

REHAB ACT

Summary Description

The Rehabilitation Act is the Federal legislation that authorizes the formula grant programs of vocational rehabilitation, supported employment, independent living, and client assistance. It also authorizes a variety of training and service discretionary grants administered by the U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration.

The Act authorizes research activities that are administered by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research and the work of the National Council on Disability. The Act also includes a variety of provisions focused on rights, advocacy and protection for individuals with disabilities.

The Act includes the following seven titles:

Title I

1. Establishes the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program, which supports the Federal-State partnership for providing vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities seeking to achieve employment in the integrated labor market.
2. Each State vocational rehabilitation agency that is not a consumer-controlled independent commission primarily concerned with rehabilitation is also required to establish a State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) to review, analyze, and advise the vocational rehabilitation agency regarding the performance of its responsibilities under the Act and to work in partnership with the vocational rehabilitation agency in, among other things, developing the vocational rehabilitation agency's goals and priorities and evaluating the effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation program.
3. Authorizes the Client Assistance Program and the American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program.

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- i. The American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program provides discretionary grants to governing bodies of Indian Tribes to establish projects that serve American Indians with disabilities on or near reservations.
- ii. The Client Assistance Program provides formula grants to States for information, referral, advice, and advocacy services to individuals with disabilities who are applying for or receiving services funded under the Act.

Title II

1. Establishes National Institute on Disability Rehabilitation and Research and authorizes research and related activities. NIDRR administers a program of rehabilitation research, including rehabilitation research and training centers, rehabilitation engineering research centers, research and demonstration projects, field-initiated projects, utilization and dissemination projects, fellowships, and research training grants.

Title III

1. Authorizes personnel training programs and service projects. Training grants are authorized to assist in increasing the number and skills of qualified personnel who provide services to individuals with disabilities. The training program supports pre-service training at degree-granting institutions, experimental and innovative training, continuing education programs, in-service training for personnel of State vocational rehabilitation agencies, and training of interpreters for individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing and individuals who are deaf-blind.

Title IV

1. Authorizes projects for migrants and seasonal farm workers, recreational programs for individuals with disabilities, parent

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training, client choice demonstrations, and special demonstration programs.

Title V

1. Establishes the National Council on Disability. The National Council on Disability is an independent Federal agency whose duties include providing advice to Congress and the President on the development of programs under the Act and reviewing and evaluating, on a continuing basis, all policies and programs for individuals with disabilities conducted or assisted by the Federal Government.
2. Section 509 authorizes the Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights Program, which supports a system in each

State to protect the human and legal rights of individuals with disabilities who need services that are beyond the scope of the Client Assistance Program and who are not eligible for services from other protection and advocacy programs.

Title VI

1. Authorizes the Projects With Industry and Supported Employment State Grants programs. The primary goal of the discretionary Projects With Industry grant program is to expand job opportunities for individuals with disabilities in the competitive labor market. In order to develop a partnership between business, industry, labor, and the rehabilitation community, each project is required to have a Business Advisory Council to provide advice on available jobs and training requirements.
2. Supported Employment State Grants is a formula grant program to assist States in developing collaborative programs with public agencies and nonprofit organizations to provide training and other services leading to supported employment for individuals with the most significant disabilities.

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Title VII

1. Authorizes funding in
 - i. Chapter 1 for comprehensive services for independent living and independent living centers
 - ii. Chapter 2 for independent living services for older persons who are blind or have a significant visual impairment.

2. Each State must establish a State Independent Living Council that jointly prepares and submits the required State plan for Chapter 1 independent living services and the State's network of centers for independent living.

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Program Authority: 29 U.S.C. 701, et seq.

Dated: March 14, 2002.

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BILLING CODE 4000-01-U