

## What are the *required* Pre-Employment Transition Services?

Click each item below to view details:

- [Job exploration counseling](#)
- [Work-based learning experiences, which may include in-school or after school opportunities, experiences outside of the traditional school setting, and/or internships](#)
- [Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs](#)
- [Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living](#)
- [Instruction in self-advocacy](#)

### Job Exploration Counseling

Job Exploration Counseling, or Career counseling/ guidance includes a wide variety of professional activities which help people deal with career-related challenges. Career counselors work with youth seeking to explore career options, experienced professionals contemplating a career change, parents who want to return to the world of work after taking time to raise their child, or people seeking employment. Career counselling is also offered in various settings, including in groups and individually, in person or by means of digital communication<sup>1</sup>.

Job exploring options are intended to foster motivation, consideration of opportunities and informed decision-making. Specific to Youth, Real-world activities ensure that students recognize the relevance of a high school and post-school education to their futures, both in college and/or the workplace. Job exploration activities can be done in conjunction with private, for-profit, public or nonprofit businesses in your community and/or through web-based resources<sup>2</sup>.

**Job Exploration Activities, may include:**

- [Career Awareness](#)
- [Informational Interviews](#)
- [Career Speakers](#)
- [Career \(Vocational\) Assessment](#)
- [Job Clubs](#)
- [Job Shadowing](#)
- [Career Student Organization](#)
- [Volunteering](#)
- [Workplace Simulations](#)
- [Workplace Tours/Field Trips](#)

#### ○ **Career Awareness**

In the Career Awareness phase of career development planning, is to understand how personal work related values applies to opportunities through the world of work. Developing your career awareness means gaining knowledge of career paths and [job opportunities](#) and the [skills](#) and [qualifications](#) necessary to be successful in these positions.

#### ○ **Informational Interviews**

An **informational interview** is an informal conversation with someone working in a career area/job that interests you, who will give you information and advice. It is an effective research tool in addition to reading books, exploring the Internet and examining job descriptions. It is not a job interview, and the objective is not to find job openings<sup>3</sup>.

- **Career Speakers** provide an overview of a specific job or career area. The speaker typically presents to a class, large group or small group of students for a short period of time. Artifacts and or photos are used to

enhance the presentation. These sessions are typically informative, motivational and provide recommendations for additional career exploration activities.

- **Career (Vocational) Assessment**

**Career assessments** are tests that come in a variety of forms and rely on both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Career assessments can help individuals identify and better articulate their unique interests, personality, values, and skills to determine how well they may match with a certain career. Some skills that career assessments could help determine are job-specific skills, transferable skills, and self-management skills<sup>4</sup>. Career assessments can also provide individuals the opportunity to discover the tasks, experience, education and training that are needed for a career they want to pursue.

- **Job Clubs**

A job club, also known as a job search club or a networking club, is a formal or informal group of job seekers. The purpose of a job club is to assist with a job hunt and to give and get job search support and advice.

Members might share resumes and cover letters, conduct mock interviews, recommend job leads, and offer general encouragement and advice about the job search<sup>5</sup>.

- **Job Shadowing**

Job shadowing is a popular on-the-job learning, career development, and leadership development intervention. Essentially, job shadowing involves working with another employee who might have a different job in hand, might have something to teach, or can help the person shadowing him or her to learn new aspects related to the job, organization, certain behaviors or competencies<sup>6</sup>.

- **Career Student Organization**

**Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs)**<sup>7</sup> are vocational organizations primarily based in high schools and career technology centers. Often, on the state level, they are integrated into Departments of Education or incorporated as nonprofit organizations<sup>8</sup>.

- **Volunteering**

Volunteering is when a person donates his/her time or efforts for a cause or organization without being paid. It may be a one-time only or an on-going commitment. It should directly or indirectly benefit people outside the family or household or else benefit a cause, even though the person volunteering normally benefits as well. Most volunteer sites are non-profit organizations.

- **Workplace Simulations**

Workplace simulations can broadly be classified into three types: Virtual, Live, and Blended. *Virtual simulations* involve real people performing activities in a virtual, simulated environment. *Live* simulations are conducted with real people interacting with each other, real artifacts, and with live support from coaches, facilitators or instructors. *Blended* simulations can take many forms but always involve some degree of technology support, as well as live interaction or live coaching and debrief<sup>9</sup>.

