# VR Services Manual E-300: Case Note Requirements

Revised Feb. 8, 2019

| **Case Note Topic** | **Documentation** |
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| ATF Ancillary SA (After the Fact Ancillary Service Authorization) | A case note entered by VR staff member that is requesting, approving, or denying a request to issue a replacement SA. RequestThe “Add to Topic” for a request includes the specific good or service and the purpose of the case note, such as “Training Replacement SA Request” or “Medical Services Replacement SA Request.The case note content must include the following: * what is being requested (include specific good or service, provider, and anticipated dates of service);
* circumstances supporting the request; and
* name and job title of requester.

**TIP:** Verify the required management approval level per applicable policy prior to documenting the request to ensure that it is routed to the correct approver in a timely manner.Approval or DenialThe “Add to Topic” for an approval or denial includes the specific good or service and the specific decision (“approved” or “denied”), such as “Training Replacement SA – Approved.”The case note content must include the following:* the parameters of the approval or denial (include specific good or service, provider, and when applicable, the date range of the approval);
* type of review completed in TxROCS (if applicable); and
* name and job title of staff making decision.

**TIP:** Verify the required management approval level per applicable policy prior to documenting the approval or denial to ensure that you are the correct approver. |
| ATF Backdated SA (After the fact Backdated Service Authorization) | A case note entered by VR staff member that is requesting, approving, or denying a request to issue a backdated SA. RequestThe “Add to Topic” for a request includes the specific good or service and the purpose of the case note, such as “Training ATF SA Request” or “Medical Services ATF SA Request.The case note content must include the following: * what is being requested (include specific good or service, provider, and anticipated dates of service);
* circumstances supporting the request; and
* name and job title of requester.

**TIP:** Verify the required management approval level per applicable policy prior to documenting the request to ensure that it is routed to the correct approver in a timely manner.Approval or DenialThe “Add to Topic” for an approval or denial includes the specific good or service and the specific decision (“approved” or “denied”), such as “Training ATF SA – Approved.”The case note content must include the following:* the parameters of the approval or denial (include specific good or service, provider, and when applicable, the date range of the approval);
* type of review completed in TxROCS (if applicable); and
* name and job title of staff making decision.

**TIP:** Verify the required management approval level per applicable policy prior to documenting the approval or denial to ensure that you are the correct approver. |
| Approval Request | A case note or series of case notes entered by the VR staff member requesting an approval.The “Add to Topic” for a request should include the specific good or service, such as “Out-of-state Training.”The case note content must include the following:* what is being requested (include specific good or service, provider, and anticipated dates of service);
* circumstances supporting the request; and
* name and job title of requester.

**TIP:** Verify the required management approval level per applicable policy prior to documenting the request to ensure that it is routed to the correct approver in a timely manner. |
| Approval Response | A case note entered by VR staff member that is approving or denying the request. The “Add to Topic” for an approval or denial should include the specific good or service and the decision (“approved” or “denied”), such as “Out-of-state Training – Approved.”The case note content must include the following:* the parameters of the approval or denial (include specific good or service, provider, and when applicable, the date range of the approval);
* type of review completed in TxROCS (if applicable);and
* name and job title of staff making decision.

**TIP:** Verify the required management approval level per applicable policy prior to documenting the approval or denial to ensure that you are the correct approver. |
| Assessing & Planning | An optional case note that can be used to record information that will be used to create the comprehensive assessment case note or information that adds additional details that support the decisions that are made as the case is moved through the VR process. A case note or series of case notes that shows how the assessing and planning activities:* provided information on the customer's disability (including a review of existing records, when available, and a review of new assessments, when necessary);
* resulted in the identification of the customer's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, and interests;
* resulted in the identification of the customer's potential employment goals;
* led to the making of decisions that support the goals, objectives, and services identified in the customer's IPE;
* led to the customer's participation in informed choice;
* led to the development of the plan for making contact with the customer.
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| Attempt to Contact | <placeholder for future content> |
| ATU (Assistive Technology Unit)(ATU staff use only) | Assistive Technology Unit (ATU) staff enters a case note or series of case notes that include:* AT evaluation scheduling
* Special customer considerations
* AT demonstration details
* AT evaluation summary
* AT equipment recommendations
* training services progress
* technical advice
* other information that support customers
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| CCRC (Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center)(CCRC staff use only). | CCRC counselors and admissions team enter a case note or a series of case notes that include:* service authorization approvals
* counseling and guidance
* general updates
* training progress notes
* tour reports
* admissions process updates
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| Case Transfer | <placeholder for future content> |
| Closure(VR counselor use only) | A case note or series of case notes that describes:* the reason the case was closed;
* the circumstances that led to the decision to close the case; and
* how the case meets the criteria required for closure.
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| Comprehensive Assessment(VR counselor use only) | A case note that describes:* Summary of records of disabilities and related impediments to employment;
* Customer’s adjustment to disability;
* Services recommended that will address specific functional limitations;
* Assessment of rehabilitation technology needs;
* Justification for selected employment goal;
* Services that are needed to achieve the employment goal;
* Available resources and comparable benefits;
* Independent living skills (including transportation and travel capabilities and resources);
* Any relevant legal issues;
* Description of customer involvement and informed choice in the selection of services, providers, and the employment goal;
* Educational and vocational history and goals;
* Justification for planned frequency of contact;
* Explanation of customer contribution to planned services (if required); and
* Any other factors that may impact participation in services.

