



“To empower individuals with disabilities to choose, prepare for, obtain and maintain employment, economic self-sufficiency, independence and integration into society”

Career Planning for Students with Disabilities

The **Office of Rehabilitation Services (ORS)** is the state agency that assists eligible individuals with disabilities to prepare for and obtain employment. In 2014 the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) afforded ORS the opportunity to provide Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to students with disabilities who have IEP’s and 504 plans, and who are either found potentially eligible or found eligible. Pre-ETS services are quite prescriptive and limited to five focus areas: (1) Job Exploration Counseling, (2) Work Based Learning, (3) Counseling on Opportunities for Enrollment in Comprehensive Transition or Post-Secondary Educational Programs, (4) Workplace Readiness Training, and (5) Self Advocacy. An ORS Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counselor assists students, their families and school in planning the movement from school to employment. A VR Counselor has specialized knowledge of the impact of disability on employment, current employment trends, and community resources.

VR Counselors assist students and their families in making informed choices by:

- Providing career information
- Assisting in gathering realistic career information to aid in making informed choices regarding an employment goal, services, and training that are necessary to obtain employment
- Identifying needed post-secondary supports (self-advocacy skills)
- Providing information about other programs and services to help make a successful transition to adult life
- Explaining both Pre-Employment Transition Services and ORS eligibility and Order of Selection in order to determine best path to services

Services available to students include:

- Guidance and Counseling
- Work Place Readiness Training to develop social and independent living skills
- Information about Careers and Resources
- Counseling on Opportunities for Post-Secondary Training and Educational Options.
- Pre-ETS Job Exploration Counseling
- Introduction to Self-Advocacy
- Pre-ETS Community-Based Work Experiences
- Benefit Information for Social Security Administration (SSA) benefit recipients

To learn more about ORS and services:

- A Referral can be made through school personnel.
- Contact ORS directly to set up a meeting with the ORS Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor who visits your school (see other side). **A parent or guardian will need to attend if the student is under 18 years old.**
- Visit the ORS website at <http://www.ors.ri.gov> for more information about ORS services and Orientations throughout the state.

ORS Counselors Covering Regional School Districts

Call ORS (see numbers below)

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East Bay Transition Center
TBD