VRC will submit the Trainee Referral Form (TRF) to the VIB HR & Special Projects Coordinator. For cases of work-based learning, a resume should be submitted along with the TRF.

Once the referral is received, the VIB HR & Special Projects Coordinator will staff the requested placement with the appropriate VIB Director/Manager who will engage local management to review the objectives of the referral and determine placement strategies.

The individual will be interviewed by relevant VIB management and, if possible, a tour of the work site will be provided.

For paid work-based learning in a competitive integrated employment setting, current procedures for authorization to The Bradford Company will be adhered to.

For unpaid work-based learning, training, or evaluation, the VRC will complete a service authorization with the number of hours authorized and length of services being requested.

The training period will be determined upon agreement of the VRC and VIB

management. However, work-based learning, training, or evaluation shall not exceed a total of 12 weeks.

VIB local management is responsible for conducting any training sessions necessary for the individual to understand the essential functions of the position. Once the skills have been attained, the individual will engage in independent work under the guidance of local VIB management.

Local VIB Managers will provide a Weekly Trainee Report (WTR) to their respective Senior Leader (with a copy to the General Manager and VRC) on observed performance progress and any additional training or coaching needs. The VRC will schedule a Monthly Staffing Meeting (MSM) at the end of each work month with the local VIB Manager, their respective VIB Senior Leader, and the individual, to review training goals and discuss areas of progress and/or areas of improvement. At no time should the information provided during the MSM be a surprise to the VRC and individual.

At the end of the agreed upon training period, the VRC shall schedule a meeting with the individual to continue counseling and guidance, address any areas of improvement, and set future expectations and next steps.

IV. Outcome

The completion of evaluation, training, or work-based learning does not constitute an offer of employment. Should the participant express interest in working at VIB, the VRC should direct them to the VIB jobs recruitment through state recruitment system to apply for any available positions that fit their interests, skills, and abilities. The VRC will utilize the information gathered during the experience to guide the participant in exploring the next steps in the process of obtaining their expressed vocational aspirations.