# Vocational Rehabilitation Services Manual C-1400: Supportive Goods and Services

Revised April 1, 2021

## C-1401: Maintenance

…

### C-1401-2: Recurring Maintenance

Recurring maintenance (also referred to as "weekly maintenance" in ReHabWorks (RHW) is used for expenses that are incurred on a recurring basis as a direct result of participation in VR services.

Recurring maintenance payments may:

* not exceed $55 per week;
* be paid during VR academic or vocational training, as determined necessary, but:
	+ must not exceed 104 weeks for a customer who is pursuing vocational training;
	+ must not exceed 156 weeks for a customer who is pursuing academic college-level training; and
* be paid to a customer in self-employment, as determined necessary, but must not exceed 16 weeks.

VR Manager review and approval are required for all recurring maintenance service authorizations.

#### Documentation of Recurring Maintenance

Customers must be informed that they are required to maintain the [VR2180, Maintenance Expense Log](http://intra.twc.state.tx.us/intranet/gl/html/vocational_rehab_forms.html), to verify that the maintenance funds are being used for their intended purpose. The VR2180 must be turned in and reviewed by the VR counselor monthly. Customers must maintain copies of receipts to verify the content of the VR2180, Maintenance Expense Log, for audit purposes, but these receipts do not need to be turned in to VR with the VR2180 form.

If the [VR2180, Maintenance Expense Log](http://intra.twc.state.tx.us/intranet/gl/html/vocational_rehab_forms.html) for recurring maintenance is not turned in in a timely manner or if it is determined that the funds were not used for their intended purpose, no additional maintenance payments can be authorized. VR Manager review and approval is required before recurring maintenance is reinstated.

VR Manager review and approval must be completed and documented in RHW before a service authorization is issued.

### C-1401-3: Nonrecurring Maintenance

Nonrecurring maintenance (also referred to as "one-time maintenance" in RHW) is used for onetime expenses that are incurred as a direct result of participation in VR services.

Nonrecurring maintenance may also be used to purchase the following:

* Maximum Affordable Payment Schedule (MAPS) goods and services (only when the vendor will not accept a VR service authorization) as follows:
	+ Applicable MAPS rate must still be applied to determine the amount of maintenance to be paid
	+ The process may not be used to exceed established MAPS fees.
	+ VR Manager approval is required
* Business start-up costs for self-employment. Refer to [C-1100: Self-Employment](https://twc.texas.gov/vr-services-manual/vrsm-c-1100) for details.
* Escort or attendant supports (when required) for a customer (use current state per diem rate).

#### Documentation of Nonrecurring Maintenance

The customer must provide a receipt that shows proof of purchase from the vendor to verify that funds were used for their intended purpose before any additional maintenance funds are released to the customer for any purpose.

If a receipt for nonrecurring maintenance is not turned in or if it is determined that the funds were not used for their intended purpose, authorization of any additional maintenance funds for any purpose requires VR Manager review and approval.

VR Manager approval is required for all nonrecurring maintenance that is equal to or greater than $400 for a single service authorization.

Note: Staff must send an email to VR RHW Provider Services to have the customer established as a provider when the amount is over $400.

VR Manager review and approval are required before maintenance can be paid to the customer to purchase goods or services that have more specific purchasing processes and/or specifications available in RHW.

VR Manager review and approval must be completed and documented in RHW before the service authorization is issued.

…

## C-1402: Transportation Services

…

### C-1402-3: Recurring Transportation

Recurring transportation includes advance payments that should be paid weekly to the private carrier for transportation that is necessary for the customer to participate in VR services.

VR Manager approval is required for any additional recurring transportation that exceeds a total of 104 weeks. The approval is limited to six-month increments (cumulatively or consecutively).

Transportation costs that are more than $400 for a single service authorization require VR Manager approval.

#### Documentation of Recurring Transportation

Documentation for recurring transportation must include:

* VR Manager approval (if required); and
* a case note that includes:
	+ calculations,
	+ the source used to define "actual mileage," and
	+ confirms the service for which transportation is required.

Customers must be informed that they are required to maintain the [VR2181, Transportation Log](https://twc.texas.gov/forms/index.html), to verify that the transportation funds were used for their intended purpose. The customer must turn in the VR2181, Transportation Log monthly, which must be reviewed by the VR counselor before the next payment is authorized.

If the VR2181, Transportation Log, for recurring transportation is not turned in or if it is determined that the funds were not used for their intended purpose, VR Manager review and approval is required before additional transportation payments can be authorized or any new service authorizations for transportation are issued.

