



**WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE ARTS
DIVISION OF REHABILITATION SERVICES**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MORE PEOPLE ELIGIBLE FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES

Institute, W.Va. (June 10, 2009) – More people may now be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services as a result of changes to the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services' (DRS) order of selection process. The changes became effective June 1, following the redirection of more funding for client services.

Order of selection is a process mandated in the federal Rehabilitation Act to ensure that individuals with the most significant disabilities are prioritized when there is not sufficient funding to serve all eligible applicants.

"These changes reflect how responsible government results in better service," said Gov. Joe Manchin. "DRS is helping people with quality of life, providing the tools they need to succeed and help themselves in order to contribute to the state's dynamic workforce."

DRS has four defined categories of disabilities based on severity of the condition, in an effort to make sure people with the most significant conditions are given priority for services. Until now, DRS was serving eligible people in the top three categories. With more funding available, DRS now has the opportunity to also serve those who may not have qualified before.

"Given the current economy, the expansion of eligibility requirements is very timely and important," DRS Director Deborah Lovely said. "The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services is ready to help more eligible people with conditions that make getting or keeping a job difficult. We can make real differences in the lives of even more West Virginians."

DRS operates the comprehensive state and federal vocational rehabilitation program and is a division of the West Virginia Department of Education and the Arts. DRS provides work-related counseling, training, job placement and other vocational rehabilitation services.

If you have a physical or mental condition that is preventing you from getting or keeping a job, call 1-800-642-8207 (VTDD) to see if you qualify for vocational rehabilitation services from DRS. For more information, visit the division's Web site at www.wvdrs.org/.

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