

## Voucher FAQs

### If you were injured before January 1, 2013

#### What is the SJDB (voucher) and what is covered?

Employees who are permanently unable to do their usual job, and whose employer does not offer other work, may qualify for the SJDB (voucher). The benefit comes in the form of a non-transferable voucher that can be used to pay for educational retraining or skill enhancement, or both, at state-approved or state-accredited schools. The voucher covers school tuition, fees, books and expenses required by the school for training. No more than 10 percent of the value of the voucher can be used for vocational & return to work counseling. The amount of the voucher varies from \$4,000 to \$10,000, depending on the permanent disability level.

#### When is the voucher available?

The voucher is offered to an injured worker when his or her PD level has been determined, either by way of an agreement between the worker and the employer or insurance company or by way of an award by a workers' compensation judge.

#### What if my employer offers a modified or alternative job and I don't accept it -- can I still receive the voucher?

If the employer sends a notice of offer of modified or alternative work within 30 days of your last temporary disability (TD) payment and the offer meets certain requirements, and you don't accept the job, you're not eligible for the voucher. The offer of modified or alternative work must meet the following conditions:

- *You have the ability to perform the essential functions of the job*
- *The job is a regular position lasting at least 12 months*
- *The job offers wages and compensation that are at least 85 percent of those paid to you at the time of your injury*
- *The job is located within reasonable commuting distance of your residence at the time of injury.*

#### How does the voucher work?

If eligible, you will receive the voucher [on form 10133.57](#). When you receive the voucher, the claims administrator should have completed lines 1 - 8. You are then responsible for completing lines 9 - 19. Lines 9 - 12 must be completed when using a vocational return to work counselor (VRTWC). A list of counselors is available to you on the DWC Web site. If you do not select a counselor, you do not need to complete lines 9 - 12. The training provider you select should assist you in completing lines 13 - 19 on the voucher. You can contact the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education (BPPVE) at [www.bppe.ca.gov](http://www.bppe.ca.gov) to get a list of accredited private schools in your area. When you have completed the voucher, you must sign and date it before sending it back to the claims administrator. You must also attach any receipts or invoices for direct

payment to you, the training provider, and/or the VRTWC. You can expect the payment to be made within 45 calendar days from the date the claims administrator receives the voucher.

**What is the amount of the voucher and how is the amount determined?**

The amount of the voucher depends on the amount of your disability award:

Up to \$4,000 voucher for permanent partial disability of less than 15 percent

Up to \$6,000 voucher for permanent partial disability between 15 and 25 percent

Up to \$8,000 voucher for permanent partial disability between 26 and 49 percent

Up to \$10,000 voucher for permanent partial disability between 50 and 99 percent

**When will I receive the supplemental job displacement benefit voucher?**

If you are eligible for the voucher and you haven't settled your eligibility (as part of an overall settlement in your case) you will receive the voucher from the claims administrator within 25 calendar days from the date your disability award is issued by the workers' compensation judge at the local Workers' Compensation Appeals Board district office.

**When can I expect to receive the payments specified in the voucher?**

The claims administrator must issue reimbursement payments to you or direct payments to the VRTWC and training provider within 45 calendar days from receipt of the completed voucher, receipts and documentation.

**Does a voucher expire?**

The voucher does not expire if *issued* prior to Jan. 1, 2013. If issued on or after Jan. 1, 2013, the voucher will expire within two years of being issued or five years from the date of injury, whichever comes later.

**Where can I find information on approved private providers of education-related retraining or skill enhancement schools?**

Mailing address:

Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education

P.O. Box 980818

West Sacramento, CA 95798-0818

Physical address:

Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education

1625 North Market Blvd., Suite S-202

Sacramento, CA 95834

Phone: (916) 574-7720 Toll Free: (888) 370-7589

Web site: [www.bppe.ca.gov](http://www.bppe.ca.gov)

E-mail: [bppve@dca.ca.gov](mailto:bppve@dca.ca.gov)

**Am I required to select a vocational return to work counselor (VRTWC) and how do I find one?**

You are not required to use a VRTWC. However, you might want to use an expert who can help you choose a training program that's in step with your abilities and medical restrictions. VRTWCs are paid to help injured workers figure out a vocational goal and a return to work plan. The Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC) maintains a [VRTWC](#) list.

**How is the VRTWC paid and what is the most he or she can receive?**

The claims administrator pays the VRTWC the amount specified in the voucher. In no event shall the amount paid to a VRTWC be more than 10 percent of the total value of the voucher.

**Can I use the voucher out of state?**

Yes, you can use the voucher to pay an out of state private provider of education-related retraining or skill enhancement. The provider must be approved by the governing state agency similarly to the way California providers are approved.

**What if I disagree with the claims administrator about the SJDB voucher?**

You can file a Request for Dispute Resolution form with the DWC. The form will be reviewed by the Administrative Director and a decision will be issued. When filling out the form, please clearly state the issues and identify supporting information for each issue and position. Please attach all pertinent documents. Send the "Request for Dispute Resolution" form to:

State of California  
Department of Industrial Relations  
Division of Workers' Compensation  
Attention: SJDB  
P.O. Box 420603  
San Francisco, CA 94142

**What kind of disputes can be resolved by a Request for Dispute Resolution?**

You can file for dispute resolution if you dispute your entitlement to a voucher, if you dispute the amount of the voucher, if the claims administrator has failed to pay for training, or if you object to the job offer provided by your employer.

**What happens if I paid tuition prior to enrolling and the school files for bankruptcy and/or closes?**

The best option for students faced with a school closure is to retain credits earned, continue their course of studies and obtain their certificate or degree. For most students, this involves a transfer to another school. If continuing studies is not possible, students may consider other options, including requesting a refund of tuition, discharge of their student loans, or other compensation. However, selecting discharges or refunds will likely result in the loss of credits already earned according to the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education. There may also be legal remedies. For more information, including a loan discharge application, go to <http://studentaid.ed.gov/>.