

## How to Apply:

VIP is looking for people who are self-motivated, focused, and prepared to succeed. To be fully qualified to participate in the VIP, a customer must:

- Submit a complete VIP application
- Submit required documents
- Have an open Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) case
- Be 18-26 years old
- Have a desire to obtain the skills necessary to become an entrepreneur and/or obtain gainful employment

## Attendance Policy:

The VIP maintains a strict attendance policy based on industry standards. Come ready to work!

## Medical Records:

To ensure the safety of all customers, staff and visitors at VIP, we require full access to a customer's medical records prior to admission.



**VIP Contact:**

**ICRE-R**

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**[www.dhs.state.il.us](http://www.dhs.state.il.us)**

The Vocational Incubator Program (VIP) is sponsored by the Illinois Department of Human Services' Division of Rehabilitation Services.



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State of Illinois  
Department of Human Services

## The Vocational Incubator Program (VIP) of Chicago



Turning Potential  
into Reality,  
One Individual at a Time



**DHS-DRS**  
*Empowering*  
**PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

## Mission Statement:

The mission of the Vocational Incubator Program (VIP) is to offer vocational training programs and Business Incubator services that provide the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) customers with the opportunities for success in job attainment or self-employment initiatives. The VIP provides state-of-the-art assistive technology and learning interventions that support customer achievement. It also offers entrepreneurs with the wrap-around business services that enhance business success.

## Program Description:

VIP offers three comprehensive programs, at no cost to DRS customers: the Business Intensive, Vocational Training, and the Business Incubator Program.

**Business Intensive:** an introduction to various business structures to help customers learn what business and self-employment are all about. Customers will have a chance to test the vocational options that are provided by the school, meet with business owners in various industries, and determine if business ownership or employment is the right choice for them.

**Vocational Training:** trains customers in seven (7) different vocational areas:

- Heat Press Program
- Graphic Design
- Business Software
- Business Planning
- Computerized Embroidery
- Retail Training
- Music Technology (coming soon)

**Business Incubator:** Those DRS customers with an approved Business Plan will be provided:

- Office space, business services, and mentoring by experienced business owners
- An opportunity to develop a professional network that allows them to advance their business agenda

## Course Descriptions:

**Heat Press:** The Heat Press Program teaches how to apply designs to multiple surfaces, using various equipment and techniques. This area is both design and production oriented with multiple avenues for self-employment.

**Business Software:** This program teaches Microsoft Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint) along with Google Calendar and other business and organizational applications.

**Graphic Design:** The Graphic Design program provides training in Illustrator, InDesign, and Photoshop. Customers will be ready to create high quality logos and posters that really stand out. With these skills customers will be able to work in various settings or their own business.

**Business Planning:** The Business Planning Program teaches the various business structures so customers develop a complete business plan. This is the first step to achieving DRS financial support for a Business.

**Business Incubator:** The Business Incubator is designed to give DRS customers with an approved Business Plan, the space and support services that are necessary to get a business “off the ground”. Building a business requires patience, resources, perseverance, and a long term view of success by each individual. In addition, each business owner will receive mentorship to navigate obstacles in order to achieve success.

**Computerized Embroidery:** This program teaches participants how to use a Computerized Embroidery Machine to create custom embroidery designs and is ideal for someone looking to create a small business either from home or in their own storefront.

**Retail Training:** Learn all of the modern retail systems that are employed today: Point of Sale (POS), Inventory, Shipping, and Customer Service. Each customer will also gain practical experience working in the on-site retail center.

**Music Technology:** Learn the technology and systems necessary to DJ, mix beats and record.

## Frequently Asked Questions:

### Who does the VIP serve?

DRS customers ages 18-26 who are looking to explore vocational options or establish and grow their own business. Full eligibility requirements are listed on the back panel.

### I have a physical disability. Will this program work for me?

Yes! We are experienced in current assistive technology and work closely with the University of Illinois Assistive Technology Unit to ensure all customers have an equal opportunity to succeed.

### How long is the VIP curriculum?

The Business Intensive curriculum is four (4) weeks, Vocational Training courses are between one (1) and three (3) semesters, and the Business Incubator can be used for multiple years as long as the business is progressing.

### Can I enroll in more than one program?

Yes, taking more than one program is possible, as long as each program supports your Individual Plan for Employment (IPE). Your IPE identifies your employment goal, and the VIP staff will help you determine which classes and programs are necessary to reach your goal. We want to ensure that our customers get the training, education and supports that best suits their individual needs and supports their success.