- **Workplace Tours/ Field Trips**

A group excursion for the purpose of first-hand observation to specific work sites. Students learn about the business, meet employees, ask questions and observe work in progress<sup>10</sup>.

Work-based learning experiences, which may include in-school or after school opportunities, experiences outside of the traditional school setting, and/or internships

## Work-Based Learning Experiences (WBL)

**(WBL may include in-school or after school opportunities, or experience outside the traditional school setting (including internships), that is provided in an integrated environment to the maximum extent possible)**

**Work Based Learning<sup>1</sup>** is an educational approach or instructional methodology that uses the workplace or real work to provide students with the knowledge and skills that will help them connect school experiences to real-life work activities and future career opportunities. It is essential that direct employer or community involvement be a component of the WBL to ensure in-depth student engagement. These opportunities are meant to engage, motivate and augment the learning process. These WBL opportunities can be done in conjunction with private, for-profit, public or nonprofit businesses in your community and/or through web-based resources. In addition, work-based learning requires in-depth engagement of youth and an evaluation of acquired work relevant skills.

**Work-based learning experiences, may include:**

- [Apprenticeships](#)
- [Career Mentorship](#)
- [Career Related Competitions](#)
- [Paid Internships](#)
- [Non-paid Internships](#)
- [Practicum](#)
- [Service Learning](#)
- [Student-led Enterprises](#)
- [Simulated Workplace Experience](#)
- [Paid Work Experience](#)
- [Non-Paid Work Experience](#)

These WBL opportunities can be done in conjunction with private, for-profit, public or nonprofit businesses in your community and/or through web-based resources. In addition, work-based learning requires in-depth engagement of youth with oversight and evaluation of acquired work relevant skills by identified staff. The work based learning experience must be provided in an integrated setting in the community. Where paid WBL experiences are provided, the wages are to be paid at no less than minimum wage.

### Definitions:

- **Apprenticeships:** Youth apprenticeships combine classroom and workplace experience to provide opportunities for high school students to try out one or more crafts or trades. They allow students to explore essential workplace skills, strengthen their academic and technical skills, explore careers in the trades, and enter apprenticeship training when they complete high school.
- **Career Mentorship:** A mentor is one who teaches or provides guidance and advice to a less experienced and often younger person<sup>2</sup>.
- **Career Related Competitions:** Career-related student competitions are work-based learning activities that require students to demonstrate mastery of career-related skills through presentations or competitions that are judged by professionals. Presentations demonstrate culminations of student effort over time, often involving teamwork. Career technical student organizations sponsor such competitions in the fields of agriculture, business, health, hospitality and industrial technology.
- **Internships (Paid Or UnPaid):** An internship is a temporary position with an emphasis on on-the-job training rather than merely employment, and it can be paid or unpaid. An internship is an opportunity to develop specific job related skills before you are qualified for an actual job.

The Department of Labor's website offers guidance and information on their "employment laws assistance for workers and small business - elaws section on volunteers. The following link provides helpful information on the Fair Labor Standards Act as it pertains to volunteers:

- [eLaws - Fair Labor Standards Act Advisor : Volunteers](#)

Internships in the "for-profit" private sector will most often be viewed as employment, unless the test described below relating to trainees is met. Interns in the "for-profit" private sector who qualify as employees rather than

trainees typically must be paid at least the minimum wage and overtime compensation for hours worked over forty in a workweek.

The following six criteria must be applied when making this determination<sup>3</sup>:

1. The internship, even though it includes actual operation of the facilities of the employer, is similar to training which would be given in an educational environment;
2. The internship experience is for the benefit of the intern;
3. The intern does not displace regular employees, but works under close supervision of existing staff;
4. The employer that provides the training derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the intern; and on occasion its operations may actually be impeded;
5. The intern is not necessarily entitled to a job at the conclusion of the internship;
6. The employer and the intern understand that the intern is not entitled to wages for the time spent in the internship.

### **DOL's Time Limits on Internships and work exploration activities:**

The Department of Labor has identified the following time limits specific to internships/ work experiences to ensure an employee relationship does not exist:

**Career Exploration** (limited to 5 hours/job) - a brief exposure to a variety of work settings and may include work site field trips or job shadowing to view the type of work being performed.

**Career Assessment** (limited to 90 hours/job) - an extended observation where the student undertakes work assignments for the purpose of assessing his/her interests, aptitudes, and support needs.

