

### Excellent Resource Available

The Arc Tennessee, Disability Rights Tennessee, and Vocational Rehabilitation have joined efforts to develop the booklet, *Getting A Head Start with Vocational Rehabilitation*. This booklet includes tools to help a potential VR applicant prepare for the application process and goes into detail about the topics in this brochure. This booklet is housed on our website: [thearctn.org](http://thearctn.org).

### Get Additional Information About Vocational Rehabilitation

#### Tennessee Department of Human Services Division of Rehabilitation Services (VR)

615/313-4891  
[http://www.tn.gov/humanserv/rehab/rehab\\_main.html](http://www.tn.gov/humanserv/rehab/rehab_main.html)

#### Client Assistance Program (CAP), a Program of Disability Rights Tennessee

800/342-1660  
<http://www.disabilityrightstn.org>

#### The Arc Tennessee

615/248-5878  
800/835-7077  
<http://www.thearctn.org>

#### Tennessee Disability Pathfinder

800/640-4636  
<http://vkc.mc.vanderbilt.edu/vkc/pathfinder/>

The Arc TN values diversity and does not discriminate based on race, ethnicity, religion, age, geographic location, sexual orientation, gender, level of disability or Limited English Proficiency.

## The Arc Tennessee Can Help with Your Disability Questions.

### Call:

800/835-7077 x 28

615/248-5878 x 28

### Email:

[help@thearctn.org](mailto:help@thearctn.org)

**The Arc Tennessee's Mission Statement:** *The Arc Tennessee empowers people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families to actively participate in the community throughout their lifetime.*

# Getting a Head Start with Vocational Rehabilitation

## A Brief Introduction





**Everyone should  
and can have  
paid, meaningful  
work.**

### What is Vocational Rehabilitation

Vocational Rehabilitation is a (federally funded) division of The Tennessee Department of Human Services. State government calls this *The Division of Rehabilitation Services*. Most people in the disability and education community refer to it as Vocational Rehabilitation or VR.

Folks with disabilities are eligible for VR services if:

1. Their disability makes it hard for them to get or keep a job;
2. They need help to get or keep a job that is right for them; and
3. They can benefit from VR services.

If you are eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) a counselor will help you a plan for employment. Some people need services to help them get a job. Here are some examples free services VR provides:

- Diagnosis
- Training
- Treatment

### Order of Selection/Priority Categories

Federal law requires an *Order of Selection* when there is not enough money to help everyone eligible. A VR Counselor decides the Priority Category (PC) for each eligible person, serving those with the most significant disabilities first.

Priority Category One (PC 1) have the most significant disabilities making it difficult for them to get paying jobs.

To qualify as *Priority Category 1*, a disability must cause limitations in two or more “functional capacities” as defined by VR policy:

- Mobility
- Communication
- Work Skills
- Work Tolerance
- Self-Care
- Self-Direction
- Interpersonal Skills

Those qualified as *Priority Category Two* have significant disabilities that cause serious problems in two or more areas that make it hard to get a job. People who get SSI or SSDI qualify as at least Priority Category Two because they have a documented disability or are blind.

*Priority Categories Three and Four* are for those with disabilities who have trouble getting and keeping jobs but do not have disabilities as significant as those who qualify as Priority Categories one and two.



### Rights and Responsibilities

Those receiving VR services have federally guaranteed rights and responsibilities. For more information about what these are, visit <https://www.thearctn.org/Assets/Docs/Getting-a-Head-Start-Voc-Rehab.pdf>.