**Note**: Only areas listed above that apply to the customer and their circumstances need to be addressed in assessments and documentation.**TIP**: If assessing and planning case notes were used to record detailed information that is part of the comprehensive assessment, it is appropriate to refer to those specific case notes by case note title and date rather than repeating the information in the comprehensive assessment case note.  |
| Consultation/Review | A case note entered by VR staff member that is providing formal consultation or review of a case.The “Add to Topic” for a consultation should include the specific good or service, such as “Hearing Aids.”The case note content must include the following:* the parameters of the consultation including specific good or service, provider, the date range of service (when applicable), and specific recommendations;
* type of review completed in TxROCS (if applicable); and
* name and job title of staff providing consultation.

**TIP:** Do not use this topic for approvals. |
| Contact | A case note or series of case notes that documents all contacts between any VR staff member and the* customer;
* customer’s representative;
* legal guardian; or
* others with direct involvement or information about customer’s participation in VR services.

**TIP:** Do not use this case note topic for contacts with providers or vendors.Each case note includes a summary of* relevant conversations,
* observations,
* decisions, and
* actions that support the customer's progress and informed choices.

**TIP**: VRC’s should always document a contact as a C&G contact IF C&G is provided during any part of the contact. Counseling and guidance is a “contact”, but should be documented using the C&G case note topic.**TIP:** Contacts include face to face conversations, telephone contacts, and written or electronic communications,  |
| Contact – Provider/Vendor | A case note or series of case notes that documents all contacts between any VR staff member and any provider of VR goods or services. Each case note includes a summary of* relevant conversations,
* observations,
* decisions, and
* actions taken or needed as a result of the contact.
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| Correction | <placeholder for future content> |
| Counseling and guidance(VR counselor use only) | A case note or series of case notes entered by the VR counselor that reflects the skillful application of counseling strategies and interventions. These case notes must include the:* **issue** addressed through C&G that are related to the impediments to employment, IPE, and/or participation in VR services;
* **strategies** for resolution of the issue to include description of decision-making processes involved;
* **customer’s participation** in the resolution;
* **customer’s reaction**; and
* **actions required** of the customer or counselor.

