



Phoenix Business and Workforce Development Board
Align Investment Steering Committee JUN 26
VIRTUAL*
June 26, 2025
2:00 pm-3:00 pm Mountain Standard Time

Webex Information (TO JOIN MEETING):
<https://cityofphoenix.webex.com/cityofphoenix/j.php?MTID=m95191a5d3159147586ae1938b8e08479>
CALL IN: 1-415-655-0001
Access code: 2864 945 8638

Opening/Roll Call
(Brandon Ramsey)

Align Investment Steering Committee Meeting Minutes
(Brandon Ramsey)

The Phoenix Business and Workforce Development Board (Board) Align Investment Steering Committee (AISC) will review and consider approval of the May 22, 2025 AISC Meeting Minutes.

RECOMMENDATION: This item is recommended for approval.

Unite Us Platform Demonstration
(Edward Limon)

Community Cares Manager, SDOH Community Programs, Edward Limon will share a demonstration of the Unite Us Platform with the AISC. Unite Us is the platform the Title I and Title II providers use to refer participants to other services. ARIZONA@WORK City of Phoenix uses this program at no-cost, as access is provided through the state.

RECOMMENDATION: This item is for information and discussion.

Referral Platform Feedback
(Rebecca Tierney)

ARIZONA@WORK City of Phoenix Workforce Supervisor Rebecca Tierney will share feedback providers have shared about the Unite Us platform, including benefits and challenges of using the system.

RECOMMENDATION: This item is for information, discussion and possible action.

Vocational Rehabilitation Update
(Cassandra Avery)

Vocational Rehabilitation Employment Outreach Supervisor, Cassandra Avery will share a program update about Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services in the City of Phoenix local workforce development area. VR is the Title IV One-Stop System Partner, who provides employment services to individuals with disabilities.

RECOMMENDATION: This item is for information and discussion.

Future Agenda Items

(Brandon Ramsey)

Call to the Public and Announcements

(Brandon Ramsey)

Adjournment

(Brandon Ramsey)

ALIGN INVESTMENT STEERING COMMITTEE

June 26, 2025



www.investinphoenix.com/workforce

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CITY OF PHOENIX

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OPENING

- Roll Call

MINUTES

The Align Investment Steering Committee
May 22, 2025, meeting minutes are
recommended for review and approval.

UNITE US PLATFORM DEMONSTRATION



REFERRAL PLATFORM FEEDBACK

Presenter: Rebecca Tierney
Workforce Development Supervisor



ADULT-DISLOCATED WORKER PROVIDER

PROS:

- Efficient Submissions
- Case Management
- Status Tracking

ADULT/DISLOCATED WORKER CHALLENGES

- Referral Quality
- Contact information
- Low Conversion
- Staff Time

YOUTH PROVIDERS

JFCS:

- Improper referrals
- Understanding of ability to provide resources
- Extra step

Neighborhood Ministries:

- Useful tool for some providers
- Need better client education
- Low referral conversion
- Extra staff time/low ROI
- Duplication of efforts

TITLE II PROVIDER

Friendly House:

- Useful tool
- Using for a year
- Able to send and receive referrals
- Don't have to manually search for resources

STATUS UPDATES

CPLC: New Program Manager- Working with UniteUs to get on the platform.

YMCA: Completed final steps to get on the platform.

Title III: Uses VOS for referrals to core partners; working to get on the platform.

Title IV: Working with OSO and UniteUs to be onboarded.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION UPDATE



ARIZONA
— DEPARTMENT OF —
ECONOMIC SECURITY

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Vocational Rehabilitation

AISC Meeting 6/26/2025

Presented by: Cassandra Avery
VR Employment Outreach Supervisor

Agenda

- **Employment data for people with disabilities**
- **Introduction to Vocational Rehabilitation and the Employment Outreach Team**
- **Vision for a statewide team**
- **Collaboration with local workforce development and workforce partners**
- **Questions and Suggestions**

Disabilities in the Workforce

According to the CDC, 70 million adults across the U.S. identify as having a disability of some kind.

Over 90% of Americans have an invisible disability.

