

PPM 530 POSTSECONDARY TRAINING

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Purpose

Postsecondary training may be included in an IPE if it is required for the consumer to achieve their vocational goal.

Policies and Procedures

530.01 Scope of Postsecondary Training Assistance

1. Training outcomes:
 - a. academic degree;
 - b. vocational skills certificate;
 - c. selected coursework to obtain occupational skills; or
 - d. industry-recognized licensing, certification, or other credentials.
2. Educational expenses

Assistance may be provided to meet the costs of attendance, including:

- a. mandatory fees;
- b. tuition;
- c. room and board;
- d. course-specific books and training materials;
- e. necessary transportation; and/or

- f. dependant care expenses.

530.02 Provider Standards

1. All postsecondary training institutions and programs utilized must meet applicable statutory and regulatory accreditation, licensing, certification, health and safety, and accessibility standards.
2. **institutions of higher education** must:
 - a. be a degree or vocational certificate granting institutions;
 - b. participate in the federal student financial aid program; and
 - c. fully accredited by the appropriate regional accreditation authority recognized by the Office of Postsecondary Education of the U.S. Department of Education.
3. **proprietary schools** must be fully accredited by the Indiana Commission for Proprietary Education or the equivalent authority in the state in which they are located.

4. **industry-certified training programs** must be nationally recognized by the applicable industry and its manufacturers and employers as providing necessary competency skills.
5. **occupational skills training programs** must be recognized by local business and industry and/or utilized by local Workforce Development programs or the Indiana Department of Workforce Development.
6. **correspondence and distance learning programs** must be administered under authority of an institution or program described in paragraphs 2 through 5 of this section.

530.03 Least-Cost Provider

Consumers are expected to attend the public in-state training institution nearest their place of residence that meets their training needs at the least cost possible for the VR program. A non-local, out-of-state, or private institution can be considered if:

1. local, in-state, or public institutions do not meet the consumer's training needs; or
2. the institution of the consumer's informed choice offers a comparable program at less or equal cost to VR,

including all costs of attendance and disability-related supports and accommodations; or

3. the consumer agrees to pay all additional costs, in accordance with PPM [530.05](#) of this chapter.

530.04 Gallaudet and NTID

Gallaudet University or the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) may be utilized if required to meet the unique training and support services needs of consumers who are deaf or hard of hearing.

530.05 Costs of Attendance

Assistance provided for the costs of attendance shall not exceed the lesser of the actual costs incurred or the reasonable fees annually established by the VR program which remain after the expected family contribution (EFC) and all available grant, scholarship, and other financial aid resources have been applied to the following cost categories: See PPM [600.07](#)

1. **mandatory fees**
2. **tuition**

3. **room and board**,
 - a. as documented by:
 - i. bill from the institution or a contracted private vendor for room and board; or
 - ii. for off campus housing, a copy of a rental or lease agreement, a written statement from a landlord specifying the number of individuals sharing the living space, and a paid receipt from the landlord (or a copy of the cancelled check made payable to the landlord) for the consumer's portion of the rent paid.
 - b. room and board assistance will not be provided for any consumer who is a commuting consumer, as described in PPM [530.06](#) of this chapter.

4. **books and training materials**, except that authorization shall not be made for:
 - a. **ordinary consumable supplies** (including pencils and pens, notebook paper, folders, binders, PC ink cartridges, and similar items); or
 - b. **personal computer (PC) hardware, software, or services** unless required for all students by the

institution or program attended or the particular course of study, as documented by a published student handbook or course syllabus, or disability related needs.

5. **required transportation assistance**, except that:
 - a. transportation shall be authorized—
 - i. in the case of **non-commuting consumers**, for no more than one round trip between the consumer's place of residence and the institution attended per each term or those periods of time during which institutional housing is closed to students or,
 - ii. in the case of **commuting consumers**, for no more than one round trip between consumer's place of residence and the institution per day commuted; and
 - b. the maximum amount of the assistance authorized shall not exceed the cost of the transportation, based on the applicable—
 - i. **public transportation fares**; or
 - ii. **private vehicle mileage**, computed as the Rand McNally, [MapQuest](#), or the State mileage

chart, shortest-distance mileage multiplied by the current Indiana Department of Administration mileage rate payable for state employee travel.

6. **dependent care** expenses for the care of dependent minors and other family members if the consumer is the primary caregiver of the dependant and alternative dependent care is necessary to enable the consumer to participate in training.