**TIP**: As with other case notes, the writing style and format of a C&G case note can be individualized by the VR counselor as long as the required content is included.**TIP**: C&G frequency is **not** the same as basic frequency of contact or “FOC” on the IPE. C&G must be completed by a counselor; FOC can be maintained by any VR staff. FOC is evaluated in the IPE services section of a Compliance and Quality Case Review. However, C&G does count as a contact for the purpose of tracking FOC. **TIP**: When counseling and guidance is provided during the completion of the joint annual review or when completing an IPE amendment, the compliance and quality criteria for counseling and guidance must also be met and clearly documented for this to count as a counseling and guidance case note for the purpose of a case review.  |
| Deafblind(DB specialist use only) | The deafblind specialist writes a case note or series of case notes to document customer contacts and other pertinent details. Case notes may include: * + evaluation findings
	+ initial recommendations and rationale
	+ recommendations/evaluation updates as needed
	+ any contacts or contact attempts
	+ consultations with customers (concerns, resource or advocacy information)
	+ staffings between Deafblind specialists and VR staff
	+ coding updates
	+ service completion (Successful or Unsuccessful)
	+ rationale for services not accepted
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| Diabetes Ed. (Diabetes Education)(DE Specialist use only). | The diabetes program specialist writes a case note or series of case notes to document customer contacts and other pertinent details. Case notes may include:* Services in evaluation and training
* diabetes education recommendations
* diabetes training on equipment
* diabetes education referrals/resources
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| Diagnostic Interview(VR counselor use only) | A case note or series of case notes that describes pertinent information garnered from the customer, the customer's family or representative, and any available records.The case note must include:* brief description of the customer’s disabilities (relevant history and current treatment);
* a description of the functional limitations and their impact on employment, education, and independence;
* a record of the customer's perception of problems or issues related to his or her disabilities and need for services;
* the customer’s educational and work history;
* the customer’s knowledge, skills, and abilities;
* the customer’s resources and comparable benefits (or the need to apply for benefits);
* information about the customer’s SSI or SSDI status (including verification of benefits or a note about the need to verify benefits);
* the VR counselor’s observations throughout interview; and
* a statement of the next actions needed to move the case through the VR process.
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| Disaster Victim Status | <placeholder for future content> |
| EAS (Employment Assistance Services)(EAS staff use only) | Employment Assistance Services (EAS) staff are responsible for entering case notes for any activity they provide for customers.  The only actual formal item to go into a case note is the Initial EAS Consultation report.  This is copied and passed into the actual SR which then carries over into a case note via RHW.The EAS staff documents EAS services in a case note when an SR is delegated to EAS.  The following are level 4 specs for EAS services that EAS should be documented in a case note in RHW:* Assistive Technology Purchase Plan
* Assistive Technology Troubleshooting
* Baseline Computer Skills Assessment for Training Recommendations
* Equipment/Software Installation
* Information Research (describe)
* Initial Consultation
* Job Retention Services
* Loaner Equipment
* Post Training Assessment
* Refurbish/Issue Equipment
* Technical Support Specialist Services

These are outlined on EAS Intranet site at: <https://intra.twc.texas.gov/intranet/vrs/html/employment-assistance-services.html> |
| Eligibility (including level of significance)(VR counselor use only) | A case note or series of case notes that describes the information that supports how each eligibility criterion is met:1. physical or mental impairment;
2. substantial impediment to employment;
3. customer requires VR services to prepare for, secure, retain, advance in, or regain employment; and
4. presume that the customer can have a goal of an employment outcome.

For Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) cases that are presumed eligible, document in a case note* statement of the presumption of eligibility;
* the reported disability; and
* documentation used to verify SSI/SSDI status.

For cases involving SSI or SSDI and that are not immediately presumed eligible for VR services, document in a case note clear justification for the delay in eligibility determination. **Level of Significance** –Document the level of significance of the case as a stand-alone case note or as part of a case note for eligibility. * A case note that describes how the customer's disability affects his or her functional capacities and meets the other criteria for establishing the disability's level of significance; or
* A completed [VR1390, Checklist for Determining Significance of Disability](https://twc.texas.gov/forms/index.html). If the VR1390 is used, meet the documentation requirement by also completing a case note in RHW that the form was completed.
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| Employment | <placeholder for future content> |
| Extension of Time for Eligibility(VR counselor use only) | A case note that describes* the reasons that an extension of time is required, and
* that the customer is in agreement with the extension of time.

**TIP:** When these details are included in the comments section of the EOT for Eligibility page in RHW, which creates a system generated case note, an additional case note is not required. |
| Extension of Time for IPE(VR counselor use only) | A case note that describes* the reasons that an extension of time is required, and
* that the customer is in agreement with the extension of time.

**TIP:** When these details are included in the comments section of the EOT for Eligibility page in RHW, which creates a system generated case note, an additional case note is not required. |
| IPE/ILP Amendment (VR counselor or IL staff use only) | A case note that describes:* review of financial information and BLR requirements;
* review of each section of the existing plan or amendment;
* progress in achieving the identified goals (including review of intermediate goals);
* the reason for the amendment;
* the nature and scope of the changes, and
* a description of how informed customer choice was included in the development of the IPE/ILP Amendment.

**TIP**: This case note is also used to document post-employment services since an IPE amendment must be completed to provide post-employment services. **TIP:** When an IPE/ILP amendment is completed, this resets the date for the next joint annual review to be completed. **TIP:** When completing an IPE/ILP amendment, it is a best practice to review all release forms and work authorization documents to ensure that they are current.  |
| Joint Annual Review(VR counselor use only) | A case note that describes:* review of financial information and BLR requirements;
* review of each section of the existing plan or amendment;
* progress in achieving the identified goals (including review of intermediate goals);
* the nature and scope of the changes, and
* a description of how informed customer choice was included in the development of the IPE/ILP Amendment.

