



**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
REHABILITATION
SERVICES ADMINISTRATION**

YOUTH IN TRANSITION SERVICES

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Who is RSA?

Mission

Provide individualized services to eligible persons with disabilities who are interested in working and achieving independence.

Youth in Transition Services Units

Provide transition services, as defined by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 amended, to coordinate a set of activities for students designed around an outcome-oriented process.

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RSA VR Transition Services

Vocational rehabilitation (VR) transition services link students with disabilities, while still in school, with the vocational rehabilitation program to create a continuum of services leading to long-term employment outcomes for eligible students.

RSA works collaboratively with the local public, public charter and non-public schools to ensure an uninterrupted plan of services for students from the secondary education environment to post-secondary education, training and employment.

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Benefits of VR Transition Services

- Decrease in gaps in services between education and employment,
- Preparation and engagement of students/young adults in post-secondary training programs, and
- Focused plans for employment that result in earlier attainment of long-term employment goals.

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Eligibility Requirements

A student will be found eligible for RSA Services if the youth fulfills the 3 requirements:

- The student has a documented disability
- The documented disability presents a substantial impediment to employment
- The student will benefit from VR services in becoming gainfully employed

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Vocational Rehabilitation Journey

STEP 1

Open Case with DC RSA

School supports student in completing application materials and consent form. School submits application & provides required documentation to RSA.

Student attends intake interview at school.

RSA determines eligibility.

STEP 2

Explore what you want to be

Student explores interests, strengths, and abilities with support of RSA VR Specialist to develop an employment goal.

School provides RSA with progress notes, course information, interest-based assessments, etc. for student.

STEP 3

Develop Your IPE

Student collaboratively develops Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) with RSA VR Specialist. The IPE is based on the student's informed choice.

RSA and school collaborate to share information that impacts IEP, transition plans, and IPEs.

STEP 4

Prepare for Employment

Implement IPE
Student receives services identified in IPE that will help build skill-sets and credentials necessary to achieve the employment goal.

RSA and schools collaborate on how implementation of IPE impacts IEP and transition plan.

STEP 5

Search for a job & get hired

Student continues to receive services that will help him/her search for a job and get hired.

If student is still in high school during this process, RSA and schools communicate student's progress, work-based experiences, employment, etc. which may impact the IEP and transition plan.

-----up to 60 days----->-----up to 90 days----->

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Application

1. RSA Transition Specialist provides school with application materials
2. Student completes application materials & consent form with support of school staff *
3. School staff submits completed application packet and required documentation checklist to RSA Transition Specialist

* Refer if student is entering the final 2 years of secondary school, or earlier if student has expressed interest in working

Application Packet Checklist

- Completed and signed application form
- Signed DCRSA consent form to obtain or release information
- Current & relevant disability records
- Transition planning & services reports
- Academic achievement
- Attendance pattern
- Social Security Card

School Staff will ensure the documents list above are readily available in SEDS, at DCPS central office, OSSE, or in hardcopy (if hardcopy, include with application). Note on checklist if not available.

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Intake

1. RSA Transition Specialist assigns an RSA Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Specialist to the case. Each school is assigned an RSA VR Specialist.
2. VR Specialist will coordinate with school staff to schedule and ensure there is space to conduct the intake interviews at school.
3. VR Specialist will conduct individual orientation and intake interview with the student.

Required Documentation for Intake Interviews

- Medical/disability report
- Social security card
- Government issued photo ID or photo ID with proof of address (driver's license, DC resident card, etc.)
- SSI & SSDI Award Letter
- Social Security Card

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Eligibility

1. Based on documentation provided by school and additional assessments / evaluations, VR Specialist will determine eligibility, which can take up to 60 days from the date of receipt of application.
2. VR Specialist will notify school staff who referred student of eligibility outcome and will provide progress updates when appropriate.

Eligibility Requirements

- The student has a documented disability, such as an IEP or 504 Plan
- The documented disability limits their ability to get a job
- The student will benefit from VR services in becoming gainfully employed

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Functional Capacities to Consider

VR Specialists will determine whether the documented disability substantially limits a functional capacity.

