

Training

Post-secondary education

Clients enrolled in any training program must maintain a cumulative minimum grade average equivalent to 2.0 on a 4.0 scale. In addition, clients whose vocational objectives require them to apply for entry into any professional or advanced level curriculums must maintain at least the minimum admission standards for those curriculums. In some cases, this will require the clients to maintain a grade point average higher than 2.0 on a 4.0 scale.

If a client's grade average falls below these minimum standards, the counselor may fund one additional quarter or semester during which the client has the opportunity to bring the grade average up to the minimum standards. Failure to improve the grade average to the minimum standards will result in discontinued funding for training and related expenses through Rehabilitation Services (RS). In the event of such circumstances, counselors will work with clients to reassess service options and to amend the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). Clients, of course, have the choice to continue training using other resources which may be available to them. If they do so and improve their grade average to the minimum standards, counselors may re-establish RS funding.

Clients enrolled in college or university programs must complete at least 30 hours per year. Year is defined as a 12-month period, which includes two semesters and summer school. Please note that this policy does not require participation in summer school if the 30-hour minimum requirement can be otherwise met. Exceptions may be considered. Each RS Program Administrator will establish a procedure for routing such exception requests through the RS Managers, RS Program Administrator or both. Use of the Exceptions Request Form (Section 8 / Part 54) is required.

- If a student drops classes resulting in failure to meet the 30-hour minimum, an exception must be approved according to Regional procedure to allow continuation of RS funding for the training plan.
- There may be occasions, such as illness, which would cause a student's IPE or participation in training to be suspended for a period of time. In such circumstances, the 30-hour annual minimum will be prorated at a rate of 12 hours each per semester and six hours per summer school session.

Clients enrolled in other post-secondary training must meet the full-time requirements of those programs. Exceptions must be allowed by the school and approved according to Regional RS procedures. Use of the Exceptions Request Form (Section 8 / Part 54) is required.

After completion of the first year of school, when transfer to a different school is contemplated, or when a change of major is contemplated, clients will be required to work with the institutions of higher education to analyze their transcripts and develop plans for completing course work necessary to complete the degree. This analysis and plan must be submitted for approval to the counselor as an expectation of the IPE.

IPEs will specifically note the grade or performance level and number of hours that must be maintained and identify how progress will be monitored. IPEs will also note the requirement for clients to consult with their counselors prior to dropping any classes.

IPEs supporting graduate studies will not be considered until the client has completed the prerequisite degree and admission requirements. Once those requirements have been met, the IPE for advanced studies may be developed if it is designed to meet a specific employment outcome that is consistent with the individual's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice.

Textbook buy-back

Funds received for books originally purchased by RS and then returned at the end of a semester or other training period will be credited or returned directly to RS. Students may choose to keep textbooks that relate to their major field of study.

Tuition and fees at private or out-of-state institutions

Tuition and fees for private or out-of-state educational institutions will be paid at a rate not exceeding the current per credit hour rate at any Kansas public institution or Kansas Board of Regents University. If a specific training program necessary to meet a client's rehabilitation needs is not available at a Kansas public institution of higher learning, out-of-state or private educational institution tuition and fees can be paid at the usual and customary rate. In cases where education costs would be less at a private or out-of-state educational institution than they would be at a similar in-state educational institution, counselor discretion and client choice will be considered. Such circumstances could include, but are not limited to, those cases requiring attendant care, specialized housing, transportation, medical expenses or other accommodations. Another factor which may be considered is the availability of courses within the timeframe of the IPE and goals for achieving employment. Out-of-state services funded by RS require prior approval. See Section 1 / Part 13.

Travel for students participating in out-of-state services

If out-of-state training is approved for a client because comparable services or programs are not available in Kansas, RS may pay reasonable travel expenses for one round trip between Kansas and the school per semester or term. (For example, RS will pay for travel to the school at the beginning of the semester and for return home at the end of the semester.) Such travel is subject to economic need.

If a client is participating in out-of-state training when comparable services or programs are available in Kansas, RS will not be responsible for any travel expenses.

Student loans and grants

The intent of the Rehabilitation Act is that vocational rehabilitation (VR) resources are used only as a last resort to pay for training in institutions of higher education. Within this context, however, a client cannot be required to take a student loan as a condition for receiving training or other VR services. Clients must make maximum efforts to secure grant assistance. Therefore, a client who owes a refund on a grant or who has defaulted on a student loan should proceed to clear the obligation in order to be eligible for additional student financial aid. If an individual decides not to repay a loan although financially able to do so, it could be concluded that the individual has failed to carry out his/her responsibility to make maximum efforts to secure grant assistance, and RS would be prohibited from paying the individual's training costs. True hardship cases may exist where an individual has limited or no financial resources and is not able to work out a satisfactory repayment agreement. Under such circumstances it can be concluded that maximum efforts have been made to secure grant assistance and that comparable benefits and services are not available. In such an instance, VR funding for training may be appropriate. *(RSA-PD-92-02)*

Scholarships

Merit-based scholarships are not considered a comparable benefit.

On-the-job training

On-the-job training requires a written agreement between the client, counselor, and employer, which stipulates the hourly wage, training to be provided by the employer, and any other conditions of employment. Job coaching may be provided in conjunction with on-the-job training if it does not duplicate the work-related training being provided by the employer.

Alternative methods of training delivery

Correspondence courses, outreach courses, private business or technical schools, and training which uses the Internet as the primary delivery mechanism may be authorized with the following considerations:

- The training specifically meets the client's needs, and is consistent with the rehabilitation plan and vocational objective.
- The training is consistent with the client's informed choice.
- The counselor and client have verified the credentials of the institution, such as accreditation, use by other related programs such as the Veteran's Administration (VA), eligibility for federal financial aid, and the placement success rate of graduates.
- The choice is cost effective.