

Idaho State Rehabilitation Council Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Combined 2023 Annual Report

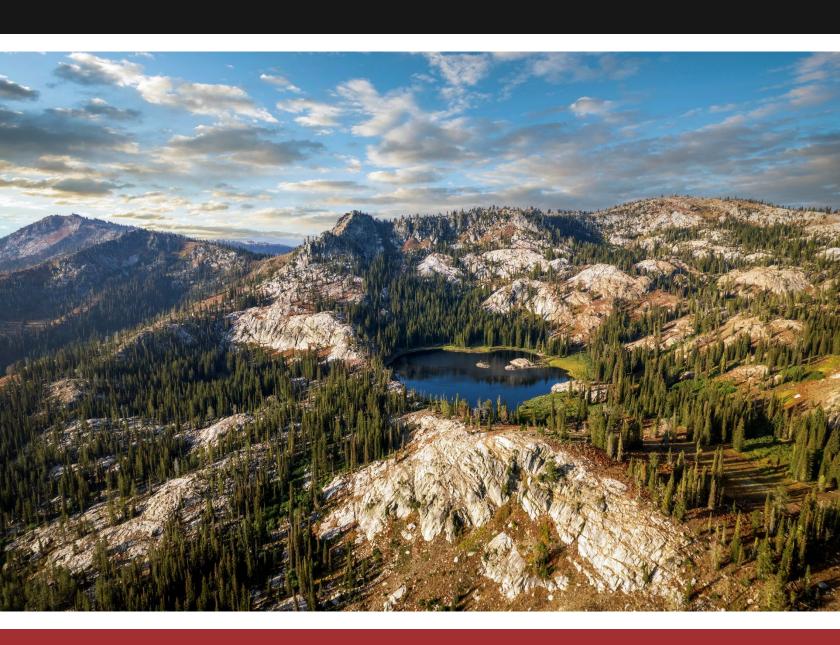


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Information and data within this report is reflective of State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2023 and Program Year 2022 (July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023). This document is partially funded by the Department of Education/ Rehabilitation Services Administration, Grant Award Number H126A230016. The Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation receives 78.7 percent of its funding through a grant from the United States Department of Education.

Cover photograph by Mike MacGuffie / IDVR Center Manager of Customer Center South Central

2022-2023 SRC Members

Council Chair	Darin Lindig
Council Vice Chair	Tim Blonsky
Disability Advocacy Group Representatives	Tim Blonsky David "Max" Maxwell Nathan Ogden
Former Applicant or Recipient Representatives	Vacant Mark Reinhardt Stephanie Taylor-Thompson
Community Rehabilitation Program Representative	Pam Harris
Client Assistance Program Representative	Nancy Grant
Business/Industry & Labor Representatives	Darin Lindig Ron Oberleitner Diana Colgrove Vacant
American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services	Ramona Medicine Horse
Parent Training & Information Center Representative	Sarah Gornik
State Independent Living Council Representative	Jami Davis
State Department of Education Representative	Randi Cole
Workforce Development Council Representative	. James Pegram
Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Representatives	
Ex-Officio	White, General Supervisor

Message from State Rehabilitation Council Chair

For over 100 years, Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) has served the state of Idaho to ensure persons with disabilities are provided an equal opportunity to employment and to receive the program's services and supports needed to be productive and valuable employees for Idaho employers. As Idaho's State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), we, as a citizen-based council, advise, make recommendations, and assist in optimizing VR services for individuals, businesses, and taxpayers.

I personally love that our SRC membership is purposely diverse and composed of past VR recipients, business representatives, and members of several disability service organizations --- each a disability advocate bringing their own perspective to work hand in hand with VR to provide the best outcomes for individuals with disabilities.



Being a council member representing the business community for the past five years, I have come to appreciate how VR provides a bridge between those wanting to

work and those businesses needing talent and other support services. Most businesses welcome the chance to hire a person with a disability but are not always savvy in understanding the various challenges encountered by individuals with disabilities. Too many employers are unaware of how to access the diverse talent pool, or the variety of services VR provides directly to support employers.

