# Vocational Rehabilitation Services Manual C-1000: Employment Services

Revised October 1, 2019

## C-1008: Employment Assistance Specialist Services

The goal of the employment assistance specialist (EAS) is to increase the quantity and enhance the quality of employment outcomes for VR customers who have a primary disability of vision loss. The EAS works in partnership with employers, the VR team, and customers with vision loss to provide specialized support to meet the customer's assistive technology needs and reach employment goals.

Specific services include, but are not limited to, assistive technology purchase planning, baseline computer skills assessment, equipment and software installation and troubleshooting, equipment refurbishing and loans, job retention and basic consultation services.

### C-1008-1: Accessing Employment Assistance Specialist Services

Employment assistance specialists serve customers with a primary disability of vision loss. A VR counselor refers a customer for EAS services by creating a service record in ReHabWorks and delegating the service to an EAS.

#### Creating a Service Record for EAS Services

* Level 1—In-House Services
* Level 2—Employment Assistance Services (EAS)
* Level 3—Employment Assistance Services (EAS)
* Level 4— Select the applicable service (describe)

Note: The term “describe” should be replaced with a brief description of requested services.

#### Initial Consultation

VR counselors must contact an EAS for an initial consultation assessment before referring a customer with a primary disability of vision loss for an assistive technology evaluation at the Assistive Technology Unit, or with an Assistive Technology Evaluation provider.

**Other Consultations**

As needed, VR counselors should contact an EAS for consultation and assistance with the following:

* Customer’s vocational or academic issues regarding assistive technology or training that might assist with an employment goal
* Facilitating meetings with employer contacts, site tours, assistance with a job analysis, job accommodations, technical information or updates, job retention and restructuring, or environmental assessments
* Issues related to assistive technology

### C-1008-2: Business Contacts

The EAS contacts small business and locally based regional personnel to increase awareness and facilitate communication between potential employers and VR counselors. The EAS works in partnership with regional business relations coordinators and regional outreach service and coordination teams to further develop business activities.

For more information on VR business services, see [A-400: Business Services](https://twc.texas.gov/vr-services-manual/vrsm-a-400).

### C-1008-3: Assistive Technology Consultations

The EAS consults with employers, customers, and VR counselors about modifying or restructuring a job so that customers with a primary disability of vision loss can be successful. More involved rehabilitation engineering situations may be referred to assistive technology support specialists to identify appropriate technologies to meet job requirements and enhance the quality of employment for customers.

For more information on technology services, see [C-200: Technology Services](https://twc.texas.gov/vr-services-manual/vrsm-c-200).

Note: Customers can often adapt to situations with inexpensive, or even no-cost low-tech solutions. Frequently, the best solution is the simplest, because it requires the least amount of specialized training and the item is easily replicated in an emergency and more easily replaced by the customer when VR is not available.

### C-1008-4: In-Service Training

The EAS presents at in-service training programs that cover the following for staff and employers:

* The employment assistance process
* Applications and implementation of rehabilitation engineering
* The use of vocational information
* Other information about employment of individuals with disabilities

### C-1008-5: Basic Consultation Service

Basic Consultation is a service for customers who have:

* a primary disability of vision loss;
* a secondary and tertiary disabilities that is not significant; and
* are not currently employed.

Through basic consultation services, a customer can receive assistive technologies to help them begin adjusting to their vision loss immediately and start training programs to ultimately achieve their employment goal.

Basic Consultation services can be provided by designated BVI staff that have been trained to provide this service.

Basic Consultation services are optional for customers in the field who are blind or visually impaired. If this option is to be used in-region, the following procedures apply:

* Designated VR staff with a BVI specialty are identified by regional management. These staff members must complete Basic Consultation training arranged by the regional EAS and the State Office Employment Assistance Program Specialist (EAPS). The ideal VR staff with a BVI specialty is a vocational rehabilitation teacher (VRT), who is required to have completed at least one year of his or her OJT plan.
* Upon completion of Basic Consultation training, the trainee will be mentored by the EAS for quality assurance.
* With the approval of the EAS and the regional program support manager, the trained VR staff with a BVI specialty performs Basic Consultations on his or her own.
* A list of approved BVI staff members who may perform Basic Consultations in the region will be housed on the EAS Intranet page. <https://intra.twc.texas.gov/intranet/vrs/html/employment-assistance-services.html>

#### Creating a Service Record for Basic Consultation

A VR counselor refers a customer who is blind or visually impaired for Basic Consultation services by creating a service record in ReHabWorks and delegating the service to the designated Blind Services staff member or VRT.

* Level 1—In-House Services
* Level 2—Employment Assistance Services (EAS)
* Level 3—Employment Assistance Services (EAS)
* Level 4—Basic Consultation (describe)

Note: The term “describe” should be replaced with a brief description of requested services.