

Chapter II – Application, Eligibility Determinations, Case Closure and Order of Selection

Section 1 – Referrals & Application

Guidance

Referrals and applications must be processed as efficiently as possible, so as not to delay the determination of eligibility and the provision of services, or the determination of ineligibility.

Legal Requirements

A. Referrals

1. Standards must be set for the prompt and equitable handling of referrals.
2. These standards must include guidelines for making good faith efforts to inform potential consumers of application requirements and gather information necessary to initiate the process of determining eligibility.

An effort should be made to process referrals within one week of the first contact. This means that information about the nature, scope and purpose of the VR program be shared with all potential applicants in order to afford them the opportunity to make an informed decision whether or not to apply. Information should also be shared about documentation needs for eligibility and how consumers can take a role in providing or securing that information.

During the application process, is very important that consumers learn about the relationship between employment and any public benefits they may be receiving, and that BRS gather accurate information regarding the individual's benefits.

B. Application

1. Once an individual has submitted an application for BRS services, an eligibility determination will be made within 60 days unless:

- a. Exceptional and unforeseen circumstances beyond the control of the agency preclude a determination within 60 days and both BRS and the consumer agree to a specific extension of time; or
- b. BRS is conducting an evaluation of the individual's ability to benefit from services.

Staff must attempt to obtain a written agreement from the consumer in any case where the process of eligibility determination exceeds 60 days.

2. An individual is considered to have submitted an application when the individual or his/her *representative**:
 - a. Has completed and signed a BRS application form;
 - b. Has provided information necessary to initiate an assessment to determine eligibility and priority for services; and
 - c. Is available to complete the assessment process.
3. BRS must inform applicants that individuals who receive services under the program must intend to achieve an *employment outcome**.
4. If the consumer is not yet 18 years old, his/her guardian must also sign the application.