# Vocational Rehabilitation Services Manual B-100: Vocational Rehabilitation Process, Roles, and Responsibilities

Revised October 1, 2020

## B-101: Roles and Responsibilities of the Rehabilitation Team

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### B-101-7: Consultants

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) staff has access to both internal and external consultants for specialized support in decision-making throughout the VR process. Consultants with specifically defined responsibilities for VR services include the following:

* Local Medical Consultant (LMC);
* Regional Psychological Consultant (RPC);
* Regional Dental Consultant (RDC);
* State Medical Director;
* State Ophthalmological Consultant;
* State Optometric Consultant;
* State Orthotic and Prosthetic Review Committee (OPRC);
* VR regional program specialists
* VR state office program specialists

For additional information about required consultations, refer to [E-200: Summary Table of Approvals, Consultations, and Notifications](https://twc.texas.gov/files/partners/vrsm-e-200.docx).

For more information on how the role of medical, consultants applies to specific medical services, refer to [C-701-2: Medical Services Required Review and Approvals Policy](https://twc.texas.gov/vr-services-manual/vrsm-c-700#c701-2).

In addition to their roles in the review of and consultation on services for specific customers, regional and state office consultants also provide technical assistance to support best business practices in their areas of specialty as related to:

* the VR process and outcomes;
* quality service delivery and documentation;
* use of comparable services, benefits, and other resources;
* quality job development and placement; and
* other areas as applicable.

#### Consultant Training Services

Unit or regional management may invite consultants to provide specialized training to staff on all aspects of the VR process in their area of specialty.

#### Review and Evaluation Services

When the clarity or completeness of reports is called into question, VR staff may request a consultant to review reports and provide a professional opinion or guidance on the:

* prognosis of selected disabilities;
* clarification of functional limitations;
* review of records, test results, and other data;
* appropriateness of recommendation for additional assessments or services; and
* application of VR policies and procedures.

#### Consultant Relationship with the Medical Community and Other Professions Outside of Vocational Rehabilitation

A consultant may:

* identify community resources for approved (nonexperimental) medical diagnostic and/or restorative services;
* help orient new physicians to the types of information and services requested by VR; and
* develop and maintain an effective working relationship with physicians, medical societies, public and private health agencies, local disability support groups, workers compensation programs, and other facilities and programs.

#### Limitations on Consultant Services for Vocational Rehabilitation Customers

A consultant does not examine or treat VR customers, except when:

* the customer is, or has been, the consultant's patient before becoming a VR customer;
* the consultant is asked to provide ancillary services, such as assisting the principal surgeon or giving emergency treatment; or
* the consultant is the only, or one of few, specialists in the immediate area.

Other cases may be referred to a consultant for treatment only when:

* there is no apparent conflict of interest, and
* the VR Manager's approval is obtained first.

If a consultant is currently treating a customer, the consultant may not provide a formal VR consultation for that customer's VR case. The case must be sent to another VR consultant, who may be located in another region, for consultation.

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