Each quarter the SRC engages with VR staff to review agency initiatives and programs including the program's budget information, field services initiatives, Pre-ETS activities, business services updates, as well as provide input on policy changes. Many issues were acted upon this year, including,

- Amending SRC by-laws including restructure of the SRC Committees to be more effective to meet Council obligations and clarifying membership requirements.
- Reviewing and approval of the Fair Hearing Process of Appeals section of the Feld Service Policy Manual.
- Providing feedback on several agency policies: Competitive Integrated Employment, Post Employment Services, and Informed Choice.
- Providing input during the development of this year's Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment and Customer Satisfaction Surveys.
- Reviewing the Corrective Action Plan required by RSA, specific to Pre-ETS expenditures.

Message from State Rehabilitation Council Chair

As a group we continue to learn how to be better informed advocates for individuals with disabilities. Several SRC members made presentations. Presentations included supports needed for neurodiversity; strategies for serving those justice involved individuals transitioning from prison; how SRC members can speak to and educate legislators on issues important to the VR program; and an overview of the newly created apprenticeship counselor position.

This year we welcome three new additions to the council: Mark Reinhardt, Diana Colgrove, and Nancy Grant. Each brings a wealth of diverse personal experiences which the council will value to years to come. We have said or will be saying goodbye to some amazing council members: James Pegram, Nathan Ogden, Ron Oberleitner, and Christine Meeuwsen. They all have left a wealth of insight, experience, and dedication to the VR-SRC relationship. A special goodbye to our former Council Chair, Janice Carson, who continues to have an out-sized impact on individuals in the state as she leads the Idaho Assistive Technology Project.

The SRC Vice Chair, Tim Blonsky, attended the spring Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) conference, during which, the SRC was informed of CSAVRs three strategic priorities to support the VR programs:

- 1. Strategies for recruitment and retention
- 2. Program efficiencies
- 3. Marketing of the VR program.

On behalf of the Idaho State Rehabilitation Council, it is my honor and privilege to provide you with our 2023 Combined Annual Report.

Thank you,

Darin Lindig, Council Chair

"It was truly a pleasure to have the VR counselor as my advocate. She was empathetic to my limitation, and never made me ashamed of my situation."

VR Customer Response to Customer Satisfaction Survey

Greetings!



It is an honor to present the Combined 2023 Annual Report. Through our strong collaboration and partnership, Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

(IDVR) and the SRC ensures a robust and comprehensive VR program that enhances employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities and supports the businesses that hire talent in the State of Idaho.

The Division has been particularly busy this past year. Highlighted below are a few of our initiatives and successes:

• To better assist customers as well as help improve employee satisfaction, agency leadership, with feedback from our greater team members, worked collaboratively to frame our future. Over the past two years, we took a deeper dive to understand our culture, what our ideal agency should be, how we measure success, and how we serve our customers, to include students, general VR customers, and businesses. Our goal through this restructure initiative was to improve employee satisfaction to drive and capture the energy to refocus on our customers. Ultimately, this

- reorganization is designed to improve teamwork, implement efficiencies, to better support the customers VR experience and increase successful outcomes.
- We have expanded our collaboration with school districts as well as the College of Eastern Idaho to offer experiences in Career Technical Education for students during the summer. Depending on the location, programs included: job exploration in the fields of construction, culinary arts, law enforcement, Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), veterinary technician and welding, to name a few.
- The Business Services Manager and her team continue to develop additional services for Idaho businesses to tap into and hire from the talent pool of individual's served by IDVR.

As we navigate our new organizational structure, our VR team continues to be committed to excellence. This undertaking is **BOLD**, however, I believe it was necessary to improve our customers' experience. While we are still early in this change, I believe the teams we have created will drive employee satisfaction which in turn will improve customer satisfaction. I look forward to the coming year with great excitement.

