

Montana Vocational Rehabilitation

COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

For Counselors Not Currently Eligible to Sit for the CRC Exam

Montana Vocational Rehabilitation (MVR) requires that counselors 1) have a relevant master's degree and 2) are eligible to sit for the [Certified Rehabilitation Counselor \(CRC\) exam](#). New counselors who do not meet these requirements are expected to complete their master's degree and become eligible to sit for the exam within 42 months from the date of hire. Some, who already have a related master's degree, may be required to take additional classes that will enable them to sit for the CRC exam. (See Categories R and D in the link above. MVR assistance will be considered on a case-by-case basis for these categories.)

WAGE INCREASES

Upon completion of a master's degree and subsequent eligibility to sit for the CRC exam, an employee in good standing will be granted a raise according to the wage specifications in the current Collective Bargaining Agreement. If the employee chooses to take the exam and passes it, s/he will be granted a raise, beyond that granted upon completion of a master's degree. As noted above, raise will be granted according to the wage specifications in the current Collective Bargaining Agreement.

The following is a three-part worksheet that will guide you through the process. Please read through the entire document to ensure your understanding of all requirements.

RESOURCES

Federal funding, state funding, and personal funding will combine to help counselors achieve the above noted requirements. Scholarships are available through MVR's federal partner, the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). These scholarships are granted to and administered by universities across the country. The following table illustrates cost share considerations.

RSA	MVR	Counselor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuition and Fees • Books • Travel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One graduate school application fee. • Books, up to \$100 per semester, <i>if not covered by scholarship*</i> • Required travel, up to two trips, <i>if not covered by scholarship—contingent on DPHHS approval</i> <p><i>*Additional funds may be provided if costs are not covered by scholarship and more MVR funds are available.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrance Testing Fees (GRE or MAT) • Application fees above \$100, transcript fees, etc. • Tuition and fees not covered by scholarship • Incidental expenses—school supplies postage, copying, etc. • Book costs above \$100 per semester • Travel not covered by scholarship or state • Any other miscellaneous fees not covered by the scholarship • CRC exam fees

If a counselor cannot get an RSA scholarship, then s/he is responsible for the costs for which the scholarship would normally pay.

PROGRAM CHOICE

With guidance from the MVR Trainer, the counselor chooses his/her education program. When choosing a program, the counselor must consider the following criteria:

- The program must be accredited by the [Council of Rehabilitation Educators \(CORE\)](#).
- The program must have the ability to provide [RSA scholarships](#).
- The program must offer online coursework (MSU Billings is an exception for those who reside in Billings.)
- The program must be both appropriate and cost effective; i.e., it does not result in unnecessary expense for MVR (e.g. excessive time away from work for employee).

TRAINING TIMELINE

Counselor Responsibilities:

Within 6 months of hire:	Within 18 months of hire:	Within 42 months of hire:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Together with supervisor complete Part 1 on page 3. Email copy to Trainer. 2. Research which RSA approved online program best fits needs, 3. Apply to the program 4. Apply for an RSA scholarship 5. Notify MVR Trainer of completion of the steps in Part 2 on page 3. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Begin taking classes 2. Provide MVR Trainer with documentation of scholarship amount and scope (i.e., what it covers on school letterhead). 3. Keep MVR Trainer apprised of any changes in education plan. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide documentation of graduation to MVR Trainer (diploma or final transcripts)** 2. Provide CRC number to MVR Trainer upon passing the exam. ** <p>**These steps are necessary to ensure that you will be granted a raise.</p>

IMPORTANT UNDERSTANDINGS & REQUIREMENTS

1. Work time may not be used for school work. However, with supervisor's approval, counselors may use work time for tests requiring proctoring.
2. Counselors may use their work computers outside of work to complete coursework.
3. Counselors must meet GPA requirements specified by their graduate program and the RSA scholarship agreement.
4. Work time will be granted for up to two (2) trips to complete required on-campus course work.
5. Counselor is required to provide information from the school on official letterhead describing scholarship amount and scope (what scholarship pays for) to the MVR Trainer.
6. The counselor is required to keep MVR Trainer apprised of any change in funding (increase or decrease) of RSA scholarship.
7. If counselor requires an advance from MVR to pay for books, the counselor will be responsible to provide reimbursement to MVR upon receipt of scholarship monies; counselor must keep all receipts to track what is owed and submit them along with payment to MVR.
8. Counselor must inform the MVR Trainer, in writing, of any lengthy interruptions (one or more semesters) of his/her education plan. Document must include brief explanation and a goal date for return to education plan. Counselor will be expected to resume his/her education program within 6 months of the interruption.
9. In exchange for its investment, like RSA, MVR expects counselors who have received MVR assistance to complete their education plans and to commit, in good faith, to two (2) years of service for every one (1) year of assistance received.
10. Counselors who choose to sit for the CRC exam will pay their own exam fees and expenses incurred to travel to/from the exam, and will use personal time to take the exam.
11. Upon completion of education and/or successful passing of the CRC exam, the counselor is responsible to provide documentation to the MVR Trainer before a wage increase can be awarded. Pay raises will be activated the first day of the pay period in which the documentation of completion is received. Employees are responsible to maintain certification status in good standing and apprise MVR Trainer of renewal date.

My signature below indicates that I have read, understood, and agreed to the expectations noted above. As specified in my employment agreement, I understand that a failure to adhere to the above expectations may result in suspension and/or termination of employment with Montana Vocational Rehabilitation.

To complete: 1) counselor and supervisor input electronic signatures, 2) select "Save As," add Counselor name to document title, click "Save," and 3) email to [MVR Trainer](#) for signature.

Counselor Signature

Date

Supervisor Signature

Date

MVR Trainer Signature

Date

To complete: 1) check off steps, fill in fields, 2) SAVE, and 3) email to [MVR Trainer](#). Save a copy for yourself. **Continue to revise form as you complete steps & forward revised copies to Trainer.**

- I have selected the following education program:
- I applied for and was notified of acceptance to the above education program on:
- I have applied for and was awarded an RSA scholarship on:
- I have provided documentation, on education program letterhead, of the amount and scope of my scholarship to the MVR Trainer on:
- My goal date to complete my education and be eligible to sit for the CRC exam is:

To complete: 1) input relevant information (dates and/or CRC number), 2) SAVE document and 3) and email copy to [MVR Trainer](#). Electronic copies are preferred. (Scan, save, and email.)

- I completed all graduation requirements and provided a copy of my diploma or transcripts to the MVR Trainer on:

Optional:

- I passed the CRC exam. CRC Certificate Number:

Expiration
date: