

## Social Security Administration

## § 404.2103

the State VR agencies or alternate participants for VR services. Payment will be provided for VR services provided on behalf of disabled individuals under one or more of the provisions discussed in § 404.2101.

(a) Sections 404.2101 through 404.2103 describe the purpose of these regulations and the meaning of terms we frequently use in them.

(b) Section 404.2104 explains how State VR agencies or alternate participants may participate in the payment program under this subpart.

(c) Section 404.2106 describes the basic qualifications for alternate participants.

(d) Sections 404.2108 through 404.2109 describe the requirements and conditions under which we will pay a State VR agency or alternate participant under this subpart.

(e) Sections 404.2110 through 404.2111 describe when an individual has completed a continuous period of SGA and when VR services will be considered to have contributed to that period.

(f) Section 404.2112 describes when payment will be made to a VR agency or alternate participant because an individual's disability benefits are continued based on his or her participation in a VR program which we have determined will increase the likelihood that he or she will not return to the disability rolls.

(g) Sections 404.2114 through 404.2115 describe services for which payment will be made.

(h) Section 404.2116 describes the filing deadlines for claims for payment for VR services.

(i) Section 404.2117 describes the payment conditions.

(j) Section 404.2118 describes the applicability of these regulations to alternate participants.

(k) Section 404.2119 describes how we will make payment to State VR agencies or alternate participants for rehabilitation services.

(l) Sections 404.2120 and 404.2121 describe the audits and the prepayment and postpayment validation reviews we will conduct.

(m) Section 404.2122 discusses confidentiality of information and records.

(n) Section 404.2123 provides for the applicability of other Federal laws and regulations.

(o) Section 404.2127 provides for the resolution of disputes.

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### § 404.2103 Definitions.

For purposes of this subpart:

*Accept the beneficiary as a client for VR services* means that the State VR agency determines that the individual is eligible for VR services and places the individual into an active caseload status for development of an individualized written rehabilitation program.

*Act* means the Social Security Act, as amended.

*Alternate participants* means any public or private agencies (except participating State VR agencies (see § 404.2104)), organizations, institutions, or individuals with whom the Commissioner has entered into an agreement or contract to provide VR services.

*Commissioner* means the Commissioner of Social Security or the Commissioner's designee.

*Disability* means "disability" or "blindness" as defined in sections 216(i) and 223 of the Act.

*Disability beneficiary* means a disabled individual who is entitled to benefits under section 223, 202(d), 202(e) or 202(f) of the act or is continuing to receive payment under section 225(b) of the Act after his or her disabling physical or mental impairments have ceased.

*Medical recovery* for purposes of this subpart is established when a beneficiary's disability entitlement ceases for any medical reason (other than death). The determination of medical recovery is made by the Commissioner in deciding a beneficiary's continuing entitlement to benefits.

*Place the beneficiary into an extended evaluation process* means that the State VR agency determines that an extended evaluation of the individual's VR potential is necessary to determine whether the individual is eligible for VR services and places the individual into an extended evaluation status.

*SGA* means substantial gainful activity performed by an individual as defined in §§ 404.1571 through 404.1575 or § 404.1584 of this subpart.

*State* means any of the 50 States of the United States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, the Virgin Islands, or Guam. It includes the State VR agency.

*Trust Funds* means the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund.

*Vocational rehabilitation services* has the meaning assigned to it under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

*VR agency* means an agency of the State which has been designated by the State to provide vocational rehabilitation services under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

*Waiting period* means a five consecutive calendar month period throughout which an individual must be under a disability and which must be served before disability benefits can be paid (see § 404.315(d)).

*We, us and our* refer to the Social Security Administration (SSA).

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**§ 404.2104 Participation by State VR agencies or alternate participants.**

(a) *General.* In order to participate in the payment program under this subpart through its VR agency(ies), a State must have a plan which meets the requirements of title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. An alternate participant must have a similar plan and otherwise qualify under § 404.2106.

(b) *Participation by States.* (1) The opportunity to participate through its VR agency(ies) with respect to disability beneficiaries in the State will be offered first to the State in accordance with paragraph (c) of this section, unless the State has notified us in advance under paragraph (e)(1) of this section of its decision not to participate or to limit such participation.

(2) A State with one or more approved VR agencies may choose to limit participation of those agencies to a certain class(es) of disability bene-

ficiaries. For example, a State with separate VR agencies for the blind and disabled may choose to limit participation to the VR agency for the blind. In such a case, we would give the State, through its VR agency for the blind, the opportunity to participate with respect to blind disability beneficiaries in the State in accordance with paragraph (d) of this section. We would arrange for VR services for non-blind disability beneficiaries in the State through an alternate participant(s). A State that chooses to limit participation of its VR agency(ies) must notify us in advance under paragraph (e)(1) of this section of its decision to limit such participation.

(3) If a State chooses to participate by using a State agency other than a VR agency with a plan for VR services approved under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, that State agency may participate only as an alternate participant.

(c) *Opportunity for participation through State VR agencies.* (1) Unless a State has decided not to participate or to limit participation, we will give the State the opportunity to participate through its VR agency(ies) with respect to disability beneficiaries in the State by referring such beneficiaries first to the State VR agency(ies) for necessary VR services. A State, through its VR agency(ies), may participate with respect to any beneficiary so referred by accepting the beneficiary as a client for VR services or placing the beneficiary into an extended evaluation process and notifying us under paragraph (c)(2) of this section of such acceptance or placement.

(2)(i) In order for the State to participate with respect to a disability beneficiary whom we referred to a State VR agency, the State VR agency must notify the appropriate Regional Commissioner (SSA) in writing or through electronic notification of its decision either to accept the beneficiary as a client for VR services or to place the beneficiary into an extended evaluation process. The notice must be received by the appropriate Regional Commissioner (SSA) no later than the close of the fourth month following the