VR Manager review and approval must be documented in ReHabWorks (RHW). See the ReHabWorks Users Guide E-100: Purchase Approval Requests for additional information about RHW Purchase Approvals.

#### Documentation of Recurring Bus Passes for Customers

Documentation for bus passes must include a case note that documents:

* the quantity of bus passes needed to support the VR service, and
* a confirmation of the service for which transportation is required.

If the VR office purchases bus tickets in bulk and issues them directly to the customer, a case note must be entered in RHW identifying the date the customer picked up the bus pass. A copy of the [VR2014, Rehabilitation Equipment, Item, and Bus Pass Receipt](https://intra.twc.texas.gov/intranet/gl/html/vocational_rehab_forms.html) signed by the customer must be filed in the customer's paper case file. Refer to [C-1402-6: Local Bus Passes for VR Customers](https://twc.texas.gov/vr-services-manual/vrsm-c-1400#c1402-6) for more information.

Customers must be informed that they are required to maintain the [VR2181, Transportation Log](https://twc.texas.gov/forms/index.html), to verify that the bus passes are being used for their intended purpose. The VR2181 must be turned in and reviewed by the VR counselor before the next bus pass is issued or purchased.

If the VR2181, Transportation Log for recurring transportation is not turned in, or if it is determined that the funds were not used for their intended purpose, VR Manager review and approval is required before additional transportation payments can be authorized or any new service authorizations for transportation are issued.

### C-1402-4: Nonrecurring Transportation

Nonrecurring transportation is a onetime advance payment to the private carrier for transportation that is necessary for the customer to participate in a single VR assessment or IPE service.

Transportation costs that are more than $400 for a single service authorization (this excludes airfare) require VR Manager approval.

#### Documentation of Nonrecurring Transportation

Documentation for transportation must include:

* VR Manager approval (if required); and
* a service justification case note that includes:
	+ calculations,
	+ the source used to define "actual mileage," and
	+ confirms the service for which transportation is required.

#### Documentation of Nonrecurring Bus Passes for Customers

Documentation for transportation must include:

* a service justification case note or be included in the IPE or IPE amendment;
* the quantity of bus passes needed to support the VR service; and
* a case note that confirms the service for which transportation is required.

If the VR office issues bus passes, a case note must be issued in RHW identifying the date the customer picked up the bus pass. A copy of the [VR2014, Rehabilitation Equipment, Item, and Bus Pass Receipt](https://intra.twc.texas.gov/intranet/gl/html/vocational_rehab_forms.html) signed by the customer must be filed in the customer's paper case file. Refer to [C-1402-6: Local Bus Passes for VR Customers](https://twc.texas.gov/vr-services-manual/vrsm-c-1400#c1402-6) for more information.

…

### C-1402-6: Local Bus Passes for VR Customers

The management support team purchases local bus tickets, passes, tokens, and transfers in bulk for VR customers. Bus passes are distributed to VR customers that are directly related to and required for their participation in VR services. Once received in the VR office, the bus passes must be kept under lock and key.

When the need for bus passes are identified, the:

1. VR counselor must enter service justification case note in RHW justifying the need for transportation;
2. Customer/representative must be present and sign the [VR2014, Rehabilitation Equipment, Item, and Bus Pass Receipt](https://intra.twc.texas.gov/intranet/gl/html/vocational_rehab_forms.html) once they receive the bus pass;
3. Staff will request the bus pass from the management team or designee;
4. VR staff are required to enter the date, customer's name, and case ID number onto the VR2015, Office Bus Pass Log;
5. Management team or designee will also sign the VR2015, Office Bus Pass Log,
6. Once the VR2014, Rehabilitation Equipment, Item, and Bus Pass Receipt document has been completed, VR staff are required to place it in the customer's paper case file; and
7. The [VR2015, Office Bus Pass Log](https://intra.twc.texas.gov/intranet/gl/html/vocational_rehab_forms.html) must be kept with the management team.

Refer to [C-1402-3: Recurring Transportation](https://twc.texas.gov/vr-services-manual/vrsm-c-1400#c1402-3) and [C-1402-4 Nonrecurring Transportation](https://twc.texas.gov/vr-services-manual/vrsm-c-1400#c1402-4) for additional information.

### C-1402-7: Airfare

Airfare can be purchased to meet a customer's transportation needs only if:

* airfare is the most cost-effective method (flying versus driving);
* airfare is an appropriate means of transportation for the customer based on potential disability-related factors; or
* no reasonable alternative exists.

When considering the cost of airfare as a transportation alternative, the VR counselor considers all related costs, such as the cost of transportation to and from the airport, parking, vehicle rental, fuel, or taxi. The VR counselor documents the cost comparison clearly in a case note.