- Physical Disabilities (visible)
- Learning Disabilities (invisible)
- Mental Health Disabilities (invisible)
- Medical Disabilities (many are invisible)

**As our workforce is getting older, we are seeing increased numbers of employees “aging into a disability”

Employment Data for People with Disabilities

Current Unemployment rate in the U.S 4.2%

Current unemployment rate in the U.S for people with disabilities 7.6%

1 in 4 working age adults in the U.S. has a disability

Current Unemployment rate in AZ 4.0%

Current Unemployment rate for people with disabilities in AZ 8.1%

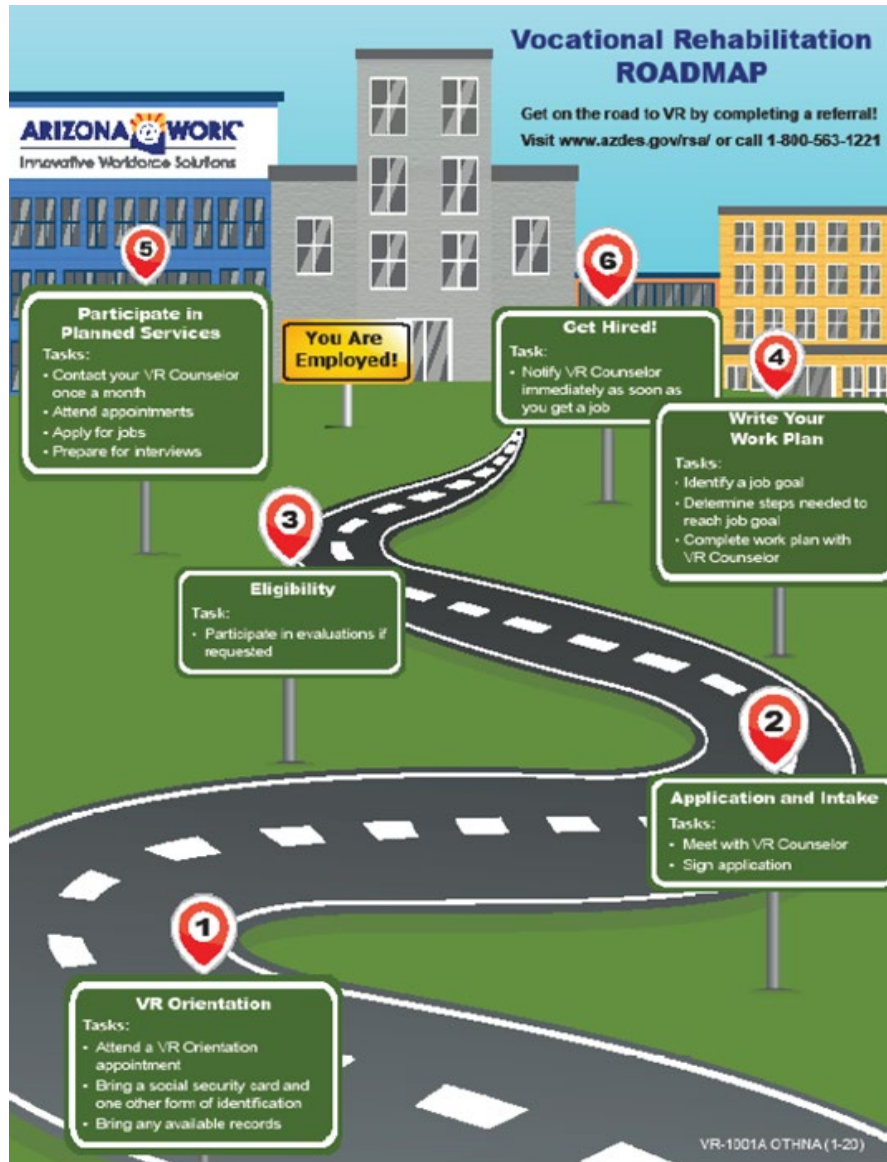
**Only 32% of people with disabilities are employed

Vocational Rehabilitation

- Work with individuals who have a disability and wish to obtain, maintain, or regain employment.
- Assist in gaining additional skills to advance in a current job (upskilling).
- Provide support to employers and job seekers to ensure success.
- Partner with local employers, workforce development, and organizations to identify workforce needs and then develop a plan to provide qualified candidates to fill those needs.



The VR Process



1. VR Orientation
2. Application and Intake
3. Eligibility
4. Individualized Plan for Employment
5. Participate in planned services
6. Get Hired!

**All applicants must have the legal ability to work in the U.S.
([A.R.S. 1-504.](#))

Employer Training

Vocational Rehabilitation offers no cost training for employers and community partners. Trainings are designed to enhance employers awareness of disability in the workplace as well as address concerns related to legal requirements and accommodations.

- Windmills Training Series
 - 12 Modules
 - Customized to meet the unique needs of the business
 - Available virtually or in person



Employment Outreach Team

The goal of the Vocational Rehabilitation Employment Outreach Team is to foster relationships with employers, workforce partners, and community organizations; leading to enhanced and successful career outcomes for individuals with disabilities.



Collaboration Defined

1. Regular communication with local ARIZONA@WORK leadership, business service teams and workforce boards.
2. To be a conduit between the workforce systems and employers to provide qualified candidates to fill the workforce needs.
3. Ensuring regular shared contacts and communication with state and local area workforce teams, to utilize a single point of contact method for outreach.
4. Cross training staff to increase awareness and understanding of programs.
5. Physical presence in the local one stops to foster collaboration and support for clients and staff.
6. Development of comprehensive resource material that fosters business support of all programs.
7. Participation in local area team meetings and other events to foster ongoing communication and partnership.



Key Takeaways:

- We want to partner with you to fill Arizona's workforce needs with qualified candidates.
- We look forward to developing robust partnerships across the state, to ensure that every Arizonan has the support needed to find and maintain quality employment.

QUESTIONS



Contact Us:

Website:

<https://des.az.gov/services/employment/rehabilitation-services/vocational-rehabilitation-vr>

Email: RSAEMP@azdes.gov

AISC MEETING

- ❖ Future Agenda Items
- ❖ Call to the Public/Announcements
- ❖ Adjournment





**PHOENIX BUSINESS AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
ALIGN INVESTMENT STEERING COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes**

**May 22, 2025
2:00 p.m.**

Members Present:

Kaaren-Lyn Graves
Samantha Hansen
Micha Harris

Brandon Ramsey
Alison Rapping
Raghu Santanam

Public Attendees:

Ariadna Valentin
LaSetta Hogans
Deb Furlong
Laura Whitehead
Jovanna Parkhouse
Hayden Maynard
Justin West
Jordan Dodewood
Victoria Aceveda
Tim Tucker
Linda Scott
Tyson Knudsen

Gina Harper
Sandra Enriquez
Dee Pinkson
Amy Schofield
Carol Gardner
Erica Bennett
Thomas E. Flynn
Angie Parra
Demitria Robles
Christina A. Lira
Rebecca Tierney
Mari Hicks

Action items taken are noted in **bold** print.

1. Call to Order / Roll Call:

The Phoenix Business and Workforce Development Board (Board) Align Investment Steering Committee (AISC) Chair Brandon Ramsey called May 22, 2025, meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. Roll call was completed and there was a quorum of six members.

2. March 27, 2025, Align Investment Steering Committee Meeting Minutes:

A motion to approve March 27, 2025, Meeting Minutes was made by AISC Member Samantha Hansen and seconded by AISC Member Kaaren-Lyn Graves.

Approved: Brandon Ramsey, Micha Harris, Alison Rapping, and Raghu Santanam.

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

Motion passed.

3. Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Grants:

Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES) WF TCP and RESEA Program Manager, Jordan Dodeward shared a presentation titled Aligning RESEA with WIOA Title III: “A Workforce System Overview”.

What is the purpose of WIOA Title III

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity ACT (WIOA) Title III governs Wagner-Peyser Act, specifically focusing on Employment Services (ES)
 - Provides Job search assistance, career counseling, and Labor Market Information
 - Administered through American Job Centers (AJCs)
 - Serves all job seekers-especially those receiving Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits

What is the purpose of WIOA Title III

<u>Purposes</u>	<u>Core Services</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce UI duration through improved employment outcomes. • Strengthen UI program integrity. • Promote alignment with the vision of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA); and • Establish RESEA as an entry point to other workforce system partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career guidance and assessments • Job Search Assistance • Creating of an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) • Referrals to training and workforce programs • Assesses a claimant’s eligibility for continued employment benefits

Career guidance assessments which includes:

- Identifying skills
- Interests
- Career goals
- Providing assistance and guidance on finding suitable job placement for our claimants

Job Search Assistance includes:

- Navigating Arizona Job Connection
 - job search assistance
- Provides resources and tools for effective job searching
 - resume writing
 - interview skills
 - training

Creating of an Individual Employment Plan (IEP):

- Outlines the individual's goals and the steps they need to take to achieve those goals.

