

Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Comparable Services and Benefits Policy Document



Policy Name: Comparable Services and Benefits

Effective Date: 7/20/2026 Revision Date: Retirement Date:

Review Schedule: Annual Revision Number:

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

This policy outlines the requirement to seek and use comparable services and benefits when available before using Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (IDVR) funds to pay for participant services. IDVR must identify, and, when appropriate, coordinate the use of other available resources that can meet participant service needs. This policy outlines the services that are specifically exempted from comparable services and benefits search and use.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that IDVR complies with requirements to use comparable services and benefits before expending IDVR funds, keeps agency resources available for vocational rehabilitation (VR) services not available through other programs, and avoid service delays on a participant's progress toward their employment goal.

2.0 LEGAL AUTHORITY

[34 CFR § 361.53](#), [34 CFR § 361.48](#)

3.0 SCOPE/APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all IDVR personnel and all eligible program participants.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

Comparable Services and Benefits: Services or benefits available to a participant from another public or private source that are of the same type and purpose as services funded by IDVR and that can meet all or part of the participant's identified service need.

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5.0 STANDARD

5.1 The Rehabilitation Act, as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), requires the VR program to coordinate and utilize services and benefits already available to the participant through other public or private entities. IDVR and the participant must seek out and determine the availability of comparable services and benefits prior to including that service in the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), unless services are exempt from comparable services and benefits requirements.

5.2 IDVR funds may not be used to supplant services that are the responsibility of another entity under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Coordination with the responsible education agency is required, as applicable.

5.3 When comparable services and benefits are available, appropriate, and timely, they must be applied to the service prior to the authorization or commitment of IDVR funds, unless the service is exempt or an exception due to delay applies.

5.4 IDVR may provide services without requiring the prior use of comparable services and benefits when requiring such use would cause a delay that negatively impacts the participant's progress toward an employment outcome. Examples of circumstances in which delay may negatively impact progress include, but are not limited to:

5.4.1 The participant is unable to meet immediate employment or job placement needs due to a delay in the availability of the comparable service or benefit;

5.4.2 Timing would impede the participant's timely progress toward achieving the goals or objectives listed in their IPE.

5.5 The unavailability of comparable services and benefits must not be based solely on participant inaction or delay, provided the counselor has made reasonable efforts to assist the participant in identifying and accessing those resources.

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6.0 EXEMPTIONS:

The following services are exempt from the comparable services and benefits process:

- 6.1 Assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs;
- 6.2 Counseling and guidance, including information and support services to assist the individual in exercising informed choice;
- 6.3 Referral and other services necessary to help applicants and eligible individuals secure needed services from other agencies, including those within the statewide workforce development system;
- 6.4 Job-related services, including job search and placement assistance, job retention services, follow-up services, and follow-along services;
- 6.5 Rehabilitation technology, including telecommunications, sensory, and other technological aids and devices;
- 6.6 Post-employment services that are not limited to exempt categories listed above remain subject to comparable services and benefits requirements.