

DIVISION OF VISUAL SERVICES, cont. . .

PIECES OF THE PUZZLE

- Under the rehabilitation counseling and employment program, consumers and counselors work together to develop an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).
- The IPE is an individualized program of services based around a core of comprehensive evaluation, vocational counseling, and job placement that are needed to assist the person in attaining his or her employment goal. Any AT that the person needs for employment must be included in this plan. However, AT devices and services may be essential to help the person demonstrate vocational capabilities and are an essential part of the comprehensive evaluation.
- Once a decision has been made to supply an eligible client with AT, it may be possible to provide a wide range of devices if they are vocationally relevant. However, DRS cannot buy devices that other sources can buy or that ADA requires other sources to provide.
- The cost of some services, such as medical examinations to determine if a person is eligible for vocational rehabilitation, counseling and job placement, are provided at no charge to the client. For some other services, a client may have to share in the cost, depending on his or her income and resources.
- The DRS State Plan has provisions, during times of limited resources, to serve clients under an order of selection which means some eligible applicants may be placed on waiting lists until funds are available to pay for services. Consumers are encouraged to apply for services during an order of selection because those on waiting lists will be served on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Visual Services provides a wide array of rehabilitation programs that include: rehabilitation counseling, employment, independent living services, Older Blind Program (page 55) business enterprise operations, special library services (page 54) and information access via telephone.
- Independent living services include rehabilitation teachers and mobility specialists that can provide adjustment counseling; instruction in personal and home management; communications; recreation or leisure activities; the community; and use of the white cane.
- The business enterprise program trains and assists people who are blind in establishing and operating food service businesses in public and private facilities across the state.
- NEWSLINE® For the Blind gives free telephone access throughout the state to local and national newspapers for persons whose disabilities limit access to printed information. Visual Services also operates a telephone service, which provides community and job information.
- VS partners with Oklahoma ABLE Tech to provide an assistive technology device demonstration center and short-term equipment loan program. The demonstration center can assist a person or small group of individuals the opportunity to explore one or more assistive technology devices to assist in the decision making process about device purchase or utilization. The short-term loan program allows a person to "try before you buy" an assistive technology device. For more information on the devices available contact the AT Lab in Oklahoma City by calling (405) 522-3418 or VS Center in Tulsa at (918) 551-4933.