Referral program:

- Referring to Title III partners within our American job centers
- Assess the cleanest eligibility for continued employment benefit.

DES RESEA Program Supervisor Victoria Aceveda shared a RESEA data overview for the City of Phoenix for Program Year 2024.

2024 RESEA Scheduled appointments

Orientations - 27,044 total

- 7,245 were City of Phoenix Orientations

Completed – 20,659 total

- 4,947 were City of Phoenix

Employment Placement – 10,873

- 2,580 were City of Phoenix

○

2024 RESEA Referral process WIOA Title I-B

(Assessment of claimant needs during initial orientation)

- Make a connection with UI claimant
- Offer referral
- Make referral to WIOA programs funded workforce services by connecting with Local Workforce Staff
 - Employment Connection Staff assesses claimant needs during initial orientation
 - If claimant is suitable, claimant is referred to a local workforce staff
 - case management
 - follow-ups
 - service delivery
- Impact of integrating RESEA with WIOA Title I-B increased
 - Access to education and credential pathways
 - Expanded career opportunities beyond immediate reemployment
 - Stronger workforce outcomes through early intervention and holistic support
 - 678 Title I-B referrals made to City of Phoenix Clients
 - 5341 Title I-B referrals made to the State of AZ claimants

- Title I-B Services available through American Job Centers
 - Adult Program
 - general workforce entrants
 - Dislocated Worker Program
 - for those affected by layoffs
 - Youth Program
 - for individuals needing early career support
 - Supportive Services (WIOA)
 - training
 - job search assistance
 - daycare
 - transportation

Jordan Dodeward discussed some of the current challenges and opportunities for improvements. Claimants need education related to utilizing the services available to them.

Challenges & Opportunity for improvement

<u>Common obstacles:</u>	<u>Solutions:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited awareness of available WIOA-funded resources. • Lack of connection with Local Workforce Development Areas • Low enrollment rates after referral from RESEA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger outreach strategies • Enhanced data-sharing for better tracking of claimant progress • More training for a better understanding to provide quality referrals

Low enrollment rates after referral from RESEA:

- 6,500 claimants referred
 - 1,100 agreed and was referred to Title I-B
 - Referral rate is about 17% - lower than expected

Jordan addressed the importance on how each partner can collaborate and work together for the RESEA referral program to become more successful. Also, by each provider understanding RESEA and having RESEA staff understand what title partners and local workforce development areas do and what their specific processes are, how to have smooth handoffs, and how each program tracks data. Jordan shared RESEA accelerates reemployment through targeted workforce services, really being that entry point into our workforce system.

City of Phoenix Community and Economic Development (CEDD) Workforce Development Supervisor Rebecca Tierney spoke about challenges and opportunities that exist in the current referral platform, that impedes staff from being able to refer clients smoothly to receive RESEA services.

4. Title I-B Performance Updates – Quarter 3:

City of Phoenix Community and Economic Development (CEDD) Workforce Development Supervisor Rebecca Tierney shared information on the Title I-B performance metrics for Q1 through Q3. Overall participants served for PY24 to date is as follows:

- Adult
 - New Enrollments 166
 - Carryovers 308
 - Total enrollments 474
- Dislocated Worker
 - New Enrollments 11
 - Carryovers 28
 - Total enrollments 39
- Youth
 - New Enrollments 250
 - Carryovers 292
 - Total enrollments 542

A carryover is a participant from the previous year in this case, July 1, 2023 – July 30, 2024. Participants would be rolled over to the current program year. They are a participant is still receiving services whether they are working on a credential or a youth working on a WEX program. She also explained new enrollments are participants who enrolled July 1, 2024, or after.

City of Phoenix Human Services Department (HSD) Deputy Director Jovanna Parkhouse explained the negotiated performance measures, targets, and results of the Title IB Adult Program through Q3 of PY24. The Adult Program has met all goals except for Q4 employment rate. Jovanna shared that her staff needs to verify at least 14 additional adult participants employment and wages whose information has not been captured.

