

## **EMPLOYMENT AFTER TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY**



***Department of  
Rehabilitation  
Services***

### **What services can I receive?**

When you apply for services, you will be assisted by a Vocational Rehabilitation or Visual Services Counselor. The Counselor will determine your eligibility for services by assessing problems you have in thinking, sensory, behavior, or physical abilities since your injury.

If you are eligible, your counselor will provide information about choices you have for developing an Individualized Plan for Employment. A range of different services is available. Your counselor will review these services with you. Your plan is like a roadmap of services to help you prepare for, find, or return to employment in a career of your choice.

Please feel free to ask questions. Your participation in planning and carrying out the plan is critical to your job success. After you and your counselor sign the plan, you will be given a copy. The plan will be provided in large print or audio tape at your request.

### **What if I'm still in school?**

Young people who are being served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act should have a transition plan under development beginning at age 14. This plan is designed to prepare for life once school is completed.

The Vocational Rehabilitation or Visual Services counselor can be involved in assisting you and your family to begin career planning when the school's transition plan is initiated.

### **For more information**

Contact the state office of the Department of Rehabilitation Services at 405-951-3400 or toll free at 1-800-487-4042.

Or, contact your local Vocational Rehabilitation or Visual Services office by consulting the "blue pages" in your local phone book.

For additional information use our website:

[www.okrehab.org](http://www.okrehab.org)

### **State Resources**

**Oklahoma Department of Education**  
Tel: 405/521-3301

**Oklahoma Department of Human Services**  
Tel: 405/521-3646

**Brain Injury Association of Oklahoma**  
Tel: 800/765-6809 or 580/23304363

**Oklahoma Traumatic Neurologic Injury Council**  
Tel: 800/522-0204 or 405/271-3430

**Oklahoma Indian Health Service**  
Tel: 888/843-2591 or 405/951-3716

**Social Security Administration**  
Tel: 800/722-1213 or 405/605-3000

**Medicare and Medicaid Services/Information**  
Tel: 800/633-4227  
Internet: <http://www.medicare.gov>

**Oklahoma School for the Blind**  
Tel: 877/229-7136 or 918/781-8200

**Oklahoma School for the Deaf**  
Tel: 888/685-3323

**Easter Seal Society**  
Tel: 405/848-2525

**Center for Learning and Leadership, UCD**  
Tel: 800/627-6827 or 405/271-4500

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# **What is Traumatic Brain Injury?**

Brain injury can occur in many ways. The most common types of traumatic brain injury result from accidents in which the head strikes an object or when the brain moves inside the skull as in a car crash. Brain injuries can also be caused by insufficient oxygen, tumors, stroke, poisoning, or infection.



## **Common Symptoms**

Brain injury can significantly affect many cognitive, physical, and psychological skills. Physical problems may involve walking, balance, coordination, fine motor skills, strength, or endurance. Visual problems are also a common symptom. Cognitive problems may occur with speech, information processing, memory, or sensory/perceptual skills. Psychological status is also often altered, causing changes in personality and behavior that affect employment outcome.

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## **Can I go back to work after brain injury?**

Even though returning to work may be challenging for people with brain injuries, the majority want to go to work. Work is an achievable goal for people after brain injury!

Having a job is important not only for economic stability, but also for increasing self-worth and attaining fulfillment in life.

## **Will I lose my Social Security benefits if I go back to work?**

There have been many changes in the Social Security laws which help people keep their medical benefits for several years. Sometimes people can retain their cash benefits as well, at least for several months while they try working again. A new program called "EZ Back On" makes it easier to again receive benefits if you lose your job because of a medical condition.

Contact the Oklahoma Benefits Planning and Assistance Project for more information:

**Tel: 1-888-801-3203**

# **What Is The Department of Rehabilitation Services?**

The Department of Rehabilitation Services is a state agency that provides employment assistance to Oklahomans with disabilities through two Divisions: Vocational Rehabilitation, and Visual Services.

## **What if I have a physical or mental impairment as a result of brain injury?**

Vocational Rehabilitation helps people who have physical or mental impairments get jobs in appropriate careers of their choice.

## **What if I have a visual impairment as a result of brain injury?**

Visual Services assists people who are blind or have visual impairments in getting jobs in appropriate careers of their choice.

## **What services can I expect?**

The primary services are counseling and guidance with job placement. Other services compensate for, correct, or prevent disability-based barriers to employment.

## **How Do I Apply for Services?**

You may apply for services in offices throughout Oklahoma. Offices can be located by checking the "blue pages" in your local phone book or by calling the following toll free number:

**Tel: 1-800-487-4042**

Enter your zip code, and you will be connected to the Vocational Rehabilitation office that serves your area.

## **Who is eligible?**

You are eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation or Visual Services if you:

- ▶ Have a physical or mental impairment that keeps you from working.
- ▶ Can benefit in terms of an employment outcome from vocational rehabilitation services, and
- ▶ Require vocational rehabilitation services to prepare for, find, keep, or return to employment.

**Many people with brain injury are eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation and Visual Services if they want to work!**