

Vocational Assistance _____

Oregon injured workers with substantial obstacles to employment may qualify for services under the Vocational Assistance Program.

Process

The insurer is responsible for contacting the injured worker within five days of certain “trigger points,” which are identified in OAR 436-120-0320, for the purpose of identifying the need for vocational assistance. If the worker is eligible, the worker and insurer jointly select an authorized vocational assistance provider. Vocational plans are developed by the provider and worker and approved by the insurer. The Employment Services Team (EST) may provide consultation or plan review. EST enforces the Vocational Assistance Rules (OAR 436-120) primarily by the dispute resolution process.

Kinds of services

- ◆ Direct Employment Plan
- ◆ Training Plan: On-the-job training, Basic education, Skills training, Formal training, Sheltered workshop training
- ◆ Direct worker purchases necessary for participating in training or for starting a job:
 - Tuition, fees, books and supplies
 - Tools and equipment
 - Wage reimbursement for on-the-job training
 - Some moving, living and transportation expenses
 - Some medical, dental, psychological, prosthetic expenses, etc., unrelated to the injury
 - Work adjustment or capacities evaluations
 - Some dues and fees
 - Clothing
 - Child or disabled adult care
 - Other necessary expenses

Eligibility criteria

- ◆ Accepted, disabling claim.
- ◆ Permanent disability.
- ◆ Cannot return to regular work.
- ◆ Has a substantial handicap to employment, i.e., does not have the knowledge, skills, or abilities to return to physically suitable work which pays at least 80 percent of the current wage for the job at injury.
- ◆ Cannot return to other suitable work with the employer-at-injury.

For more information contact: Employment Services Team 503-947-7816