Customer airfare purchases are completed using the Customer Central Billed Account (CBA).

Using the CBA for customer airfare purchases allows caseload-carrying staff members to purchase customer airfare at state-contracted rates.

In addition to reducing airfare costs for customer travel, using the CBA has the following benefits:

* Advance purchase is not necessary
* No minimum or maximum length of stay
* 100 percent refundable tickets if cancelled or unused

When using the CBA, reservations must be made at least 14 days in advance and ticketed at least seven days in advance to allow for review and to ensure that the itinerary is acceptable to the customer. For travel being requested during holiday periods (October through January), reservations must be made at least 30 days in advance.

#### Requesting Customer Air Travel

The VR staff member:

* completes and signs [VR1762, Central Billing Request for Consumer Airfare](http://intra.twc.state.tx.us/intranet/gl/html/vocational_rehab_forms.html), and include the service authorization number in the Comments field (see [ReHabWorks Users Guide, Chapter 16: Case Service Record, 16.2.10 Consumer Airfare](https://intra.twc.texas.gov/intranet/manuals/rhwhelp/index.html) for details); and
* emails the signed VR1762 to the Accounting–Consumer Airfare Team at Payables.ConsumerAirfare@twc.state.tx.us.

On VR1762, VR staff notes any special needs or requirements that the customer or passenger may have. For example, VR staff documents whether the customer:

* needs to be on a specific flight to travel with a group;
* requires accommodations; or
* requires special seating (describe the circumstances).

#### Reserve and Verify Customer Airfare

The following procedures must be used to book and verify the travel:

1. Accounting–Consumer Airfare Team authorizes the charge to the Customer CBA.
2. Travel agency books the airfare and emails the reservation and ticket confirmation itinerary to the Accounting--Consumer Airfare Team.
3. Accounting–Consumer Airfare Team maintains a printed copy of the itinerary in the Customer CBA and forwards the confirmation by email to the VR staff member who requested the travel.
4. The VR staff member must respond by email to the Consumer Airfare mailbox to confirm that the forwarded itinerary is acceptable.
5. The VR staff member, upon confirming the itinerary as acceptable, completes a service record and service authorization using the date, purchase price, and fees information provided. (Note: The VR staff does not create the service authorization for payment now; this will be done in step 8.)
6. The customer or passenger must provide the itinerary or confirmation number and a valid driver's license, photo ID, or other acceptable proof of identification. (Acceptable forms of identification are found at [Transportation Security Administration Identification](https://www.tsa.gov/travel/security-screening/identification).)
7. The VR staff member receives a mass email from the Accounting–Consumer Airfare Team paying the bank statement once the customer's travel is shown on the bank statement. (Note: The email names all customers that traveled within that bank statement period. The VR staff copies and redacts names of all other customers from the document before filing with the customer's purchasing records.) See [ReHabWorks Users Guide, Chapter 16: Case Service Record, 16.2.10 Customer Airfare](https://intra.twc.texas.gov/intranet/manuals/rhwhelp/index.html) for details.
8. The VR staff member adds the service authorization number in the appropriate column for the customer.
9. Accounting verifies and audits the service authorization and lets the VR staff member know when he or she can receive and authorize payment for the customer's travel.

#### Processing the Payment

For the Accounting–Consumer Airfare Team to process the payment for customer travel, the VR team must have created the service record and service authorization in RHW.

If discrepancies are noted between the service record, service authorization, or invoice received by the Accounting–Consumer Airfare Team, a team member emails the VR team to resolve the differences.

#### Cancelled Flights

The ticket is paid for using a VR CBA credit card. If the customer's ticket requires cancellation, the VR team must notify the Accounting–Customer Airfare Team immediately by email at Payables.ConsumerAirfare@twc.state.tx.us or by phone at 512-463-1671, option 4, for immediate assistance. The following responsibilities and conditions apply:

* The customer is not authorized at any time for any reason to make any changes or cancel his or her flight itinerary. Additional costs incurred will be the responsibility of the customer. The customer must go through the VR team to make any changes or cancel flight itinerary.
* The VR team is responsible for closing the service authorization in RHW. For all state-purchased Short's Travel itineraries, a cancellation fee is assessed.

#### Airfare Limits

Air transportation for customers who are attending in-state or out-of-state training is limited to no more than two round-trip economy tickets per year. Exceptions require review and approval by the VR Manager.

If there are questions regarding customer airfare procedures, contact the Accounting–Consumer Airfare Team in one of the following ways:

* Email TWC Consumer Airfare
* Phone 512-463-1671, option 4

…

### C-1402-9: Vehicle Repair

As with other transportation services, VR provides payment for the repair of the customer's vehicle only when necessary for the customer to participate in other planned services, such as vocational training and job-related services.

