NTACT THE COLLABORATIVE | National Technical Assistance Center on Transition

A Compendium to the Delivery of Pre-Employment Transition Services

A Collaboration Between Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and Local Education Agencies (LEA)

This guide highlights Pre-Employment Transition Services within the Continuum of VR Services.

Continuum of VR Services

Pre-Employment Transition Services | **Transition Services** | **Employment Related Services**

Who Can Receive Pre-Employment Transition Services?

- Pre-employment transition services are provided to all who meet the definition of a student with a disability who may need such services and are:
  - ✓ Eligible for vocational rehabilitation (VR) services, or
  - ✓ Potentially eligible for VR services (i.e., all students with disabilities, including those who have not applied or been determined eligible for VR services)
- A "Student with a disability" is an individual with a disability in a secondary, postsecondary, or other recognized education program who falls within the requirements for minimum and maximum age, and is either:
  - ✓ Eligible for, and receiving, special education or related services under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), or
  - ✓ Is a student who is an individual with a disability, for purposes of section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
- Regarding "minimum and maximum age" for a student with a disability:

- ✓ The individual may not be younger than the earliest age for the provision of transition services under the IDEA, or if the state involved elects to use a lower minimum age for receipt of pre-employment transition services under the Rehabilitation Act, is not younger than that minimum age.
- ✓ The individual may not be older than 21 years of age, or if the State law for the State provides for a higher maximum age for receipt of services under the IDEA, is not older than that maximum age.
- ✓ If there are two VR agencies in a State, both agencies must agree on the same age range.

VR is the only entity that can verify the individual is a student with a disability for the purpose of pre-employment transition services.

What is the Purpose of Pre-Employment Transition Services?

- Improve the transition of students with disabilities from school to postsecondary education or to an employment outcome.
- Increase opportunities for students with disabilities to practice and improve workplace readiness skills, through work-based learning experiences in competitive, integrated work settings.
- Increase opportunities for students with disabilities to explore post-secondary training options, leading to more industry recognized credentials, and meaningful post-secondary employment.

What are Pre-Employment Transition Services?

- **Pre-employment transition services** are the five "required" activities, and nine "authorized" activities specified in the Rehabilitation Act, as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) **34 C.F.R. § 361.48(a)(2)** and **34 C.F.R. § 361.48(a)(3); as** well as four "coordination" activities specified in **34 C.F.R. § 361.48(a)(4) which** are essential for arranging and providing the "required" and "authorized" activities.
- The five "required activities" represent the earliest set of services available for students with disabilities who are eligible or potentially eligible for VR services, are short-term in nature, and, designed to help students identify career interests, which may be further explored through additional VR services, such as **transition services** and other individualized VR services.
- The five "required activities" are:
  1. **Job exploration counseling**
  2. **Work-based learning experiences,** which may include in-school or after school opportunities, or experience outside the traditional school setting (including internships), that is provided in an integrated environment in the community to the maximum extent possible
  3. **Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs** at institutions of higher education
  4. **Workplace readiness training** to develop social skills and independent living

5. **Instruction in self-advocacy** (including instruction in person-centered planning), which may include peer mentoring (including peer mentoring from individuals with disabilities working in competitive integrated employment)

- At least 15 percent of the VR Agency's Federal allotment must be reserved to provide or arrange for the provision of pre-employment transition services for students with disabilities.
- Pre-employment transition services are the only activities that a State VR agency may pay for with the **minimum 15 percent reserve funds**.
- VR must make certain the five ''required'' pre-employment transition services are available to all students with disabilities who need them. VR is not required to provide all five ''required'' activities to each student with a disability if all the activities are not necessary. The five required activities may start and end multiple times, as long as the individual still meets the definition of a student with a disability, and needs the service.
- When determining the student's need for one or more of the five required services, consider:
  - ✓ Information received from the pre-employment transition services referral form
  - ✓ Information from the initial interview with the student/family
  - ✓ Communication with the local education agency (LEA) regarding the IDEA transition activities, related services, accommodations and supports, that have occurred or are currently being provided through the Individualized Education Program (IEP); or are outlined in a student's 504 plan
- For a potentially eligible student receiving pre-employment transition services, consider when the student may need to apply for VR services and be determined eligible, in order to receive additional VR services, in accordance with an approved Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), to benefit from one or more of the required pre-employment transition services. Ensure the student is provided informed choice throughout the process (**Continuum of VR Services**).
- Pre-employment transition services may begin once a student with a disability requests or is recommended for one or more pre-employment transition services.

Who is Responsible for the Provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services?

- State VR Agencies are responsible for providing or arranging for the provision of pre-employment transition services.
- Pre-employment transition services must be provided in collaboration with LEA.
- **In a letter dated 8.31.2020**, The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) recognized that partnerships between State VR agencies and LEAs, particularly on the provision of quality pre-employment transition and transition services, provides students with disabilities access to the opportunities needed for postsecondary education, training, and/or employment success.

- LEAs are obligated to **provide transition services under the IDEA**:
  - ✓ LEAs are responsible for providing and paying for any transition service that is considered special education or related services necessary for ensuring a free appropriate public education (FAPE), as required under IDEA.
  - ✓ Nothing under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act shall be construed as reducing a LEA's obligation to provide the above-described services under IDEA (see Section 101(c) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 C.F.R. §361.22(c) of the VR regulations).
  - ✓ Pre-employment transition services provided by VR agencies may not duplicate services that are already provided by LEAs through the IDEA.
  - ✓ Decisions as to who will be responsible for providing services that are both special education services and VR services must be made at the State and/or local level as part of this collaborative process, and will be further defined in the **formal interagency agreement**.

How Does VR Deliver Pre-Employment Transition Services?