Jane Donnellan, MA, CRC IDVR Administrator

Vocational Rehabilitation Services for Individuals with Disabilities

IDVR assists Idahoans with disabilities to obtain, maintain or advance in employment. IDVR provides various services to assist individuals with disabilities find work.

IDVR Vision

An Idaho where all individuals with disabilities have the opportunity to participate in the workforce and employers value their contributions.

IDVR Mission

To prepare individuals with disabilities for employment and career opportunities while meeting the needs of the employer.



Vocational Rehabilitation is appropriate if...

- · You want to work.
- You have a disability that makes it hard for you to get a job, continue working or advance in a job.
- You want to become employed to the best of your ability.
- You need support and assistance to become employed.
- You can be an active participant in the development of your career goals.

You may be eligible if:

- You have a physical or mental disability which creates difficulties with obtaining or maintaining a job.
- You get Social Security for a disability (SSI or SSDI) and want to work.

Services

When developing your plan for getting work, you may require several different types of support. The types of support vary based on your employment goal and will be unique to your specific needs.

Supports may include counseling and guidance, job search, placement and other job supports, academic training, and disability related supports, to mention a few.

Are you a high school student? Visit the <u>student page</u> on the website or scan the QR code for more information.

Customer Satisfaction Survey Results

The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) oversees the ongoing customer satisfaction survey of IDVR participants who leave/exit the program for various reasons.

In order to gauge the customers' overall experience with program services, the customer satisfaction survey asks 12 questions in three domains. The SRC and Division use customer feedback to improve the VR experience and service delivery.

The survey was completed by 274 out of 2,729 customers with a 10% response rate. Percentages listed below represent the proportion of respondents who answered "agree" or "strongly" agree" to each of the survey questions. Responses were collected from customers with cases closed from July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023.

Overall Customer Satisfaction (N=274)

Percent of "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" Responses

General Customer Satisfaction

Treated me with respect	95%
Responded to my questions in timely manner	84%
Satisfied with my experience	80%
Would recommend VR to friends with disabilities	84%
Understood that employment was the goal	96%

Individual Plan for Employment (IPE)

Had the opportunity to choose service providers	91%
Services provided in a timely manner	86%
Worked with VR counselor to develop plan	94%

Services Provided by Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs)

Recommend providers	74%
Services were helpful	74%
Satisfied with the communication & interactions	75%
Had a choice when picking a provider	75%

Purpose of the Idaho State Rehabilitation Council

The SRC is a body of citizens appointed by the executive director of the Idaho State Board of Education under the authority of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

The SRC is composed of a diverse group of volunteers including current or former customers, professionals, employers, advocates, and service providers who promote public awareness, advocacy, and support of the Vocational Rehabilitation program. The majority of the SRC members are themselves individuals with disabilities. SRC members are chosen for their interest in, and specialized knowledge of the disability community. The term of office for SRC members is three years, with the option of serving a second three-year term.

The SRC must be composed of at least 15 members including:

- 4 representatives of businesses, industry & labor
- 1 representative of Statewide Independent Living Council
- 1 representative of parent training & information center
- 1 representative of client assistance program
- 1 representative of community rehabilitation program service provider
- 1 representative of disability groups
- 1 current or former VR customer
- 1 American Indian VR Services program
- 1 representative of the State Department of Education
- 1 representative of the Workforce Development Council

- 1 Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (ex-officio)
- Vocational Rehabilitation Administrator (ex-officio)

The SRC communicates directly with customers, rehabilitation professionals, businesses, service providers, and other individuals interested in improving the services and programs provided by the VR program. This group reviews, analyzes, and advises the Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (IDVR) regarding the performance, effectiveness, and objectives of the program. SRC members provide critical support and guidance to IDVR (and to individuals with disabilities served by the Division) and communicate regularly with legislators, on both the state and national levels on their behalf.