#### Payment for Vehicle Repair

Payment for vehicle repair, including parts and labor, is authorized only when:

* no comparable services or benefits are available to meet this customer's transportation needs; and
* repair is the most cost-effective means to meet those needs.

Authorization covers only repairs that are required to make the vehicle safe and operable.

#### Approval Requirements

VR Manager approval is required for vehicle repairs when the total cost of the repair is greater than $1,000, or when the total cost exceeds the vehicle's value.

#### Documentation Requirements

Before authorizing payment, the VR counselor considers and documents in a case note that:

* the vehicle is:
	+ owned by the customer or a family member (if not, VR Manager approval is required); and
	+ the customer's primary means of transportation;
* vehicle repair is a best-value decision to meet the customer's transportation needs, and:
	+ based on the vehicle's overall condition, ongoing repairs are not expected; and
	+ repair costs do not exceed the vehicle's value as estimated from Kelly Blue Book using the "sell to private party" value (After the VR counselor reviews and makes the decision to authorize the service, he or she prints and files a copy of the computer-generated estimate in the paper case file.);
* there are no comparable services and benefits available to meet the customer's transportation needs, such as public bus service; and
* the customer has a plan for how to meet transportation expenses after case closure.

For additional information about repairs to vehicle modifications, see [C-204: Vehicle Modification Services](https://twc.texas.gov/vr-services-manual/vrsm-c-200#c204).

### C-1402-10: Vehicle Rental

Vehicle rental can be purchased if:

* it is economically justified; and
* no reasonable alternative exists.

#### Approval Requirements

VR Supervisor approval is required for all vehicle rentals.

…

## C-1405: Child Care Services

…

### C-1405-4: Child Care Payment Guidelines

If no comparable benefits are available for child care, VR may pay up to 100 percent of the customer's child care costs during training, not to exceed the maximum rates listed in [WD Letter 25-20, Attachment 1: Fiscal Year 2021 Child Care Provider Reimbursement Rates (PDF)](https://twc.texas.gov/files/policy_letters/attachments/wd-25-20-att.1-wfed.pdf). Child care payments during training are limited to the duration of training.

VR adopts and implements the rates used and monitored by TWC for child care rates.

Payments may not exceed the maximum allowed rates listed in the Increased Rates table.

#### Maximum Full Day Rates for Child Care

Each Local Workforce Development Board (Board) sets the maximum rates for child care services. Those rates are outlined in the state's Child Care and Development Fund State Plan.

The rates are set for (1) Licensed Child Care Centers, (2) Licensed Child Care Homes, and (3) Registered Child Care Homes. Each of these categories has additional rates for each of these provider types that are Texas Rising Star providers (2-, 3-, or 4-star providers). This information is found in [WD Letter 25-20, Attachment 1: Fiscal Year 2021 Child Care Provider Reimbursement Rates (PDF)](https://twc.texas.gov/files/policy_letters/attachments/wd-25-20-att.1-wfed.pdf).

Age groups in each provider type are as follows:

* Infants age 0 to 17 months
* Toddlers age 18 to 35 months
* Preschool age children from 36 to 71 months
* School age children 72 months to 13 years

#### Procedures

The following procedures are used to find the amount in fees that VR pays for child care. If the fees exceed the maximum rate listed in [WD Letter 25-20, Attachment 1: Fiscal Year 2021 Child Care Provider Reimbursement Rates (PDF)](https://twc.texas.gov/files/policy_letters/attachments/wd-25-20-att.1-wfed.pdf), VR pays the amount that is listed as the maximum rate.

#### Table for Calculating Daily Rates

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Calculating Daily Rates** | **To obtain the daily rate:** |
| Providers with monthly rates | Divide the rate by 4.33, then divide the result by 5. |
| Providers with biweekly rates | Divide the rate by 2.165, then divide the result by 5. |
| Providers with weekly rates | Divide the weekly amount by 5. |
| Providers with hourly rates | Multiply the hourly rate by 12 to calculate the full-day rate and by 6 to calculate the part-day rate. |

Providers with multiple rates within an age category average all applicable rates to obtain the published rate for the age category, then determine the daily rate using the appropriate method.

Some providers may charge a registration fee in addition to ordinary child care costs. VR may pay the registration fee to the facility once per calendar year for each child who will be participating in child care.

When identifying applicable fees, VR staff must be aware that activity fees include only the fees that all parents are required to pay and do not include fees for optional activities such as field trips or optional classes.

