

Principles of the Rehabilitation Services Administration
U.S. Department of Education
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The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) is committed to providing individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with significant disabilities, with the assistance and opportunities they need to achieve high-quality employment and independence in their communities. RSA-administered programs under the Rehabilitation Act are a primary source of information, training, employment, advocacy, and support services that individuals with disabilities use to realize their goals in their professional and personal lives.

Recognizing the significant impact that RSA programs have on thousands of individuals with disabilities, we have adopted a set of principles to direct our policies, maximize the effects of our efforts, facilitate the delivery of quality services to individuals with disabilities, and strengthen the relationships among individuals, RSA grantee, third-party service providers, and others who impact the lives of persons with disabilities.

Principles:

- Individuals with disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities, are capable of achieving competitive, high-quality employment in integrated settings and living full and productive lives in their communities.
- Major barriers to the employment and independence of individuals with disabilities are the low expectations and misunderstandings society, some grantee agencies, service providers, or consumers themselves have about their abilities, capacities, commitment, creativity, interests, and ingenuity.
- Individuals with disabilities are able to make informed choices about their own lives — including their employment options, the types of services they need, the selection of service providers — and are able to assume responsibility for their decisions.
- The primary role of VR agencies and other RSA-funded entities is to empower individuals with disabilities by providing the information, skills training, education, confidence, and support services individuals need to make informed choices about their professional and personal lives.
- Services are best delivered within a framework of accountability, efficiency, and the least administrative burden necessary.
- The most effective vocational rehabilitation, independent living, training and other programs result from a strong alliance among individuals with disabilities, grantee agencies, service providers, and organizations representing each. These alliances encourage accountability through systematic and ongoing assessments of a grantee's policies, programs, and practices.