Jovanna shared that the Dislocated Worker Program exceeded all performance metrics except for credential attainment. Currently the credential attainment rate is about 13% below their target, which translates into needing positive credential outcomes for the five individuals. Credential attainment is a challenge in the Dislocated Worker Program because many individuals fail to take the tests to obtain national certification, despite finishing their training, after securing employment. Jovanna shared some highlights for PY24 Q3:

- Community Outreach & Engagement
 - 900 connections
 - 19 events supported
- North Office Remodel Service Continuity
 - 357 community members outreached to during remodel
- Partnership & Referral Success
 - Collaborated with 9 community programs

- 160 participants referrals
- Grant Submission: (Gila River Indian Community Grant)
- Digital Skills for Workplace Readiness, including a Borrow-to-own laptop program
- Connected Careers
 - Training and support service for Broadband-Related Careers
- Unconditional Participant Success Story (Lauren L)
 - Received credential in April 2025 after program exit

Neighborhood Ministries Phoenix Site Supervisor Amy Schofield shared Neighborhood Ministries outcomes:

PY2024 Performance

Measure	Negotiated Target	Actual Measure
Q2 Employment	72.0%	71.72%
Q4 Employment	72.0%	76.92%
Median Earnings	\$6,000.00	\$7,109.62
Credential Attainment	56.0%	63.89%
Measurable Skills Gains	62.0%	53.66%

Amy shared the reason they did not meet two areas for Q2 was due to staff not recording employment for one of their youth participants and measurable skills gains are collected near the end of the program year.

Chicanos Por La Causa (CPLC) Director, Workforce Solutions, Dee Pinkston, shared CPLC outcomes:

PY2024 Performance

Measure	Negotiated Target	Actual Measure
Q2 Employment	72.0%	80.4%
Q4 Employment	72.0%	77.3%
Median Earnings	\$6,000.00	\$7,359.66
Credential Attainment	56.0%	68.0%
Measurable Skills Gains	62.0%	41.89%

Dee shared that CPLC had not met Measurable Skills Gains this quarter and are working hard to make sure they get over the 62% by the end of the program year.

Jewish Family & Children’s Services (JFCS) Program Director, Gina Harper, shared JFCS outcomes:

PY2024 Performance

Measure	Negotiated Target	Actual Measure
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Q2 Employment	72.0%	74.0%
Q4 Employment	72.0%	70.2%
Median Earnings	\$6,000.00	\$3,782.62
Credential Attainment	56.0%	36.6%
Measurable Skills Gains	62.0%	56.0%

Gina shared JFCS has challenges in meeting performance measures because they serve foster care youth. Many of the program participants face barriers like trauma, behavioral health, lack of stability due to not having family support, or minimal schooling, and transportation issues. Many of participants enroll in the program to get their GED but often their youth will begin the GED but drop-out of the program.

YMCA Associate Executive Director, Erica Bennett presented YMCA outcomes:
PY2024 Performance

Measure	Negotiated Target	Actual Measure
Q2 Employment	72.0%	74.24%
Q4 Employment	72.0%	75.32%
Median Earnings	\$6,000.00	\$5,970.74
Credential Attainment	56.0%	66.67%
Measurable Skills Gains	62.0%	14.81%

Erica shared the YMCA did not meet Median Earnings and Measurable Skills Gains (MSG) this quarter. She mentioned that the program had at least 30 graduates from High School that is located on site. They will show an improvement in MSG upon receiving grades and transcripts.

City of Phoenix Community and Economic Development (CED) Business System Analyst Justin West presented PY24 - Youth Performance for Q3:

PY2024 Performance

Measure	Negotiated Target	Actual Measure
Q2 Employment	72.0%	75.46%
Q4 Employment	72.0%	75.35%
Median Earnings	\$6,000.00	\$6730.56
Credential Attainment	56.0%	64.40%
Measurable Skills Gains	62.0%	37.40%

Justin explained the MSG performance metric was not met because it is a lagging indicator because it is real time indicator. The fact that it is measured at 37%, it's nothing to be concerned about because all the providers put in their numbers, as the program year wraps up, the numbers will increase substantially.

5. Future Agenda Items:

- Small Business engagement
 - Programming within the Title I-B

6. Call to the Public:

None

7. Adjournment:

AISC Chair Brandon Ramsey adjourned the meeting at 2:58 p.m.

Service Provider Feedback on UniteUs

Rebecca Tierney
Workforce Development Supervisor



Title IB Adult-DW:

- ***Efficient Submissions:*** Referrals are submitted quickly.
- ***Case Management:*** System allows for entering case notes and transferring cases (beneficial for Spanish-speaking clients)
- ***Status Tracking:*** Users can monitor referral status, receive acceptance/rejection notifications, follow up on rejected referrals, and message contacts directly.