VR may pay for child care after a customer has achieved employment for a total of no more than two months at the following percentages:

* 100 percent for the first four weeks
* 80 percent for the fifth week
* 60 percent for the sixth week
* 40 percent for the seventh week
* 20 percent for the eighth week

## C-1406: Occupational Licenses

…

### C-1406-2: Occupational License Fees

VR pays fees only for:

* licenses; and
* necessary examinations or registrations.

VR does not pay state or municipal tax assessments on occupations. Management must not make any exceptions.

VR does not pay for dues to a professional association or trade union unless paying the dues meets best-value purchasing criteria or unless the VR counselor can justify the purchase as critical to the success of the customer's employment. If the VR counselor believes that payment to a professional association or trade union is critical to the success of the customer's employment, the VR counselor must enter a case note in RHW that explains the justification for the decision and obtain VR Manager approval. The VR Manager may consult with TWC Office of General Council as needed to determine if use of VR funds is allowed.

VR funds cannot be paid to organizations that financially support a lobbyist.

## C-1407: Tools and Equipment

…

### C-1407-3: Purchasing and Documenting Tools or Equipment

VR may purchase required tools and equipment for the customer when the following conditions are met:

* The IPE shows that the customer is entering a training program or employment
* Purchased tools and equipment are of good quality and are regularly required for the chosen occupation, trade, or profession
* The cost of tools and equipment does not exceed a total of $5,000 for all tools and equipment

If the cost of required tools and equipment exceeds $5,000, management approval is required according to the following thresholds:

* Greater than $5,000 to $15,000—VR Manager approval required
* Greater than $15,000 to $25,000—Regional director or deputy regional director approval required
* Greater than $25,000—VR Division Director approval required

For additional purchasing requirements, refer to D-205: Purchasing Threshold Requirements.

Tools and equipment may be repaired if replacement is more expensive.

Remind the customer of the agreement in the IPE to:

* safeguard and maintain proper custody of tools and equipment;
* not dispose of tools and equipment unless they are unserviceable or obsolete; and
* return usable tools and equipment not used as planned to VR.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

If a customer reports that their tools and equipment were lost or stolen, they must provide a copy of a police report. Replacement cost of lost or stolen tools and equipment over $1,000 requires VR Supervisor approval. VR must recover usable tools and equipment that the customer no longer needs. When a customer refuses to return VR property, refer to [C-1407-5: Reporting Lost or Stolen Tools and Equipment](https://twc.texas.gov/vr-services-manual/vrsm-c-1400#c1407-5) for further action.

VR retains residual title to all tools, equipment, and unused supplies issued to a customer during the rehabilitation process.

#### Paying for Goods

VR staff must obtain the customer's signature on an itemized receipt or cash register receipt that describes each good purchased, or [VR2014, Rehabilitation Equipment Receipt and Agreement](http://intra.twc.state.tx.us/intranet/gl/html/vocational_rehab_forms.html), and place the signed receipt in the case file.

Refer to [VRSM A-210: PIN and Signature Procedures](https://twc.texas.gov/vr-services-manual/vrsm-a-200#a210) for more information on signatures.

#### Receipt of Items

VR2014, Rehabilitation Equipment Receipt and Agreement, provides VR with a list of rehabilitation equipment items issued to the customer and familiarizes the customer with the terms of the transaction. It also provides evidence of the return of the equipment.

VR2014 is used for rehabilitation equipment issued by:

* VR field staff; and
* Employment Assistance Services (Customer Technical Support).

Note: Do not use VR2014 when purchasing items associated with physical restoration, such as low-vision aids and glucometers.

#### When Initiated in the Field

When initiated in the field, the VR counselor:

* lists all customer-tagged and/or nontagged equipment, as outlined on the customer's IPE, which are issued to the customer;
* verifies that the customer is aware of the responsibility to properly care for the equipment and understands the other terms of the agreement;
* has the customer sign and date the form acknowledging receipt of the equipment;
* places the signed original VR2014 in the customer's case file; and
* gives a copy of VR2014 to the customer.

#### When Initiated by the Customer Technical Support Technician

When initiated by the Customer Technical Support Technician:

* Customer Technology Services lists all customer-tagged and/or nontagged equipment that is being sent on VR2014;
* the VR counselor reviews VR2014 and the contents of all boxes sent, and documents in RHW with a case note;
* the VR counselor meets with the customer and verifies that the customer is aware of the responsibility to properly care for the equipment and understands the other terms of the agreement;
* VR staff has the customer sign and date the form acknowledging receipt of the equipment;
* the VR counselor places the signed original VR2014 in the customer's case file; and
* the VR counselor gives a copy of VR2014 to the customer.

…