SRC members participate in quarterly meetings and strategic planning activities, provide recommendations for the VR Portion of the Combined State Plan, provide critical feedback on Division policies, and analyze customer satisfaction results and other relevant program performance data.

SRC members and IDVR staff agree that this strong partnership produces positive and lasting impacts for Idahoans with disabilities.

In order to accomplish the many activities and responsibilities, the SRC is comprised of two standing committees: Executive and Planning, Policy and Program Effectiveness Committee. All SRC members participate in committee activities based upon their strengths and area of interest.

Committee Descriptions

Executive Committee

This committee will exercise the overall governance of the Council subject to Council Bylaws. The Executive Committee will represent and guide the Council's efforts to advocate for the VR program on behalf of the state agency, to state legislators, congressional delegation, and to the public at large. Advocacy efforts will focus on a partnership with the agency toward a common goal - maximizing employment and independent living for people with disabilities.

The Executive Committee will be composed of the Chair, Vice-Chair, the immediate past Chair, if available, and the co-chairs of the Planning, Policy and Program Effectiveness Committee. At least one member with a disability will be a member of the Executive Committee.

Planning, Policy and Program Effectiveness Committee

Activities of the Planning, Policy, and Program Effectiveness Committee strive to ensure that the VR program produces high quality outcomes for VR customers. Committee members will review, analyze, and advise IDVR on eligibility, including order of selection; the extent, scope, and effectiveness of services provided, policy

development; and functions performed by state agencies that affect or potentially affect the ability of individuals with disabilities in achieving employment outcomes. This Committee will have two co-chairs, one chairing the CSNA and VR Portion of the State Plan and the other chairing the Policy Development and Survey Committees. Each subcommittee shall consist of at least two (2) additional members.

SRC Mission

Working on behalf of Idahoans with disabilities, the Idaho State Rehabilitation Council endeavors to provide consumers, service providers and others the opportunity to participate in constructive dialogue and public input to continually improve the quality of Vocational Rehabilitation services to residents of Idaho.

"Without your help I would have struggled to get the tools necessary and do as well in my job as I have. Thank you for another wonderful program."

VR Customer Response to Customer Satisfaction
Survey

Funds Expended Toward Customer Services/Support

\$6,211,914.80

Expenditures on Job Training \$2,044,636.21

Training Type	Total Paid	Unique Participants
Apprenticeship	\$2,922.00	7
Community College	\$147,284.65	82
Four-Year	\$915,422.71	239
Graduate	\$254,118.97	35
Miscellaneous	\$82,587.83	63
Occupational/Vocational	\$505,646.91	212
On-the-Job	\$27,070.50	10
Truck Driving	\$109,582.64	59

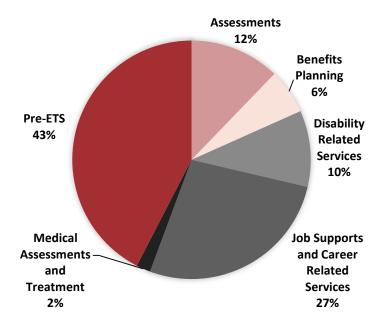
Return on Investment (ROI)

For General Funds spent by IDVR it is estimated that successfully employed customers will return \$19,770,845 in taxes to the State over the course of their working life (based on data from SFY23).

"The VR Counselor was incredible, personable, and professional. He made me feel very comfortable, relaxed, and able to trust him to meet my career needs."

VR Customer Response to Customer Satisfaction Survey

OTHER CUSTOMER EXPENDITURES



Program Highlights

Top 6 Referral Sources in State Year 2023

Self Referral	737
State Department of Correction/Juvenile Justice	486
Other Sources	455
Family and Friends	400
Educational Institutions (Elementary/Secondary and Post-Secondary)	234
Mental Health Providers	206

4,323

Customers Served*

Customers by Age Range

Age Group	# of Participants
14 to 24	1594
25 to 44	1488
45 to 59	858
60 to 85	383

*Individuals received Individualized Plan for Employment IPE services; typical participation (duration) is multiple years.



