

Your Rights and Responsibilities as a Client of Michigan Rehabilitation Services

Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) helps persons with disabilities prepare for, find, and keep a job. When you apply for services, you agree that you want to become employed.

You likely will have many questions about your rights and responsibilities if you choose to work with MRS toward your job goal. This brochure should answer most of these questions. If you have additional questions, please ask a MRS counselor.

How to I become eligible to receive MRS services?

First, you must have a physical or mental disability that interferes with your becoming employed. Second, you must *require* MRS services to prepare for a job- or to keep a job you already have or to re-enter the job market. Persons who are eligible for Social Security disability programs (SSDI, SSI) meet these requirements if they want to work.

How will my eligibility be decided?

To determine if you are eligible for services, MRS will need information to verify that you have a disability. This information can come from you, members of your family, physicians, therapists, or others who know about your disability. MRS will presume you can become employed unless there is convincing evidence otherwise. You will be notified of the eligibility decision.

Once you become a client, your eligibility will be continually re-evaluated. Services to you may be discontinued if it appears they will not help you to become employed.

If I become eligible for services, who will decide the kinds of services I receive?

You will be asked to prepare a written plan of action to help you reach your employment goal. This plan is called an Individualized Plan for Employment or IPE for short. You can ask an MRS counselor, or others, to help you prepare your IPE. MRS wants you to make informed choices about your employment goal, the services that will be provided to you, and who will provide them. Therefore, you have the right to obtain written information from MRS about service options available to you. MRS must agree to and sign your plan.

You have the right to an annual review of your IPE to see if any changes are needed. You also have the right to be told if there will be a delay in MRS services to you, or if MRS cannot provide services. Situations such as these may be caused by a reduction in funding, staff, or openings at facilities or schools.

Do I have a right to review my case file?

You may review information in your case file if you make this request in writing. However, there are two circumstances when more than written request will be required: (1) Information that has been provided by other agencies may be disclosed only with their permission; and (2) Certain information – such as technical, medical, or psychological reports – may have to be provided through a health professional or other representatives.

Will my case file conversations with my MRS counselor be kept confidential?

All discussions with your counselor are kept confidential. Your counselor will release information in your case file only to those agencies directly involved in your rehabilitation program. MRS will not release information in your case file to other agencies or persons unless you give your permission in writing.

MRS will release information in your case file *without your written consent* **only** (1) if required by federal law or regulation, (2) if required by judicial order, (3) in response to investigations for law enforcement, fraud, or abuse, or (4) in situations involving abuse, neglect, exploitation, or safety to protect you or others.

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Do I have a right to appeal an MRS decision that I disagree with?

Yes. You have the right to appeal any agency action regarding your rehabilitation program. If you disagree with a decision of an MRS staff person about services that have been provided or denied to you, you may write to the agency director within 30 days to request a formal hearing. You have the right to have someone of your choice assist you in these proceedings. (Please ask for a copy of the brochure *How to Appeal Decisions made by Michigan Rehabilitation Services*).

However, you are encouraged to try first to resolve your disagreement by discussing it with your counselor or the district manager. If you do request a formal hearing, you have the option of asking for mediation. This is a voluntary process that uses a trained, neutral person to help you and MRS explore possible solutions to your disagreement.

The Client Assistance Program (CAP), administered by Michigan Protection and Advocacy, Inc., is also available to help you understand your rights and responsibilities as an applicant or client of MRS. For more information on eligibility, services, rights, and responsibilities, you can call a CAP counselor toll free at 1-800-292-5896 (voice/TTY). (Please ask for

a copy of the brochure *Client Assistance Program*.)

What will I be responsible for if I become an MRS client?

The success of your rehabilitation program depends on your accepting the following responsibilities:

- You have a responsibility to provide information MRS may need to determine your eligibility and develop your rehabilitation program. If you do not make needed information available, MRS will be unable to provide services to you.
- You will have a responsibility to be an active partner in your rehabilitation program. Being an active partner means that you will be called on to make informed choices throughout your program.
- You have a responsibility to notify your counselor of any change in your address or telephone number. You should also notify your counselor of any other changes in your circumstances that could affect your rehabilitation program.
- You have a responsibility to participate financially in your rehabilitation program to the best of your ability.

However, services will not be denied if you cannot help with the cost.

- You have a responsibility to use other community services and benefits in your rehabilitation program. For example, if you are eligible for Medicaid benefits, you will be expected to use these toward the medical costs of your rehabilitation program.
- You have a responsibility to keep all appointments scheduled with your counselor and other persons involved in your rehabilitation program. For example if you are eligible for Medicaid benefits, you will be expected to use these toward the medical costs of your rehabilitation program.
- You have a responsibility to perform satisfactorily in training or in any other activity related to your rehabilitation. This includes regular attendance.
- You have a responsibility to return any equipment purchase for you by MRS if you no longer use it. There may be other clients who could use such items in their rehabilitation.

Michigan Rehabilitation Services
Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth
P.O. Box 30010
Lansing, MI 48909
1-800-605-6722 (voice/TTY)