§ 361.37 Information and referral programs.

(a) General provisions. The State plan must assure that—

(1) The designated State agency will implement an information and referral system adequate to ensure that individuals with disabilities, including eligible individuals who do not meet the agency’s order of selection criteria for receiving vocational rehabilitation services if the agency is operating on an order of selection, are provided accurate vocational rehabilitation information and guidance (which may include counseling and referral for job placement) using appropriate modes of communication to assist them in preparing for, securing, retaining, or regaining employment; and

(2) The designated State agency will refer individuals with disabilities to other appropriate Federal and State programs, including other components of the statewide workforce investment system.

(b) The State unit must refer to local extended employment providers an individual with a disability who makes an informed choice to pursue extended employment as the individual’s employment goal. Before making the referral required by this paragraph, the State unit must—

(1) Consistent with §361.42(a)(4)(i) of this part, explain to the individual that the purpose of the vocational rehabilitation program is to assist individuals to achieve an employment outcome as defined in §361.5(b)(16) (i.e., employment in an integrated setting);

(2) Consistent with §361.52 of this part, provide the individual with information concerning the availability of employment options, and of vocational rehabilitation services, in integrated settings;

(3) Inform the individual that services under the vocational rehabilitation program can be provided to eligible individuals in an extended employment setting if necessary for purposes of training or otherwise preparing for employment in an integrated setting;

(4) Inform the individual that, if he or she initially chooses not to pursue employment in an integrated setting, he or she can seek services from the designated State unit at a later date if, at that time, he or she chooses to pursue employment in an integrated setting; and

(5) Refer the individual, as appropriate, to the Social Security Administration in order to obtain information concerning the ability of individuals with disabilities to work while receiving benefits from the Social Security Administration.

(c) Criteria for appropriate referrals. In making the referrals identified in paragraph (a)(2) of this section, the designated State unit must—

(1) Refer the individual to Federal or State programs, including programs carried out by other components of the
§ 361.38 Protection, use, and release of personal information.

(a) General provisions. (1) The State agency and the State unit must adopt and implement written policies and procedures to safeguard the confidentiality of all personal information, including photographs and lists of names. These policies and procedures must ensure that—

(i) Specific safeguards are established to protect current and stored personal information;

(ii) All applicants and eligible individuals and, as appropriate, those individuals’ representatives, service providers, cooperating agencies, and interested persons are informed through appropriate modes of communication of the confidentiality of personal information and the conditions for accessing and releasing this information;

(iii) All applicants or their representatives are informed about the State unit’s need to collect personal information and the policies governing its use, including—

(A) Identification of the authority under which information is collected;

(B) Explanation of the principal purposes for which the State unit intends to use or release the information;

(C) Explanation of whether providing requested information to the State unit is mandatory or voluntary and the effects of not providing requested information;

(D) Identification of those situations in which the State unit requires or does not require informed written consent of the individual before information may be released; and

(E) Identification of other agencies to which information is routinely released;

(iv) An explanation of State policies and procedures affecting personal information will be provided to each individual in that individual’s native language or through the appropriate mode of communication; and

(v) These policies and procedures provide no fewer protections for individuals than State laws and regulations.

(2) The State unit may establish reasonable fees to cover extraordinary costs of duplicating records or making extensive searches and must establish policies and procedures governing access to records.

(b) State program use. All personal information in the possession of the State agency or the designated State unit must be used only for the purposes directly connected with the administration of the vocational rehabilitation program. Information containing identifiable personal information may not be shared with advisory or other bodies that do not have official responsibility for administration of the program. In the administration of the program, the State unit may obtain personal information from service providers and cooperating agencies under assurances that the information may not be further divulged, except as provided under