Customers
Successfully Employed

Customers by Disability Type



Visual Impairments	21
Psychological & Psychosocial Disabilities	2,268
Physical Disabilities	777
Learning and Intellectual Disabilities	813
Auditory and Communicative Disabilities	473
duction by Bloubinty Typo	

Business Spotlight

IDVR hosts virtual business spotlights to allow businesses the chance to get in front of an audience of VR team members as well as partners from Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ICBVI), Shoshone Bannock Tribal VR, and the Department of Veteran Affairs to share information about their business. The business spotlights foster information sharing and discussions about the specific business to allow the team members working with job seekers to better understand the business structure, types of positions, and what the business is looking for in a qualified applicant. These services are designed to ensure positive matches are made from the job seeker to the business side of the recruitment and talent matching relationship.

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Business Spotlights Completed

If you would like for your business to be spotlighted, please reach out to IDVR's Business Relations Manager at mikayla.monaghan@vr.idaho.gov to plan your business spotlight!

1,451

Total Services to Businesses

Several businesses who participated in a Business Spotlight include:

- St. Alphonsus
- Idaho Transportation Department
- MDU Utilities/ Intermountain Gas
- Family Resource Home Care
- · Idaho Youth Ranch
- FedEx Ground
- QualityLogic

Services Provided to Businesses by Category:

Information & Support Services	556
Recruitment Assistance	491
Training Services	
(Including Employee & Student	283
Services)	
Other Contacts with Business	121

764 Employers Engaged with IDVR

Business Services



Service Partners

IDVR provides no-cost services and supports to address the needs of business including hiring and maintaining qualified employees with disabilities.

Information and Support Services

IDVR will work with businesses to answer questions regarding hiring and maintaining individuals with disabilities as part of their workforce. This service is customized to the business needs to assure the business has the information and resources they need to create an inclusive and supportive workplace.

Building Your Talent Pipeline

IDVR works with students who are the future of the workforce. IDVR can assist your business build its talent pipeline by informing students of opportunities, to complete

informational interviews, job shadows, or short-term work experiences with your business.

Recruitment Assistance & Candidate Pre-Screening

VR will support businesses in connecting with the VR talent pool of job seekers. VR has numerous ways to do this such as informal or formal meetings to gather information about the position that is being recruited for and then share this out with job seekers that meet the minimum qualifications of the position, share information with our partner agencies to expand the talent search, <u>Jobs in Idaho</u>.



Visit the <u>business page</u> on the website or scan the QR code for more information.

Training Services

VR will work with your business to build customized training in a variety of topic areas to help your business to create an inclusive and supportive workplace for all individuals, including persons with disabilities. Topics may include disability etiquette, reasonable accommodations, ADA basics, Disability Awareness, or many more training options depending on the need of your business.

Employee Training Support

IDVR can partner with your business to help meet the needs of skilled talent for your various positions. If you are seeking individuals ready to learn and grow in their career, IDVR can assist you and your employee with gaining the skills needed to be successful in their position through an agreement for on-the-job training. For businesses with on-the-job training that will last at least one year, IDVR can support your business in developing and recruiting for a registered apprenticeship program.

"I appreciate IDVR so much for the help I received from your services. Thank you! I wouldn't be able to hear if it wasn't for your help."

VR Customer Response to Customer Satisfaction Survey

Business Services Team Expansion

IDVR recognizes the importance of being available to provide support and services to business across the state. The IDVR Business Services Team will be expanding to have dedicated team members across the state to support businesses in understanding how they can partner with IDVR, as well as providing ongoing support to build long-term mutually beneficial relationships between business and IDVR.

Employer Request for Assistance

To <u>request assistance</u> or support in any



of these areas, please complete the form, or reach out to IDVR's Business Services Manager.

