

What you need to know about Arizona's Rehabilitation Services Administration's, (AZRSA) Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program

AZRSA's Vocational Rehabilitation is an employment assistance program for people with disabilities. You must be determined eligible to receive services. Eligible individuals are those who:

1. Have a documented disability, and...
2. The disability causes a substantial impediment to employment, and...
3. Require vocational rehabilitation services in order to overcome the impediment to employment, and
4. Are able to get and keep a job.

What is the Order of Selection?

When every eligible person cannot begin receiving VR services due to limited funding, federal law requires that AZRSA determine the order in which persons will receive services as funding becomes available.

The Order of Selection (OOS) is organized by Priority Category. All eligible persons in the state of Arizona are assigned to a Priority Category based on how significantly their disability impacts their ability to work. The federal law requires that persons with the most significant disabilities be served first; therefore Priority Categories are served in the following order as funding allows:

- Priority Category 1 – Persons with the most significant disabilities
- Priority Category 2 – Persons with significant disabilities
- Priority Category 3 – All other eligible persons

Persons within each category are served based on application date.

How does AZRSA determine my significance of disability and Priority Category?

Your counselor will determine your significance of disability and Priority Category after reviewing your medical records, assessment reports and speaking with you about your ability to complete work related tasks. These work related tasks are categorized into 7 functional capacity areas. These areas are:

• Communication	• Interpersonal Skills
• Mobility	• Self-Care
• Self-Direction	• Work Skills
• Work Tolerance	

Your counselor will also determine what services you might need in order to obtain and maintain employment and for how long those services might be needed.

What are the criteria for each Priority Category?

Priority Category 1 – *Eligible persons with the most significant disabilities*

A person with a severe physical or mental impairment that seriously limits three or more functional capacities in terms of an employment outcome; and whose vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require 2 or more vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time. Persons in Priority Category 1 are selected for services before all other eligible persons.

Priority Category 2 – *Eligible persons with significant disabilities*

A person with a significant physical or mental impairment that seriously limits one or more functional capacities in terms of an employment outcome; and whose vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require 2 or more vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time.

Priority Category 3 – *All other eligible persons*

A person with a physical or mental impairment that seriously limits one functional capacity in terms of an employment outcome; and whose vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require 1 vocational rehabilitation service over a limited period of time.

- *Your counselor has 60 calendar days to determine your eligibility for the Vocational Rehabilitation program. Sometimes, evaluations or assessments are needed to determine how significantly your disability impedes your ability to work and the counselor will request an extension to this process to gather the needed evaluation/assessment results.*

How will I know what Priority Category I am assigned to and if I can start receiving services?

Once your Priority Category has been determined, a letter notifying you of the decision will be mailed to the address you have provided to us. The letter will state your Priority Category and if you may begin services, or if you have been placed on a waitlist.

How can I find out about my status on the waitlist or what Priority Category is being served?

AZRSA will contact you by mail at least once every 6 months regarding your status on the waitlist. As soon as funding is available to serve your Priority Category, AZRSA will notify you by mail that you may come to your local VR office to begin services.

- *Currently, only Priority Category 1 is open and receiving services. Priority Categories 2 and 3 have been closed since 2009.*

Am I automatically eligible for services if I am on SSI or SSDI?

A person who receives SSI or SSDI based on their own disability will be considered eligible and will be at least a Priority Category 2. You may qualify for a higher Priority Category based on the actual number of functional capacity limitations.

How do I request a review of my Priority Category Assignment?

You may request a review of your Priority Category assignment at any time by providing your counselor with evidence that your disability has become more significant.

You may go online and complete a self-referral form at:

<https://des.az.gov/services/employment/arizona-rehabilitation-services>

For questions about AZRSA or VR services for people who are Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing please contact:

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