

Pre-Employment to Competitive: Connecting the Dots to a Job with MRS

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Objectives

- Key Differences between Pre-Employment to Competitive Levels of MRS Service
- Making Pre-Employment services work for your students
- How to assist transition aged youth with landing competitive, unsubsidized employment

Know the Lingo

- MRS case types
 - PTA: Prior to Application
 - Open to students in secondary education with IEP/504
 - VR: Vocational Rehabilitation
 - Complete full MRS application
 - Eligibility determination
 - Services provided under Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)
- Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)
 - Available under PTA or VR to students with a disability

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

- Section 422: Pre-Employment Transition Services
 - Each State shall ensure that the designated State unit, in collaboration with the local educational agencies involved, shall provide, or arrange for the provision of, pre-employment transition services for all students with disabilities in need of such services who are eligible or potentially eligible for services under this title.

Who is eligible for Pre-ETS Services?

- Student with a disability
 - Between 14 and 26 years of age
 - Attending a secondary or postsecondary education program
 - Receiving special education services, or is an individual with a disability for purposes of 504 eligibility.

Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)

- 5 Categories
 - Job Exploration
 - Work-Based Learning Experience
 - Counseling on Post-Secondary Education
 - Workplace Readiness Training
 - Self-Advocacy Training, including Peer Mentoring

Job Exploration

- Career Inventories (CareerScope/Career Assessment Inventory)
- Informational Interviews
- Career Day-Guest Speakers from various professions
- Career awareness
- Workshops & Seminars

Work-Based Learning Experience

- Job Shadows
 - Internships (paid or unpaid)
 - Career Mentorships
 - Apprenticeships
 - On-the-job training (OJT)
 - Trial Work
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- Used to provide students an opportunity to gain hands-on workplace experience and gain transferable skills.
 - Not used as a “filler” for students who are work ready.

Counseling on Post-Secondary Education

- College and MCTI Tours
- College Success Workshop
- College applications, FAFSA
- Counseling on various training options including certifications, degrees, trade programs
- How to access accommodations in post-secondary setting

Workplace Readiness Training

- Soft skills (Communication, Attitude, Teamwork, Professionalism, etc)
- Employability
- Completing applications, resume writing, interviewing
- Financial Literacy
- On-the-job evaluations
- Work or personal adjustment

Self-Advocacy Training, Including Peer Mentoring

- Disability Disclosure and self-advocacy
- Leadership Training
- Peer mentoring and guidance

Examples that DO NOT fall under Pre-Employment Services...

- Competitive, Integrated Employment
- Job Coaching
- Tuition
- Books and other course material
- Assistive Technology
- Psychology Evaluations
- Transportation
- Assessments

Completing PTA and Referring to VR

- Once it has been determined a student with a disability has been provided the services designed with PTA of an early start at job exploration to assist them in making the transition from education/training to competitive, integrated employment

How can Pre-ETS lead to successful VR outcomes?

- Job Exploration:
 - Students can complete interest inventories, participate in job shadows and informational interviews to narrow career interest
 - Leads to more developed vocational goal for IPE
- Self-Advocacy
 - Students learn to advocate for themselves and seek necessary accommodations for both post-secondary training and employment

How can Pre-ETS lead to successful VR outcomes?

- Work Readiness
 - Students provided training on resume writing, how to fill out job applications, interview skills
 - All necessary skills for obtaining competitive, integrated employment
 - Less up-front work with job developer and can move to looking for employment more quickly and independently

How can Pre-ETS lead to successful VR outcomes?

- **Work Readiness: Soft Skills**
 - Some of the top skills employers look for:
 - Communication
 - Time Management
 - Teamwork
 - Problem-Solving and Critical Thinking
 - Often provided in group setting to provide opportunity to learn from peers and practice interpersonal skills.

How can Pre-ETS lead to successful VR outcomes?

- Work-Based Learning Experience
 - Gain foundational work skills
 - Transferable skills
 - Add to resume
 - Develop connections for potential references
 - Learn about likes/dislikes, strengths, abilities, areas for improvement
 - Practice with self-advocacy and asking for accommodations if needed

Work Based Learning Experience Example

- Handout
 - PTA from VR Evaluation
 - PTA – same experience, expectations but not being evaluated for assessment purposes but more of a learning process
 - VR – use as an assessment purpose for eligibility and can have recommendations for next steps

How can Pre-ETS lead to successful VR outcomes?

- Counseling on Post-Secondary Education
 - Provides students with an opportunity to learn about potential options such as college, MCTI, certifications, apprenticeships, etc.
 - Assists with development of more concise IPE and services to be provided

Collaboration IS KEY

- Families and students
- School Transition Coordinators and Teacher Consultants
- Vendors
- PTA and VR Counselors

Collaborating with Families and Students

- Orientation process
 - In Groups or Individually, students hear about MRS services from their assigned MRS Counselor
 - Consent forms sent home for students under the age of 18
 - Movement toward more parent involvement in services for minors/those with guardians
 - January 2020: Pre-ETS Service Agreement
- Counselors often attend Parent Nights, Parent-Teacher Conferences, and other school events to share MRS information with families

Collaborating with School Transition Coordinators and Teacher Consultants

- Meet with staff at beginning of school year to discuss programming
- Attend IEP Meetings and school events
- Coordinate orientations for students with school support
- Consistency throughout district for required paperwork and expectations

Collaborating with Vendors

- Open communication
- Clear expectations
- Sharing of ideas for new programs
- Inclusion of vendors into planning of programs

Collaboration Between PTA and VR Counselors

- Understanding what each other's roles are
- Creating clear lines as to when to move student to VR case
- Warm handoff of cases who have been active in pre-ets services when moving to VR so families are well informed and involved in process

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Questions?