

Order of Selection Frequently Asked Questions

Washington State Department of Social and Health Services

What is an Order of Selection?

Federal law requires DVR to use an Order of Selection when the Division does not have sufficient resources to serve all eligible customers. The Order of Selection is how DVR prioritizes services for people who need them most. When customers are determined eligible, their counselor assigns them to a priority category based on the significance of their disability. The priority category assignment is based on the impact of the disability, not the type of disability.

How does this affect my DVR case?

If DVR has closed your case and you have not achieved an employment outcome, your priority of service category will be determined again when you reapply. This means that you may be placed on a waiting list if your priority of service category is not currently being served. If DVR has closed your case and you have achieved an employment outcome, you can still return for post-employment services when needed.

What are the priority of service categories?

- Category 1 – Most Significant Disabilities
- Category 2 – Significant Disabilities
- Category 3 – All Other Eligible Individuals with Disabilities

DVR looks at seven distinct areas to determine your priority of service category: mobility; communication; self-care; cognition and learning (self-direction); interpersonal; work tolerance; and work skills.

What are the criteria for Category 1?

DVR determines that you are in priority Category 1 (an individual with a most significant disability) if you are determined eligible for vocational rehabilitation services and you meet the following criteria:

1. You require multiple VR services over an extended period of time; and
2. You experience serious functional limitations in four or more areas.

What are the criteria for Category 2?

DVR determines that you are in priority Category 2 (an individual with a significant disability) if you are determined eligible for vocational rehabilitation services and you meet the following criteria:

1. You require multiple VR services over an extended period of time; and
2. You experience serious functional limitations in one to three areas.

If you receive Social Security Disability benefits (SSI and/or SSDI), you are automatically placed in at least Category 2. DVR determines whether you should be assigned Category 1 after talking with you and/or reviewing additional medical information.

What are the criteria for Category 3?

DVR determines you are in priority category 3 (an individual with a disability) if you are determined eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, you experience functional limitations in at least one area, and you do not meet the criteria for categories 1 or 2.

Who does DVR serve first?

As a vocational rehabilitation program, DVR's core mission is to serve individuals with disabilities who need our services most. This includes individuals with the most significant disabilities and students with disabilities. DVR serves people with the Most Significant Disabilities (Category 1) first.

What happens if I'm placed on a wait list?

A waitlist is a result of a closed priority category. If you are placed on the wait list, DVR will invite you off the wait list based on your priority category and the date you applied for services from DVR. If you are placed on the wait list, DVR will provide you with information and referral about other federal or state programs that offer services to help you meet your employment needs, if available.

What about Pre-Employment Transition Services under an Order?

DVR will continue to provide pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities while under an Order of Selection.

- Students with disabilities who have not applied for DVR services can continue to receive pre-employment transition services.
- Students with disabilities who have an approved Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) can receive pre-employment transition services through their IPE.
- Students with disabilities who receive a pre-employment transition service before applying for DVR services CAN continue to receive pre-employment transition services if determined eligible and placed on a wait list.
- Students with disabilities who apply for DVR services before participating in a pre-employment transition service CANNOT receive pre-employment transition services if placed on a wait list.
- If a student is determined ineligible for DVR services, they can no longer receive pre-employment transition services.

What can I do if I disagree with my priority category?

If you disagree with your priority category determination, you are encouraged to contact your VR counselor to discuss the reasons why you believe the category should be changed. You are encouraged to provide information to DVR as needed to accurately determine your priority category.

DVR customers have rights. Customer rights include the ability to contact the Client Assistance Program (CAP) and other ways to resolve disputes. See the Customer Rights enclosure for more information.