# VR-SFP Chapter 3: Basic Standards

The following sections of the VR Standards for Providers have been revised. These requirements will take effect July 1, 2021.

## 3.3 Contractors Standards–All Contract Types

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### 3.3.10 Contractor Required Policy and Procedures

The contractor must develop and adhere to policies and procedures to protect customers, customer interests, visitors, and the contractor's staff.

Contractors must have policies and procedures in place before providing services to customers and must review and update their policies to ensure continued compliance with the standards. Contractors must ensure that their policies and procedures do not conflict with the standards or the requirements of their contract. Contractors must develop a written plan and maintain documentation that staff and customers, as appropriate, have been educated on policies and procedures.

At a minimum, contractors must have written policy and procedures on the following:

* Maintaining confidentiality of customer and employee information (refer to [3.3.4 Confidentiality](https://twc.texas.gov/standards-manual/vr-sfp-chapter-03#s334) and [3.3.5 Data Encryption](https://twc.texas.gov/standards-manual/vr-sfp-chapter-03#s335)), including:
  + providing physical safeguards;
  + providing authorized access; and
  + reporting a breach of confidentiality;
* Managing customer expectations and responsibilities;
* Managing customer grievances;
* Providing customers with the VR toll-free telephone number (1-800-628-5115) and explaining that the number is for applicants and customers to use to report complaints or compliments about the contractor;
* Providing the customer with the Client Assistance Program (CAP)- Disability Rights telephone number (1-800-252-9108) and explaining the purposes of CAP;
* Maintaining the contractor's standards that are explained in [3.3 Contractor Standards–All Contract Types](https://twc.texas.gov/standards-manual/vr-sfp-chapter-03#s33) on:
* promoting employment of qualified individuals with disabilities;
  + maintaining professionalism;
  + avoiding conflict of interest;
  + maintaining confidentiality;
  + using data encryption;
  + following sound fiscal and business practices;
  + reporting abuse, fraud, misconduct, and waste;
  + referring customers to VR; and
  + adhering to the terms of the contract;
* Meeting the standards published in [3.5 Contractor Standards for Physical Locations](https://twc.texas.gov/standards-manual/vr-sfp-chapter-03#s35), when applicable;
* Meeting the standards published in [3.4.1 Customer Satisfaction Surveys](https://twc.texas.gov/standards-manual/vr-sfp-chapter-03#s341);
* Meeting the standards published in [3.4.2 Service Delivery Achievements](https://twc.texas.gov/standards-manual/vr-sfp-chapter-03#s342);
* Terminating a customer's services (refer to [3.6.5 Termination from Service Delivery](https://twc.texas.gov/standards-manual/vr-sfp-chapter-03#s365));
* Providing customer orientation on the reporting of allegations or incidents of abuse, exploitation, or neglect that involve individuals with disabilities (see [3.6.6 Allegations or Incidents of Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation](https://twc.texas.gov/standards-manual/vr-sfp-chapter-03#s366) and [3.6.1 Customer Orientation](https://twc.texas.gov/standards-manual/vr-sfp-chapter-03#s361));
* Reporting observations or evidence that a customer is using alcohol or drugs (see [3.3.7 Reporting Substance Abuse by Customer](https://twc.texas.gov/standards-manual/vr-sfp-chapter-03#s337));
* Reporting unusual or unexpected incidents that compromise or may compromise the health or safety of individuals or the security of property used by the contractor's employees or VR customers and visitors (see [3.3.11 Safe and Secure Environments](https://twc.texas.gov/standards-manual/vr-sfp-chapter-03#s33311)), including:
  + how to obtain emergency medical services for customers; and
  + how and when to report incidents;
* Providing in-person services when the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), or the federal, state, or local government issues health and safety protocols. The policy must include a worksite plan that describes how the contractor will:
  + adhere to the CDC, or the federal, state, or local government’s current health and safety protocols; and
  + maintain the health and safety of their employees and customers at their physical location, during service delivery in the community, and/or when transporting customers.

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## 3.6 Customer Safeguards

### 3.6.1 Customer Orientation

Any customer referred to a contractor by VR must receive orientation to the services, roles, responsibilities, expectations, policy, and procedures, as applicable. Contractors must document in writing the topics included in the orientation and must obtain the customer's signature to verify that the customer received the orientation.

Orientation and handouts, if applicable, must address at a minimum:

* information about the contractor and the purpose of the referral;
* appropriate rules and regulations;
* the customer's responsibilities and the contractor's expectations;
* safety information;
* how to report complaints about a contractor (a provider of services) to VR at 1-800-628-5115; and
* explain the purpose of the Client Assistance Program (CAP) - Disability Rights and provide their telephone number (1-800-252-9108).

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## 3.11 Documentation and Record Keeping

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### 3.11.1 Documentation and Signatures

When completing forms and/or documentation related to the delivery of services or goods to customers, the contractor must do the following:

* Answer all questions related to the services or goods provided. If a question or section does not apply, enter "Not Applicable" or "N/A" and explain why.
* Write summaries in paragraph form in clear English with adequate details, for questions requiring a narrative response.
* Review the form carefully, leaving no blanks.
* Write the goal in clear, measurable terms, when goals are required.
* Collect required signatures from VR or OIB staff, customers, provider’s staff, and circle of supports (including customer representatives, if any), using encryption when required, through one of the following methods:
  + obtaining handwritten signatures;
  + obtaining digital signature(s) ensuring customer confidentiality on approved software options.
  + Examples of approved software to collect digital signatures include:
    - Adobe and
    - DocuSign (when it is an option for a TWC-VR form) Signatures can be collected on smart devices (i.e. tablets and phones).
  + sending a copy of the document to the customer when the customer has the equipment necessary to print, sign and return an electronic copy of the signed form (such as a photo or scanned copy).
* Make certain that all standards have been met before submitting any form and/or report with an invoice for payment.

Signatures, handwritten or electronic, or VR staff member’s contact with customer are always preferable to other methods of verification. The provider must make at least three attempts to obtain signatures, but not more than one per day, after the services have been completed. However, when the provider’s attempts to obtain signatures have been unsuccessful and those attempts have been recorded on the submitted documentation, an email from the customer or parent verifying the information in the document may be submitted with the form in lieu of a signature.

When forms are completed by a provider, the forms must be submitted by either US mail, hand delivery, fax, or encrypted email, unless otherwise noted.

Information must be accurate and complete. All instructions on the form and in the VR-SFP manual must be followed.

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