**TIP**: This case note is also used to document post-employment services since an IPE amendment must be completed to provide post-employment services. **TIP:** When an IPE/ILP amendment is completed, this resets the date for the next joint annual review to be completed. It is not necessary to complete a JAR when an IPE/ILP Amendment is completed. **TIP:** When completing a JAR, it is a best practice to review all release forms and work authorization documents to ensure that they are current. |
| Medical Services Coordinator Info.(Medical Services Coordinator (MSC) use only) | <placeholder for future content> |
| Modifications | <placeholder for future content> |
| O & M (Orientation and Mobility)(O&M staff use only). | A case note or series of case notes that describes:* assessments completed with customers
* training progress reports
* service record closures

customer contacts or attempts to contact |
| Phase Adjustment | A case note or series of case notes that describes:* the circumstances surrounding previous closures and the need for phase adjusting the case;
* consultation with the VR Manager, if applicable.
 |
| PIN Reset(VR management team use only) | A case note or series of case notes that describes:* an action taken; and
* the reason that the customer's PIN was reset.
 |
| Purchasing | Limited use for purchasing actions. |
| Purchasing Pre-review | <placeholder for future content> |
| Records and Reports | A case note that provides basic information about requesting and processing records or reports. Restricted Use: * Do not use for documentation specific to a SA or purchasing action (use “Purchasing” case note topic).
* Do not use when more detailed information is being documented and should be documented in a case note topic, such as “Assessing & Planning”.
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| Referral | <placeholder for future content> |
| Requires Special Attention | A specific and factual report including* the date,
* the location,
* the names and addresses of witnesses and people involved,
* what was said or done, and
* the names of those willing to testify.

If it is later determined that the customer no longer poses a threat, enter a new case note that describes the change in circumstances. |
| Service Justification(VR counselor use only) | A case note that describes:* type of service,
* goal of service,
* specific provider,
* begin and end dates of service,
* information about available comparable benefits, and
* information about how the consumer exercised informed choice.

When services are provided for family members, the service justification note must also describe:* why services are needed for a family member;
* which family member or members need the services (name and Social Security number);
* what services are needed; and
* how the services are expected to contribute to the customer's employment.

**TIP**: A service justification is not required if comparable information has already been recorded in another case note or in the customer’s IPE. |
| State Office Use Only - RSA Approval – Purchase Prior Approval(state office use only) | RSA approval case note entered by VR staff member that is approving or denying the request. The “Add to Topic” for an approval or denial should include the specific good or service and the decision (“approved” or “denied”), such as “Out-of-state Training – Approved”. The case note content must include the following:* the parameters of the approval or denial (include specific good or service, provider, and when applicable, the date range of the approval);
* type of review completed in TxROCS (if applicable); and
* name and job title of staff making decision.
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| State Office Use Only - RSA Request - Purchase Prior Approval(state office use only) | RSA approval request case note entered by VR staff member that is requesting an approval prior to purchase.The “Add to Topic” for a request should include the specific good or service, such as “Out-of-state Training”.The case note content must include the following:* what is being requested (include specific good or service, provider, and anticipated dates of service);
* circumstances supporting the request; and
* name and job title of requester.
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| Subminimum Wage and Competitive Employment | <placeholder for future content> |
| Trial Work (VR counselor use only) | A case note that provides a clear justification of the need for trial work as an assessment.  |
| TxROCS Case Review | A case note entered by VR staff member that is completing the case review.The case note content must include the following:* the parameters of the review including specific good or service, provider, the date range of service (when applicable), and specific recommendations;
* type of review completed in TxROCS (if applicable); and
* name and job title of staff providing consultation.
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| VDU (Vocational Diagnostic Unit)(VDU staff use only) | A case note or series of case notes that may include:* scheduling information
* customer contact or contact attempts
* summary and recommendations of the VDU evaluation
* feedback summary
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| VRT (Vocational Rehabilitation Teacher)(VRT use only) | The VR Teacher writes a case note or series of case notes to document customer contacts and other pertinent case information. Case notes should include:  * customer assessments
* any contacts with customers
* training recommendations (include training goals in these areas: Adjustment to Visual Impairment, Independent Living Skills, Travel Skills, Communication Skills, Vocational Skills, and Support Systems)
* training services summary (include what was taught, how was it taught, evaluation of tasks, and next actions)
* training services completion (include VR teacher and VR counselor are in agreement of the closure)
* courtesy customer visits
* staffings between VR teacher and VR counselor.
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