Craig's Success Story

"I love nursing and look forward to many years in the field. I get a chance to show love and compassion to a stranger every shift."

- Craig, VR Customer

Craig applied for IDVR services in January 2018 to obtain assistance to enter a new career path after sustaining a workplace injury and being unable to continue in his previous vocation due to the heavy physical demands of his prior work in the construction industry. After he recovered from his workplace injury, Craig approached Vocational Rehabilitation requesting assistance with furthering his education in order to enter into a new career path.

Vocational Rehabilitation assisted Craig with counseling, guidance, financial support with tuition and books and assistance with the requirements to obtain his Registered Nurse (RN) license in Idaho. Craig completed his Bachelor of Science in Nursing Cum Laude at Boise State University and obtained his license in December of 2022. Craig started his career as a medical/surgical RN at West Valley Medical Center in January 2023. Craig regularly expresses gratitude for the support that VR provided him to achieve his employment goal and to start a new career. Craig also indicates that he refers others to VR, for assistance with their employment goal, because of his positive experience.

"The genuine compassion Craig brings to the team and our patients is palpable... I am so thankful for the efforts of his vocational rehab team who supported him."

Dawn S, Director, Med-Surg & Orthopedics West Valley M

Scan the QR code to read more about <u>Craig's</u> success story

Occupation: **Registered Nurse**

Employer:
West Valley
Medical
Center

Location: Caldwell, Idaho

Hourly Wage: **\$32.00**

Weekly Hours: **40**

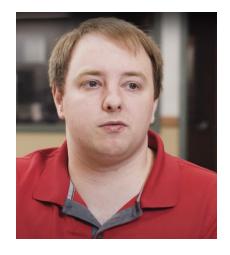




Tim's Success Story

"Voc Rehab made it possible [to become a teacher]. If I needed help with anything I knew I could go talk to Emily [my VR Counselor]."

- Tim, VR Customer



Tim was referred to VR by his parent. Tim worked with the same VR counselor from 2015-2023.

Tim came to VR knowing that he wanted to work as a teacher in order to have a positive impact on the lives of others, just as many teachers had for him throughout his education. With this goal in mind, VR was able to support Tim in completing his Bachelor's Degree in secondary education, gaining his Idaho teacher's license, and obtaining/maintaining his employment in his first year of teaching at Vallivue Academy.

Occupation:

English

Language

Arts Teacher

Employer: Vallivue Academy

Location: Caldwell, Idaho

Weekly Hours: **40**

"Idaho Voc Rehab really did their legwork with [Tim], in helping him to achieve his goals and get his education to set himself up for success. He was able to develop the skills that he needed to come sell himself, and get hired on. Kudos to [IDVR] for the groundwork and helping him get the education he wanted so that he could share his knowledge with kids."

Rafel CdeBaca, Vallivue Academy Principal & Former VR Customer

Scan the QR code to watch <u>Tim's success</u> story



Pre-Employment Transition Services

Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) are activities that provide career exploration and job readiness services for students with disabilities ages 14-21 to assist with transitioning from school to postsecondary education or competitive integrated employment. Students must be eligible for and receiving special education or related services under Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). However, for purposes of Section 504 of the Act, students with disabilities must be eligible for but are not required to be receiving services under Section 504.

Job Exploration Counseling

Assists students discover their interests and abilities to guide their career planning. It increases their motivation to explore and participate in activities to help them make informed decisions about their future. Job exploration counseling activities included:

- 12 Career Technical Education (CTE) programs
- 1,333 students participated.
- Higher Education programs include,
 BSU PREP, ISU Academy NExT, and
 U of I Vandal Academy.
- Career Counseling sessions available with Idaho State University (ISU).



Scan the QR code to learn more about one of the CTE programs.