Functional Capacities

- Mobility**
- Communication**
- Self-Care**
- Self-Direction**
- Interpersonal Skills**
- Work Tolerance**
- Work Skills**

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Vocational Exploration

RSA, student, and school staff work together to support student's career exploration with student exercising **informed choice**.

1. VR Specialist works with student one-on-one to explore his/her interests, strengths, and abilities.
2. School staff shares progress notes, course information, internship information, interest-based assessments, etc. with VR Specialist.
3. VR Specialist shares information with IEP team that may impact the IEP and transition plan.

The VR Specialist will:

- Be the student's main point of contact
- Provide guidance and counseling to student throughout the process
- Work collaboratively with student to develop and implement plans for achieving employment
- Collaborate with school staff when necessary to obtain and/or share student information

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Develop IPE

RSA, student, and school staff collaborate in developing the IPE with student exercising **informed choice**

1. VR Specialist provides students with all options that match his/her skills, strengths, and abilities.
2. VR Specialist shares information with IEP team that may impact IEP and transition plan. For example, based on individuals chosen employment goal, while the student is still in high school, the student may need to:
 - Take specific courses
 - Modify service hours
 - Participate in an internship or training program
3. Student participates in a financial needs assessment to determine sources of funding for services.

Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)

This plan is unique to the student and is developed collaboratively by the student and the RSA VR Specialist. The process for developing the plan can take up to 90 days after date of eligibility. The plan includes:

- Student's employment goal
- The supports and services the student needs to achieve employment goal
- Who will provide services
- Who is responsible for paying for services (Financial Needs Assessment)

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Prepare for Employment

1. VR Specialist refers student to providers to receive services identified in IPE.
2. Student participates in services and in career preparation activities available at school and in community.
3. Student regularly follows-up with VR Specialist to review progress.
4. VR Specialist shares information that may impact IEP and transition plan.
5. While student is still in high school, high school staff and RSA support him/her in participating in work experiences.

Examples of VR services*

Examples of services:

- Supported employment
- Independent living
- Career counseling & guidance
- Assistive technology devices
- Transportation allowances
- Work-related training & education

* Services are individualized.

- Example: if student's employment goal requires him/her to attend training/credential program/college/etc., school assists student in application processes and RSA provides additional support.

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College/University as a VR Service

1. VR Specialist and the student will decide based on the employment goal if the student will require to attend a college or university.
2. If yes, VR Specialist will provide a list of institutions that have the necessary program/training to meet the employment goal.
3. VR Specialist will first consider public institutions within the metro DC area.
4. The student will exercise informed choice on which institution to attend.
5. VR specialist and school staff will ensure the student has applied for comparable benefits, e.g. FAFSA, DC TAG, for sources of funding.

Once a student has begun engaging with RSA, the VR Specialist should be invited with the student's consent to participate in the IEP team discussions.

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Search for a Job & Get Hired

1. VR Specialist refers students to RSA Business Relations Unit or external providers to receive services identified in IPE that will help him/her search for a job and get hired.
2. Student participates in services and regularly follows-up with VR Specialist to review progress and report employment.
3. If still in high school, VR Specialist will communicate, when necessary, student's progress to school staff related to work-based experiences that affect IEP and transition plans. For example
 - Project Search
 - Summer employment
 - Part-time employment
4. VR Specialist may contact high school staff after a student graduates if there is a need for additional information.

Employment Services

Services are individualized.

Examples of services:

- Job development
- Job coaching
- Job placement

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Case Closure

1. VR Specialist will speak to student before closing case to make sure there is a mutual agreement to end services
2. Student shares progress and additional needs with VR Specialist
3. If student is non-responsive while still in high school, VR Specialist will contact high school staff about how to reach student

VR Specialist will close the student's case after discussing with the student either of the following:

Successful Employment Outcome

- Student gets a job that is consistent with IPE and employment goal
- Student maintains the job for at least 90 days
- Student and VR Specialist agree that job is satisfactory in meeting employment goal

Unsuccessful Employment Outcome

- Student is non-responsive
- Student does not actively work towards achieving employment goal
- Disability worsens and prevents student from working

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Questions



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