

REFERRAL – 34 CFR 361.41

Updated and Approved March 12, 2024

The Iowa Department for the Blind shall process all referrals and requests for information in an equitable and timely manner. A referral for VR services may be made by phone, mail, website, or electronic formats. The individual or the individual's guardian (if under 18 or court-appointed) should consent to the referral being made. The IDB's [Referral Form](#) is available, but its use is not required if the minimum referral information is provided. For a referral to be made, the information provided to IDB must minimally include:

- First Name
- Last Name
- Date of Birth
- Street Address
- City, State, Zip Code
- County where the individual lives
- Phone number
- Preferred method and time to be contacted
- Legal Guardian if applicable
- Name and contact information for the individual submitting the referral

If all information is provided and the person requests information regarding VR services, the individual will be assigned to work with a counselor based on geographic location or need for a specific sub-program and shall be registered in the case management system. If an individual moves, his or her file will be transferred to the appropriate counselor in his or her new geographic region. The VR counselor will respond to referrals within fourteen business days.

A referred individual will be scheduled for an initial interview that should take place within 21 days of the date of the referral, unless the individual requests otherwise. At this interview, the VR counselor will share information about IDB roles and responsibilities in the process to assist the individual in making an informed choice when applying for services.

If at this meeting, the referred individual is interested in applying for VR services, the individual, or the individual's guardian, if appropriate, should answer application questions and sign the application (completing the application process). If the individual is over the age of 18 and has a court-appointed guardian, documentation of guardianship is required prior to application acceptance. Documentation provided must be official court guardianship documents that include the type of guardian and the areas of decision-making where the guardian has authority to act. At this time, the VR counselor should also begin gathering information for determining eligibility.

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In the case of a self-referral where the potential client expresses the intention to apply for services, the 60-day time frame for determining eligibility will begin on the day this referral is received.

Funds for case services must not be expended on an individual until the individual is considered to have submitted an application for services.