

2026 Pre-ETS Provider Agreement for LEAS Q&A

1. Can the point of contact (POC) be a case manager, or must it be an LEA representative?

Each LEA or school district determines who will serve as its point of contact (POC) for OVR. The POC may be a case manager or another appropriate staff member. Contact your LEA or school district to determine who should be designated as the POC.

2. Is there a minimum or maximum number of students for group Pre-ETS?

Community-Based Group services may be delivered to groups of 2–20 students and require a 1:4 staff-to-student ratio.

Instructional Services may also be delivered to groups of 2–20 students; however, there is no required staff-to-student ratio for Instructional Services.

3. Who should we contact if we have transition-age students who were denied Pre-ETS because they are in middle school and were told OVR only serves high school students who are older and have identified goals for the future?

Pre-ETS may begin as early as age 14; eligibility is not based on whether a student is in middle school or high school. If you have questions or concerns about access to Pre-ETS for a particular student, contact your local OVR office and request to speak with the Transition Supervisor.

4. Is 11th grade now the recommended year for students to apply for VR services? Last year we were told 12th grade. Is 11th grade a guideline rather than a hard requirement?

There is no required grade level for a student to apply for vocational rehabilitation (VR) services. OVR recommends applying approximately two years before the student is expected to exit school. This allows time for the application, eligibility determination, development of an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), and delivery of appropriate services.

For a student planning to exit after 12th grade, 11th grade may be an appropriate time to apply. A student planning to remain in school beyond 12th grade may apply later based on their anticipated exit date and individual needs.

5. Who can start the process? Does the OVR referral or application need to be submitted by a parent/guardian, or can a case manager submit it?

A Pre-ETS referral to OVR may be initiated by anyone, including a case manager. Best practice is to ensure the student and parent/guardian are aware of and involved in the referral. Once OVR receives the referral, OVR will contact the student and family to discuss the referral, available services, and next steps.

6. Is there a list of approved Pre-ETS providers?

OVR maintains a list of approved providers. Contact your local OVR office to discuss approved provider options and service availability in your area. Providers are currently completing the approval process under the new 2026 Pre-ETS Provider Agreement, so availability may continue to change during the transition.

7. At what point in a student's education can Pre-ETS begin?

Pre-ETS may begin as early as age 14. The appropriate time to begin depends on the individual student's needs, interests, and readiness to engage with OVR and participate in Pre-ETS.

8. The rates discussed during the training are the rates OVR pays providers, correct? Will services continue to be free to LEAs? What costs are LEAs or school districts responsible for paying?

LEAs and school districts are responsible for service identified in a student's IEP/FAPE, and are not financially responsible for OVR-funded Pre-ETS. The rates discussed are the rates OVR pays approved providers. LEAs and school districts are not financially responsible for OVR-funded Pre-ETS.

9. At what point can Community-Based Group or Individual paid work experiences begin, and how do we get students involved?

Community-Based Group services may begin as early as age 14 when appropriate for the student. To begin the Pre-ETS process, an OVR-244 Pre-ETS Request Form must be submitted for each student. OVR will then connect with the student and family to discuss the referral, available service options, and which services are appropriate based on the student's individual needs. Not every student needs or will receive every Pre-ETS.

Individual paid work experiences are generally recommended around age 16 or approximately two years before the student exits high school, based on the student's individual circumstances. Students under age 18 participating in paid work experiences must meet applicable Pennsylvania Child Labor Law requirements, including obtaining a work permit when required. OVR and the provider will work with the student, family, and school as appropriate to ensure requirements are addressed before the work experience begins.

10. If students are participating in a Community-Based Group service, does a teacher or other school staff member need to accompany them?

Community-Based Group services are delivered by an OVR-approved provider. OVR does not require a teacher or other school staff member to accompany students during these services. LEAs and schools should follow their own policies and requirements regarding student supervision and participation in community-based activities.

11. Should OVR be invited to IEP meetings for students age 14 and older, and what should we do if our OVR representative is unable to attend or does not respond?

LEAs should invite OVR to IEP meetings when OVR participation is appropriate and with the required consent. However, there are significantly more students who may benefit from OVR involvement than OVR staff available to attend every IEP meeting. OVR participation should be prioritized for students whose transition needs indicate that OVR involvement would be beneficial and who are likely to engage in OVR services.

LEAs can support timely and consistent involvement by referring students to OVR at the appropriate point in their transition planning based on their individual needs and anticipated exit from school. An OVR representative does not need to attend every IEP meeting for a student to be referred to or receive OVR services.

If you have ongoing concerns about communication or participation from your local OVR representative, contact your local OVR office and request to speak with the Transition Supervisor.

12. What is the maximum number of hours a student can receive through MY Work Individual?

MY Work Individual allows up to 240 hours within a three-month period. However, 240 hours is the maximum, not the default. The number of hours authorized should be based on the individual student's needs, goals, and circumstances.

13. I work for a cyber charter school that serves students across the state. In the past, we primarily worked with one Pre-ETS provider, but this year we have had OVR staff from different District Offices involved with our students. How are Pre-ETS coordinated for cyber charter schools?

Because cyber charter schools serve students who live throughout Pennsylvania, OVR involvement may come from different District Offices based on where individual students reside. Pre-ETS may be provided by OVR staff or by approved Pre-ETS providers available in the student's local area, depending on the student's needs and available services.

14. Is the updated OVR School Profile available, and do schools need to complete a new School Profile because of the changes to Pre-ETS?

Yes. The OVR-261 School Profile and online School Profile survey have been updated to reflect the new Pre-ETS structure and should be used for School Profiles completed or updated going forward.

School Profiles are completed or updated annually. If your school has already completed its School Profile for the current year, it does not need to be completed again because of the new Pre-ETS Provider Agreement. OVR will continue to use the previously completed School Profile for this year.

15. Can a 9th-grade student who is age 14 have an open case to participate in Community-Based Group or Individual services, or are 9th-grade students limited to Instructional Services?

Students in 9th grade may have a Potentially Eligible (PE) case or apply for VR services, depending on their individual circumstances. Grade level alone does not prevent a student from having an OVR case. Most Instructional, Community-Based Group, and Community-Based Individual services are available to students with either PE or VR cases, depending on the specific service requirements and the student's needs.

While these services may be available beginning at age 14, services are provided based on the individual student's readiness, needs, interests, and transition goals. Younger students may benefit from Instructional Services or other foundational experiences before progressing to more independent community-based activities, while other students may be ready for community-based experiences earlier.

16. Can students begin receiving Pre-ETS before 11th grade?

Yes. Students may begin receiving Pre-ETS as early as age 14. The appropriate services and timing should be based on the individual student's needs.

17. Where can we find the link for Act 48 credit?

The Act 48 link and QR code were included in the PowerPoint presentation. The form is also available here: <https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/9USwc9xXZv>