

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **What is the mission of the Perkins Center?**

The mission of the Center is to provide services that enable Kentuckians with disabilities to achieve suitable employment and independence. The Center is a division of the Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR). This is also the mission of Kentucky OVR.

## **Is this an entitlement program? How much will it cost me if I would like to enroll?**

Vocational Rehabilitation is not an entitlement program such as welfare assistance. Eligibility for participation in the OVR program is based on a reasonable expectation the person can enter/reenter the workforce upon completion of services, which includes those provided through the Perkins Center. For persons declared eligible for OVR services who choose to come to the Perkins Center, there is no cost for lodging, food, in-house training/therapy services, and other basic services. Persons who come to the Perkins Center do not lose their Social Security/Medicare benefits or have them reduced.

## **Does the Center provide around the clock supervision for individual students?**

No. The Center offers its services in a learning environment designed to encourage independence and teach appropriate social/work skills that are vital to succeed at work and in the community.

## **Who makes up the student body?**

The Center serves individuals with a wide range of physical and/or mental disabilities. The average age of persons served is approximately twenty-four (24).

## **Do the dorm and medical housing units ever close during the year?**

Yes. Residential services at the Perkins Center typically close for a few weeks in June and for a few weeks during the Christmas/New Year holidays. Classes are dismissed and students return home or make arrangements for their housing during this time. Students are asked to take all of their personal belongings with them when residential services close so the rooms in the dormitory and Assisted Living Unit can be thoroughly cleaned and chemically treated.

## **Who decides what programs and services I need?**

Most Center students undergo a vocational evaluation at the Perkins Center. Some students receive a vocational evaluation elsewhere before they come for services. The evaluation process at the Perkins Center takes about three days and involves several different types of tests and assessments to determine the strengths, abilities, and needs of each individual. At the end of the evaluation, the evaluator will review the testing results with the student and make recommendations to the student and OVR counselor based on the results.

## **Is there ever a waiting list for program services?**

Yes. Programs may have all slots taken from time to time. When this happens, a waiting list for that particular service is created. Students are placed on the list in the order in which their case is received.

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## **How long would I be enrolled at the Center?**

This is difficult to answer. This depends on your vocational goals. Some programs are longer in duration than others.

## **Who will be allowed to receive information about my participation at the Center?**

The Center Application Form asks prospective students to identify the person(s) to whom information about their program can be shared. While the Center fully attempts to involve family members and other significant persons in the rehabilitation process, the Center also operates under state and Federal confidentiality guidelines. Prospective students and their families are encouraged to talk to staff about this issue.

## **Will the Center staff manage my money for me while I attend?**

No. Center staff does not oversee or regulate a student's finances.

## **Can I cash personal checks while I am at the Center?**

The Center does not cash student checks or money orders. Students may want to consider opening an account at a local bank or using a bank debit or prepaid Visa card. The Thelma Post Office, located very close to the Center, will cash Postal Money Orders. The Wal-Mart in near-by Paintsville can be used to cash Wal-Mart Money Orders.

## **Where can I purchase everyday items I might want?**

The Center operates a Training Store where personal care items can be purchased. The "Court Yard Gift Shop" is located on campus and sells gifts and items appropriate for souvenirs to students, staff, and the public. Proceeds from sales benefit the Student Government Association. Additionally, another vendor operates a small store on campus that is open during certain hours of the week. The Center also provides transportation for town shopping trips in near-by Paintsville.

## **Do the dorm/medical rooms have telephones and satellite/cable T.V.?**

There are no phones in the rooms. Phones are available in the student lobby and operate on phone cards available for purchase at many retail/outlet stores. Students may also keep and use cellular phones. You will need to check with your cellular service to see if your plan is available at the Perkins Center's location in Thelma, Kentucky. Cable T.V. reception is available for students housed in the Assisted Living Unit. A satellite system is available in the dormitory units. Both are free of charge to students. The Perkins Center does not supply the television sets. If wanting to connect to the system, students must also bring/purchase a short length of coaxial cable necessary to connect a TV to the wall jack for reception. There are TV's with cable in the dormitory lobby and viewing selection is on a "first come/first serve" basis. Students may also bring DVD players, and video game systems.

## **Can I bring a personal computer? Does the Center have Internet access?**

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Students may have and use personal computers. The student must provide his or her own computer. A wireless network connection (KEN) is available for student use upon request. There are certain rules that apply to use of the wireless network. Computers with internet access are available for student use in the Office Technology Classroom during scheduled evening and weekend hours.

### **Can the Center transport me if I have no way to come to the Perkins Center? Will the Perkins Center staff take me home on weekends to visit family and friends?**

The Center provides transportation to students without a means to come to the Center, for certain approved activities during a student's stay (e.g. town shopping trips, medical appointments, etc.), upon a student's discharge from the facility, and during summer/Christmas break if the student has no other means of getting to or leaving the Center. However, transportation is not provided for students to return home for weekend visits.

### **What types of laundry services are available for students?**

Fresh bed linens, towels, and washcloths are issued to residential students during the week if students want these items.

Washers/Dryers are available to residential students free of charge in the dormitory and Assisted Living Unit. Staff will assist students who are not physically capable of doing their own laundry.

### **Can I be guaranteed a room without a roommate?**

No. Students will typically have a roommate during their stay.

### **If I am scheduled to begin my program, how much money should I bring with me when I come to the Perkins Center?**

It is not necessary or desirable to bring more than you might need to purchase items for personal grooming such as shampoo, soap, etc., or incidental items you might want such as CD's/DVD's, snacks from the vending machines, etc.

### **Can I leave the Center as I choose when my classes and/or therapy sessions are completed for the day or on weekends?**

To help ensure the safety and wellbeing of its residential students, the Center operates on a four level pass system. A Case Manager assigned to work with you toward your rehabilitation goals will determine what level is appropriate. This will be reviewed periodically and could change during your stay. Center staff will be happy to discuss the use of the pass system with you and your family.

### **Can I keep a family/personal vehicle while I am at the Perkins Center?**

Yes you may. However, keeping a vehicle on Center property is subject to a vehicle policy. Center staff will provide you with a copy of the policy upon your request. This information is also provided to in-coming students at their Orientation session.

### **Can I keep medication in my room?**

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All prescription medications must be turned in at the Assisted Living Unit upon a student's arrival at the Perkins Center. Students will report to the Assisted Living Unit for their medications according to the scheduled times they are to receive the medications. Students may keep over-the-counter medications. However, students must use the medications responsibly.

### **Are students allowed to smoke at the facility?**

Effective August 1, 2006, smoking is not allowed inside state government buildings and offices by Executive Order of the Governor. Designated areas outside the building have been established where staff, students, and visitors can smoke.

### **I am interested in coming to the Center, what do I need to do now?**

You will need to contact your Kentucky OVR Counselor and let them know. The Counselor will determine your eligibility for services and then forward your case to our admissions staff. If you are accepted for services, you will receive a letter from our Admissions Office with a time to arrive at the Perkins Center. If required, we will also arrange transportation services.

### **When does the Center admit new students?**

The Center typically admits new students every week. Mondays are used as the admission day for incoming students.