

## What are the priority categories?

OVR has three priority categories:

### **Priority Category I: MSD**

An individual with a most significant disability (MSD) has a disability that results in serious functional limitations in **three** or more functional capacity areas.

### **Priority Category II: SD**

An individual with a significant disability (SD) has a disability that results in serious functional limitations in **at least one** functional capacity area.

### **Priority Category III: NSD**

An individual with a non-significant disability (NSD) is determined eligible for the OVR program but does not meet the MSD or SD requirements.

### **Exemption to the Order of Selection:**

#### **Job Retention**

OVR will serve and prioritize individuals who are currently working and at immediate risk of losing their job due to a disability-related issue. Job retention includes individuals who were placed in the Order of Selection for MSD, SD and NSD. Individuals seeking services under this exemption are limited to job retention services only.



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OVR receives 78.7% of its funding through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. For Federal fiscal year 2018, the total amount of grant funds awarded were \$132,750,447. The remaining 21.3%, including additional matching fund costs (\$37,442,433.77), was funded by State appropriations and other non-Federal allowable sources.



# UNDERSTANDING ORDER OF SELECTION

**OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL  
REHABILITATION  
1521 NORTH 6TH ST.  
HARRISBURG, PA 17102**

**1-800-442-6351 (Voice)  
1-866-830-7327 (TTY)**

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

Equal Opportunity Employer Program

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OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

## What is Order of Selection?

When all customers eligible for the vocational rehabilitation (VR) program cannot be served due to limited resources, federal law requires the VR agency – in this case the Pennsylvania Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) – to define categories which establish the priority order in which customers will be served. This law requires OVR to give highest priority to customers with the most significant disabilities. It also requires OVR to serve customers in the other categories in priority order as funds become available. This is called an **Order of Selection (OOS)**. The OOS categories are called **priority categories**. OVR opens and closes priority categories based on available resources.

## How does OOS affect services?

If you are eligible for OVR services, your vocational rehabilitation counselor (VRC) assigns you to one of the priority categories, based on the significance of your disability to employment. If your priority category is open, you can receive the full range of VR services. If it is closed, you will be notified that you are on a waiting list, and will be provided information and referral services only. However, if you are a student receiving the five required OVR Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS) before being determined eligible for OVR services, you can continue to receive PETS services if you are determined eligible and placed on the waiting list.

## Job Retention Exception to OOS

If you are already working but are in jeopardy of losing your job due to your disability, and if OVR eligibility standards are met, you could receive OVR services immediately.

## What is a “significant” disability?

A **significant** disability is a disability that requires multiple (two or more) VR services over an extended period of time (six months or more) after an Individualized Plan for Employment has been developed.

## What is functional limitation and what makes a functional limitation “serious”?

A **functional limitation** is a barrier to employment due to a disability that affects one of these functional capacity areas: mobility, self-direction, self-care, interpersonal skills, communication, work tolerance or work skills. A **serious** functional limitation means the individual requires accommodations or services not typically needed by other individuals to prepare for, enter, keep or advance in employment.

## If I am placed on the OOS waiting list, when will I be served?

When a category opens, OVR may serve all customers in that category or may serve them in the order that they applied for VR. OVR will notify you as soon as your category opens and you can receive services. After 12 months, if your category remains closed, your counselor will contact you to discuss whether you wish to stay on the waiting list. Your name may remain on the waiting list for as long as you wish.

## Am I automatically served if I receive SSI or SSDI?

No. Individuals receiving supplemental security income (SSI) or Social Security disability insurance (SSDI) will be evaluated like all other customers.

## May an OVR office serve more categories than another office?

No. The VR program is statewide. All offices will serve the same open categories.

## Will I receive priority with OVR if I receive services from another program or if my financial resources are limited?

No. Priority is not based on the referral source, other services received or one’s financial situation.

## Will there be a periodic review of my functional limitations?

If you are on the waiting list and believe your disability has become more significant, you may contact your VRC to request a review of your priority category assignment. Supporting documentation may be requested.

## What if I do not agree with my priority category assignment?

You may discuss your concern with your VRC or the VRC’s supervisor. If you still have concerns, you have the right to file an appeal in writing to the director of BVRs or BBVS at:

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation  
1521 North 6th St.  
Harrisburg, PA 17102

You also may request assistance from the Client Assistance Program (CAP). CAP can be reached at:

215-557-7112 (Voice/TTY) or  
[www.equalemployment.org](http://www.equalemployment.org).

## Where else may I seek services if I am on the waiting list?

OVR will provide you with information about the One-Stop Centers (PA CareerLinks®) in your area. Please contact the PA CareerLink® for employment assistance. If you are seeking other options, please contact your VRC for information and referral services.

For more information or to request an alternate accessible format, please contact your local OVR office or call OVR toll free:

1-800-442-6351 (Voice)  
1-866-830-7327 (TTY)