Work Based Learning Experience (WBLE)

Students gain work experience though paid or unpaid work in a community-based setting. Additionally, WBLE activities include informational interviews, job shadows, workplace tours, apprenticeships, and/or internships. WBLE services included:

- School district programs were offered during the school year and summer months; 23 WBLEs were completed during the summer of 2023.
- 1,430 students participated in WBLE.
- Idaho Parent's Unlimited Work of Art program.
- Participation in one of the 12 Community Rehabilitation Programs contracted WBLE programs.



Scan the QR code to learn more about the <u>IESDB WBLE</u> <u>program</u>.

Workplace Readiness Training

Develops the skills and behaviors needed for students to be successful in any job. These skills help students learn how to interact with employers and coworkers and may include instruction in soft skills, communication, and/or independent living skills. VR counselors provide workplace readiness training with students in individual or group setting. Workplace readiness activities included:

- Participation in one of the 12 CTE programs.
- Reality Town
- 1,907 students participated in Workplace Readiness Training

Counseling on Post-Secondary Education

Assists students determine what options are available after graduating from high school. It creates a better understanding of how post-secondary education may be needed to obtain a career, as well as determine which institutions provide education programs necessary to support their employment goal. Services may also include understanding disability related

accommodations, assistive technology, accessing financial aid, and other college resources. Counseling on Post-Secondary Education activities included:

- Boise State University (BSU) PREP
- Idaho State University (ISU) Academy NExT
- University of Idaho (U of I) Vandal Academy
- 914 students participating in counseling on Post-Secondary Education

Instruction in Self-Advocacy

Helps students learn how to make informed decisions about their future and explain to others what they need to be successful on a job or in school. This service may include communicating their disability needs to others, setting goals, and requesting and using accommodations. Instruction in Self Advocacy awareness included:

- School District specific programs
- Annual Tools for Life Conference
- 927 students participating in Instruction in Self Advocacy.



For more information on these programs and services, visit the students page.

Interested in joining our efforts to champion individuals with disabilities?

The Idaho State Rehabilitation Council invites you to apply for membership. If you are interested in issues related to disability and employment, the SRC encourages you to apply for a seat on this council.

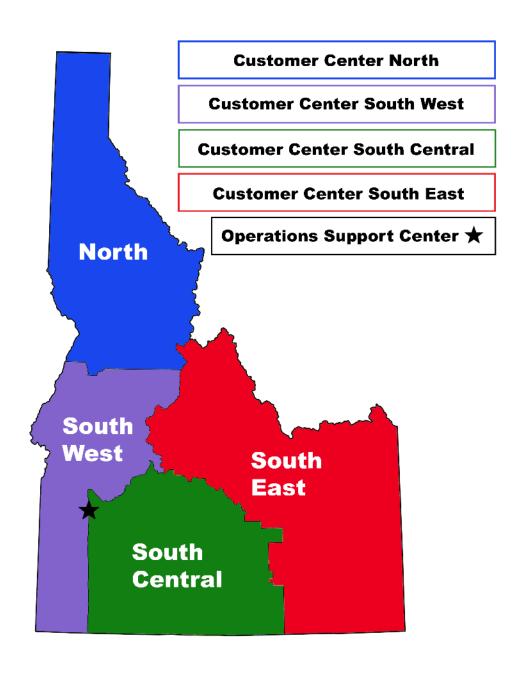
SRC 2024 Meeting Schedule

January 23rd, 2024 April 23rd, 2024 July 23rd, 2024 October 22nd, 2024



To learn more about the Idaho State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) and the Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation visit www.vr.idaho.gov, scan the QR code, or contact us at (208) 334-3390.

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Visit the <u>contacts page</u> on the website or scan the QR code for more information.



IDAHO STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL IDAHO DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

650 West State Street, Room 150 P.O 83720 Boise, Idaho 83720-0096 OFFICE (208) 334-3390 FAX (208) 334-5305

VISIT US ONLINE: WWW.VR.IDAHO.GOV