Adult-DW Challenges:

- ***Referral Quality:*** Many referrals are not suitable for the Adult-DW program, and most of the individuals are unaware they are being referred for our services.
- ***Contact information*** is often incorrect or only one contact method and we cannot connect with those individuals whose voicemail is full or not set up.
- ***Low Conversion:*** Customers frequently do not create an AJC account or move forward with services.
- ***Staff Time:*** Following up on referrals consumes a great deal of staff time, with no conversion or positive outcomes (particularly for RESEA referrals).

Youth Providers

JFCS:

- We get about 1-2 referrals a month but most are 25+ yrs
- Some referrals are for basic needs and they need help now/today or need things like ID's, bus passes, etc., but the provider they are referred to can't help either, i.e., we provide resources to those participants in our programs but can't provide them for just anyone in the community.
- We don't use the platform to refer youth to resources because we know where to send our youth and using this is an extra step.

Neighborhood Ministries:

- Useful tool to connect medical providers to resources for social and emotional needs.
- Individuals don't often understand what they're being referred to, which can make the referrals less effective.
- We call, and clients don't know they were referred; we have had 2 successful referrals over the last couple of years.
- Using the platform as additional system adds a lot of extra work for staff, especially when we use multiple platforms for case management and reporting. The result is a lot of extra work for very little return of referrals.
- To accept/decline referrals, we are managing a separate queue and have to use the system to follow up and as a result don't use it for referring to other services.

Title II Provider (Friendly House):

We've been using this platform for about a year now and it has been a very useful tool. We are able to receive and send referrals to many of the resources in the community. Its helpful because we don't have to start a search, we can simply access the site and get a list of organizations with resources our clients are interested in.

Status Update:

CPLC-

- New Program Manager- Working with UniteUs to get on the platform.

YMCA-

- Completed final steps to get on the platform.

Title III-

- Has been using VOS for referrals to core partners but is working to get on the platform.

Title IV-

- Has been working with the OSO and UniteUs to get onboarded, a few schedule conflicts has delayed this.



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Vocational Rehabilitation

AISC Meeting 6/26/2025

Presented by: Cassandra Avery
VR Employment Outreach Supervisor

Agenda

- **Employment data for people with disabilities**
- **Introduction to Vocational Rehabilitation and the Employment Outreach Team**
- **Vision for a statewide team**
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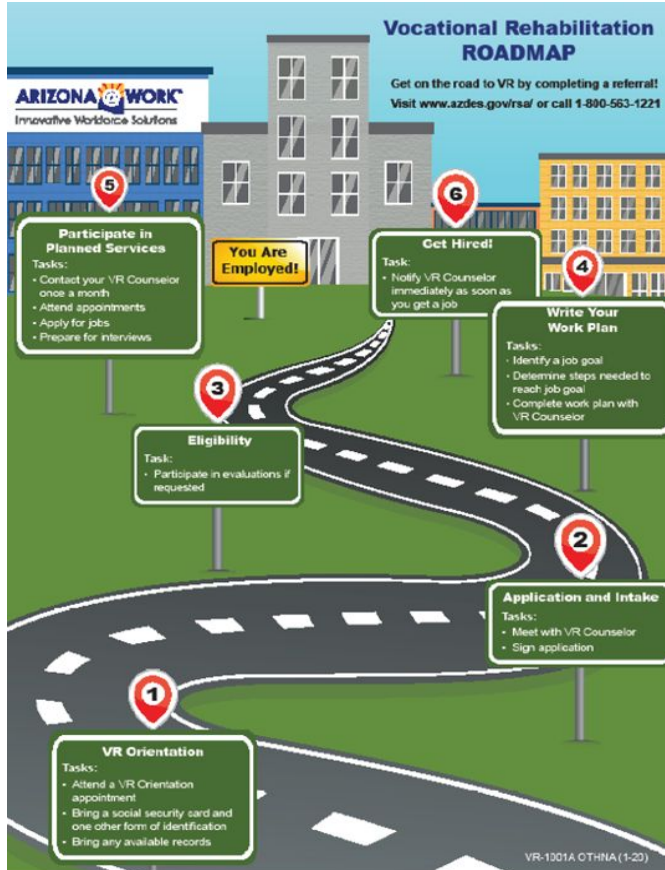
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