- Each of the five required activities can be delivered to students in a variety of ways. No matter how services are delivered, VR is responsible for ensuring services are delivered appropriately; and there must be a coordinated plan for service delivery that is communicated with the student, parent/family, and the LEA to ensure all parties are informed and in agreement with those services being provided.
- Who can deliver pre-employment transition services?
  - ✓ The VR Counselor, or other staff employed by VR may work directly with the student to provide services.
  - ✓ VR may also arrange for the provision of pre-employment transition services to students through a contract or fee for services arrangement with another entity, such as the LEA, a community rehabilitation provider (CRP), a university, or another vendor.
- When can the student receive pre-employment transition services?
  - ✓ During, or after school, on weekends, or even during the summer.
- How are pre-employment transition services provided to students?
  - ✓ Virtually
  - ✓ Individually
  - ✓ In a group setting
    - When providing services virtually, it is important to identify a secure and confidential platform for service delivery, and strategies for student access in collaboration with the LEA and parent/family (i.e. infrastructure, Instructional Supports, Student Supports, Parent/Guardian Supports).

- When providing services, especially in a group setting, it is important that all students are able to access services in accordance with their individual learning styles, and are afforded appropriate assistive technology accommodations and/or behavioral supports as needed, to ensure meaningful engagement and participation.

How Do VR and Education Ensure Pre-Employment Transition Services Are Meaningful for Each Student?

- VR works in partnership with the LEA to identify students with disabilities who need one or more of the five required pre-employment transition services.
  - ✓ Develop strategies for a timely and coordinated referral process that includes parental approval and student agreement with services being provided.
  - ✓ Identify primary points of contact for VR, the LEA, and any other entity who may be involved in the direct provision of pre-employment services for the student.
- Identify strategies for coordinated service delivery
  - ✓ Logistics (e.g. develop a crosswalk or flow of services guide that outlines when, where, and how services will be delivered)
  - ✓ Ensure each student is actively participating and engaged
  - ✓ Incorporate appropriate assistive technology accommodations and/or behavioral supports
    - Be mindful of the intersectionality of social identities and culturally diverse, equitable, and inclusive practices
  - ✓ Engage the student's family/support system
    - Prioritize what you are asking of families so they do not get overwhelmed
    - Arrange regular times to connect or touch base
    - Celebrate success
    - Understand what impacts a parent's vision for the future, and what causes them concern
- Determine a process for sharing information which may include, but are not limited to:
  - ✓ LEA transition assessment results
  - ✓ Student interest inventory/career assessment results
  - ✓ Appropriate assistive technology accommodations and/or behavioral supports as outlined in the IEP, behavior plan, or 504 plan
  - ✓ IDEA transition services currently being provided by the LEA
  - ✓ Pre-ETS activities currently being provided or arranged for by VR
  - ✓ Transition services, in accordance with an approved IPE, currently provided by VR

- Identify how student participation, progress, and outcomes will be tracked, reported, and measured:
  - ✓ Conduct Pre-Post Surveys
  - ✓ Use curricula/activities that keep students engaged
  - ✓ Incorporate opportunities for student self-reflection
  - ✓ Identify when the student has achieved the expected outcomes for the services being provided
  - ✓ Document the student's progress

Short Term Outcomes - VR Collaboration with Education

- Alignment of IEP and IPE goals.
- Ability to identify an employment goal based on interests prior to HS exit.
- Ability to identify current and/or post-secondary training, supports, and other services needed to reach employment goal within their chosen career pathway prior to HS exit.
- Increased student led IEP meetings and enhanced self-advocacy skills in career planning.
- Increased family engagement in VR services and IDEA transition planning.
- Increased opportunities for students with disabilities to explore post-secondary education/training, competitive integrated employment, and independent living post-secondary goals in the IEP.

Decreased duplication of transition services and increased coordination of career planning opportunities and service delivery by all partners.

Long Term Outcomes- VR Collaboration with Education

- Increased HS graduation rates, and decreased drop-out rates.
- Increased number of students achieving competitive integrated employment within their expressed career field.
- Increased number of students participating in post-secondary training and education that leads to credential attainment and/or measurable skills gain, and jobs with an upward trajectory.
- Meeting current workforce needs with a better prepared workforce.
- Improved business engagement and community relationships with VR and Education.

Successful Student-Driven Outcomes

Students	Education	Vocational Rehabilitation
• High school diploma • Career pathways with multiple on/off ramps • Employment or training in higher-skilled jobs • Practice employability skills • Post-school training/education • Self-determination and self-advocacy	• Students actively engaged, staying in school, and graduating • Students achieve IEP post-secondary goals • Increased partnerships and support • Successful post-school outcomes • IDEA transition indicators improve	• Increased involvement with students at younger age • Students apply for VR services earlier • Students identify IPE employment goal • Increased competitive, integrated employment • Higher wages and long-term employment success • WIOA common performance measures increase

Additional Pre-Employment Transition Services Resources

- Overview of Pre-Employment Transition Services Webinar
- Pre-Employment Transition Services Flexibility Based on Notice of Interpretation Webinar
- Policy Guide for Pre-Employment Transition Services for Students with Disabilities
- Side By Side View: Transition Services
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on Pre-Employment Transition Services
- Types of Vocational Rehabilitation Transition Services
- Pre-Employment Transition Services: A Guide for Collaboration Among State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies and Education Partners
- Community Rehabilitation Providers Pre-ETS Guidebook
- Pre-ETS Strategic Planning Guide
- Pre-Employment Transition Services: Beyond Implementation
- Re-Imagining Student and Youth Engagement: Awareness to Action

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IDEAs that Work
Office of Special Education Programs
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