530.06 Criteria for Commuting Consumer Status

1. A consumer shall be considered to be a commuting consumer for purposes of room and board assistance under PPM [530.05](#) of this chapter if—
 - a. s/he resides:
 - i. 50 **miles or less** from the training site, according to Rand McNally, [MapQuest](#) or State mileage chart shortest distance mileage, or
 - ii. More than 50 travel miles from the training site, but **chooses to commute** for training; and

- b. adequate public or private **transportation is available** to meet the consumer's commuting needs; and
 - c. commuting is not precluded by **disability, work schedule** (if employed during training).
2. The VR program will not authorize both room and board and daily commuting costs for the same term.

530.07 Grant Assistance Application

1. No training or training-related services provided by any post-secondary training institution or program can be paid for with VR program funds unless **maximum efforts** have first been made by the consumer and the VR Counselor to secure all grant assistance available to pay for the services, whether in whole or in part.
2. Every consumer planning to begin or continue postsecondary training with VR program assistance must obtain and complete a **free application for federal student aid (FAFSA)**, and must submit it to the designated federal processing agent.
3. **Beginning students** must complete and submit the FAFSA within the Indiana **priority filing period** (after January 1, but in time to be received by the processing

agent on or before March 10), or as soon as possible thereafter.

4. **Continuing students** must complete and submit the FAFSA within the priority filing period in all cases, without exception. Continuing students missing the priority filing period will not be eligible for VR program assistance for any of the costs of attendance or other training-related services for the ensuing academic term.
5. The VR program cannot assist with postsecondary training or training-related costs if the consumer owes an unpaid refund on a grant previously awarded or is in an unresolved default status on a previous student loan.
6. In addition to the FAFSA, the consumer must complete and submit any other student financial aid application form(s) required by the postsecondary training institution or program attended according to instructions and deadlines establish by the institution or program.

530.08 Maximum Efforts

1. The consumer will be deemed to have made the maximum efforts required to secure grant assistance

for the cost of training if s/he has met the requirements described in PPM [530.09](#) of this chapter and if, while a student, the consumer maintains his or her eligibility for continued student financial aid by:

- a. maintaining satisfactory academic progress, as defined by the postsecondary training institution or program attended; and
 - b. adhering to all other requirements (e.g., student codes of conduct and remaining drug free) required as conditions of student financial aid eligibility.
2. The VR Counselor will be deemed to have made the maximum efforts required to secure grant assistance if s/he has informed the consumer of the responsibilities noted in paragraph 1 of this section on an annual basis, as appropriate, orally and in writing, using alternative appropriate modes of communication, if applicable.

530.09 Funding Resource Utilization

VR program assistance is available only as the last-dollar funding source for postsecondary training expenses after the expected family contribution (EFC) of the consumer and family and all federal, state, institutional, and private financial aid resources available have been applied to the costs of attendance. See PPM [600.07](#).

1. Coordination of Funding

Financial aid grants, scholarships, and other comparable services and benefits for which the consumer is eligible that are specified as to use (e.g., tuition waivers) must be used for the purposes for which they are awarded.

Thereafter, the EFC and any financial aid remaining must be applied to the costs of attendance in the following order:

- a. mandatory fees,
- b. tuition costs;
- c. room and board (if applicable),
- d. books and training materials,
- e. transportation,
- f. dependent care

2. College Work-Study Program Income

VR program policy does not require consumers to participate in any college work-study program. If the consumer chooses to participate in the program, work-study income will be considered a resource by the postsecondary training institution or program.

3. Student Financial Aid Loan Programs

Consumers cannot be required to apply for or accept any student or parental financial aid loan offered consequent to the financial aid application process; however, consumers and their families may need to apply for and accept loan assistance in order to fulfill their expected family contribution (EFC).

4. Merit-Based Scholarships

Merit-based scholarships not specified as to use may be utilized for cost of attendance as the consumer chooses.

5. VR Program Assistance

- a. Program assistance is not available to pay for any portion of the EFC determined by the student financial aid application process, and cannot be used in lieu of any financial aid grants, scholarships, or other comparable services and benefits for which the consumer is eligible. See PPM [600.05](#).
- b. authorizations for VR program postsecondary training assistance can be made only for one term (semester or quarter) at a time.
- c. VR support for attendance during summer school semester is to be determined on a case by case basis and upon VR Director guidance.

