800-552-5019 | TTY dial 711
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DARS

Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services

Our Mission

The **D**epartment for **A**ging and **R**ehabilitative **S**ervices, in collaboration with community partners, provides and advocates for resources and services to improve the employment, quality of life, security, and independence of older Virginians, Virginians with disabilities, and their families.

The **Division of Rehabilitative Services** offers vocational rehabilitation to assist people with disabilities to prepare for, secure, retain or regain employment. You may be eligible for these services if you have a physical, mental or emotional disability; this disability keeps you from working; you live, work or attend school in Virginia; and DRS certifies that there is a good chance that these services will result in your employment.

Vocational rehabilitation counselors may provide or assist with:

- Physical and mental restoration
- Vocational evaluation/career exploration
- Vocational/job training
- Job placement assistance
- Situational assessment
- Job development/job coaching

Assistive technology devices, services or accommodations may help consumers live and work independently. Services and supports are also available to businesses to improve workplace accessibility. DARS can help identify potential resources for obtaining equipment through the Virginia Assistive Technology System, the Assistive Technology Loan Fund Authority and Centers for Independent Living.

DARS works with many **Community Partners** and businesses to assist individuals with disabilities in achieving their goals of employment and/or independence.

- Brain Injury Services
- Centers for Independent Living
- Employment Service Organizations
- Virginia Assistive Technology System
- ATLFA
- One-Stop Service Centers
- Ticket to Work/Employment Networks
- High schools and higher education

The **Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center** provides comprehensive, integrated medical and vocational rehabilitation services to enhance an individual's independence and employability. Its on-campus staff provide counseling, vocational evaluation and training, medical rehabilitation/clinical therapy services, driver education and life skills training.

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Capabilities, not Disabilities

Today, businesses recognize people with disabilities as a **workforce that works**. The Division of Rehabilitative Services provides employers the tools and resources they need to successfully employ and support people with disabilities in the workplace.

At little or no cost, employers can benefit from the following DRS services:

Staffing and Recruitment

DRS' dedicated employment counselors can find qualified job applicants who meet your specific job requirements.

Workplace Accommodations

Develop or revise job descriptions, identify reasonable accommodations for prospective or existing employees with disabilities or improve workplace accessibility.

Job Retention/Return to Work Services

In cases of disability due to illness or non-occupational injury, DRS can help reduce turnover and training costs by providing solutions that keep valuable skills and expertise in your workplace.

Disability Awareness Training

Create a positive work environment within your company. Request for staff to learn about disability etiquette, "people first" language and adopt best practices for hiring, accommodating and communicating with workers and customers with disabilities.

Access to Resources

DRS connects businesses with community resources and networks that support diversity and workforce needs.

Financial Incentives and Training Programs

Hiring and/or accomodating persons with disabilities can provide you with tax and reimbursement benefits.

Unpaid Work Experience Program

- The Unpaid Work Experience is a no-cost, opportunity to identify future employees.
- DRS consults with the employer to set up specific job tasks for our client to perform.
- DRS assists the client with transportation costs.
- DRS provides accident coverage for qualifying client if injured during the internship.

On-The-Job Training Reimbursement Program

- Employers get a chance to assess the abilities and work habits of an employee at half the cost.
- DRS will set up a contract for you to hire our client and will reimburse you for up to 50 percent of the trainee's wages paid during the training period.
- The trainee's wage is equal to minimum wage or the entry level wage the employer pays for that position, whichever is greater.
- OJT can also be combined with the Work Opportunity Tax Credit.
- DRS finds carefully screened trainees to match the demands of your workplace.
- DRS follows up regularly on trainee's progress.

Work Opportunity Tax Credit

- A tax credit is available to employers who hire persons with disabilities.
- The tax credit amounts to 25 percent of qualified first-year wages for those working 120 to 400 hours or 40 percent for 400 hours or more worked.
- See the VEC Website for more information.

Supported Employment Training Program

- DRS contracts with vendors to provide job services that help employees become acclimated to their job and increase job performance.
- Contracted services may include situational assessments, job coaching, job retention, social skills training, job placement and long-term follow along.

For more information about DARS, visit www.vdars.org
8004 Franklin Farms Dr., Henrico, VA 23229
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Contact your Business Development Manager to learn more or set up these programs.

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