6. **Advanced Degrees** Assistance may be provided for graduate or postgraduate studies if an advanced degree is the minimum required to achieve the employment outcome.
7. **Elective Courses** For electives outside the prescribed course work, the VR program will assist with the costs of tuition and books only. VR will not assist with the costs of course-specific fees, equipment and other training materials, or related tutoring services.
8. **Study Abroad** Study outside the United States may only be supported when it is a required part of a domestic training program in which the consumer is enrolled. When foreign studies are anticipated, the IPE must be submitted for prior approval of the appropriate region manager.

530.10 Disability-Related Supports

The costs of required disability-related supports and accommodations may be authorized as appropriate, in accordance with applicable program policies. Such costs are separate from the maximum assistance permitted for the costs of attendance, except state-funded institutions are

responsible for providing reader services for ~~blind~~ consumers who are blind.

530.11 Satisfactory Progress Toward Meeting Training Objectives

1. Consumers are expected to meet the full-time enrollment requirements of the institution attended, and to complete their training within the usual and customary period, unless full-time attendance is precluded by:
 - a. the individual's disability, and/or
 - b. role of primary care giver to dependent minors or other family members; and/or
 - c. not needed to complete the training program; and/or
 - d. not possible, due to scheduling conflicts among the necessary courses offered.
2. Program assistance for developmental/remedial courses may be provided as required, contingent upon satisfactory progress being made toward the training objective.
3. The consumer is responsible for resolving any incomplete grade received for any course in accordance

with the requirements established by the postsecondary training institution or program for receiving an acceptable final grade.

4. Failed courses must be repeated at the expense of the consumer, unless extenuating circumstances have been identified and approved by the counselor.

530.12 Tutoring

1. Tutoring outside the regular training setting on a one-on-one or small group basis may be provided for a course when the consumer's course instructor, academic advisor, or disabled student services office has:
 - a. stated that the consumer is at risk of failing the course; and
 - b. specifically recommended tutoring,
 - c. Not provided by the postsecondary training institution or program.
 - d. Should be provided by a qualified individual recommended by the course instructor, academic advisor or disabled student services.

2. The VR program **will not fund tutoring** solely for the purpose of enabling a consumer to enhance already satisfactory academic performance.
3. VR will not provide financial support for tutoring services in conjunction with any developmental or remedial courses, or institutionally provided support programs for consumers who are learning disabled (LD).
4. Tutoring should not exceed one-half hour of tutoring per each full hour of in-class instruction.
5. The rate paid for tutoring shall not exceed ~~the lesser of~~ the prevailing rate paid tutors at the post secondary institution or training program in which the consumer is enrolled.

530.13 Academic Performance Requirements

1. Consumers must maintain acceptable academic standing with the postsecondary institution or program attended and must maintain, at a minimum, a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 or better on a 4.0 scale (or the equivalent "C" average), or satisfactory performance in programs for which a point or letter scale is not used.

2. Timely submission of grade reports must be submitted to the VR counselor for each grading period completed prior to authorization being made for the subsequent term.
3. Consumers with vocational objectives requiring graduate or post-graduate training must achieve at least the minimum admission standards for those curricula.
4. If student financial aid eligibility is lost due to failure to meet the standards established in this section, further VR training assistance will not be made available until the consumer has reestablished his or her academic standing in accordance with those standards.

530.14 Postsecondary Training IPE Requirements

The IPE for every consumer participating in postsecondary training must specify that VR program assistance is conditional upon the consumer's:

1. maximum efforts to secure and maintain grant assistance and other comparable services and benefits, as described in this chapter;
2. meeting required academic achievement standards, including the satisfactory academic progress standards

of the institution or program attended, the cumulative GPA standards required by the VR program, and the admissions requirements for graduate and postgraduate studies, as applicable;

3. timely submission of grade reports to the VR Counselor for each term completed;
4. adherence to all applicable codes of student conduct;
5. agreement to contact the VR counselor at least once each term;
6. agreement that any transfer to another institution or program or any change of majors will occur only after notification and approval by the VR Counselor to determine further VR support and necessity of an amended IPE.

Authority: Federal regulations 34 CFR §§[361.5\(b\)\(5\)](#), [\(6\)](#), [\(16\)](#), and [\(23\)](#); [361.42](#); [361.45](#); [361.46](#); [361.48\(f\)](#); [361.50](#); [361.51](#); [361.52](#); [361.53](#); and [361.54](#); and federal subregulatory [Policy Directives RSA-PD-92-02, "Provision of Financial Assistance for Post-Secondary Education By State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies"](#) (November 21, 1991)

and [RSA-PD-97-04 "Employment Goal for an Individual with a Disability \(August 19, 1997\).\]](#)