**Work-Related Training** (limited to 120 hours/job) - a period of work experience for the purpose of training job skills and job-related skills.

If all of the factors listed above are met, an employment relationship does not exist under the FLSA, and the Act's minimum wage and overtime provisions do not apply to the intern. This exclusion from the definition of employment is necessarily quite narrow because the FLSA's definition of "employ" is very broad.

The following link to the DOL website provides helpful information on the Fair Labor Standards Act as it pertains to the school to work designation which can be helpful in determining whether or not a work based learning experience falls within this category:

- [eLaws - Fair Labor Standards Act Advisor : School-to-Work](#)

### **Note: Displacement and Supervision Issues:**

The Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division list factors<sup>4</sup> to consider in whether a site is a bona fide training program or considered a work site. The following illustrates what may determine a site to be a training program:

- Employers typically do not utilize trainees as a substitute for regular workers.
- If the employer uses the workers as substitutes for regular workers, it is more likely that the workers are employees as opposed to trainees.
- If the employer would have needed to hire additional employees or require overtime had the workers not performed the work, then the workers are likely employees.
- Conversely, if the employer is providing job shadowing opportunities where the worker learns certain functions under the close and constant supervision of regular employees, but performs no or minimal work, this type of activity is more likely to be a bona fide training program
- However, if the worker receives the same level of supervision as employees, this would suggest an employment, rather than a training, relationship.

### **No Job Entitlement/No Entitlement to Wages**

- Before the work-based training begins, both the employer and the worker agree that the worker is not entitled to a job at the conclusion of the training period or wages for the time spent in training.

- The parties' expectations regarding the compensation and job opportunities are relevant but not determinative.
- Even when such an agreement exists, hiring workers who finish the training program is considered in determining whether an employment relationship exists. Frequently hiring such workers suggests that the workers are not trainees.
- Finally, if the worker is placed with the employer for a trial period with the hope that the worker will then be hired on a permanent basis (even if the worker is not automatically entitled to a job at the end of the period), then the worker is not likely to be a trainee during the trial period.

The FLSA makes a special exception under certain circumstances for individuals who volunteer to perform services for a state or local government agency and for individuals who volunteer for humanitarian purposes for private non-profit food banks.

The Wage and Hour Division (WHD)<sup>5</sup> also recognizes an exception for individuals who volunteer their time, freely and without anticipation of compensation for religious, charitable, civic, or humanitarian purposes to non-profit organizations. Unpaid internships in the public sector and for non-profit charitable organizations, where the intern volunteers without expectation of compensation, are generally permissible. WHD is reviewing the need for additional guidance on internships in the public and nonprofit sectors.

Such permissible opportunities may include:

- **Practicum:** a course of study devoted to practical training in the field, where supervision is provided. Usually applies to be specialized field of study.
- **Service learning:** work-based learning activity that integrates meaningful community service with classroom instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities<sup>6</sup>.
- **Student Led Enterprises:** school based enterprises that produce goods or services for sale or to be used by people other than the participating student(s).
- **Simulated Workplace Experience:** Simulated workplace experiences are work-based learning activities that simulate work environments in any field. Examples include automotive or construction programs in which sustained industry involvement allows students to develop and apply their skills in the context of industry standards and expectations.
- **Work Experience ( Paid or Non-Paid):** work experience offers students the opportunity to explore careers and understand the nature of work through first-hand exposure to the workplace. Students may or may not be paid.
  - **Paid Work Experience** can be general or vocational, focusing respectively on general workplace skills or career preparation activities within a specific industry or career area.
  - **Non-Paid Work Experience** is exploratory in nature and its intent is to expose an individual to a variety of occupations for the purpose of building basic workplace competence.

**Note:** Section 511 of WIOA Title IV limits the use of sub-minimum wage. Individuals age 24 or younger may not begin work paying subminimum wage (less than Federal minimum wage) unless the following actions have been completed:

- The individual received pre-employment transition services or transition services under IDEA (and)
- The individual applied for VR services and has been found ineligible for services (or)
- The individual has been determined eligible for VR services but has not been successful /achieved Competitive Integrated Employment and client record of services closed.
- The individual has been provided career counseling and information and referral to other resources designed to assist the person in attaining competitive integrated employment. *For more complete detail on Section 511 of WIOA Title IV, see [Laws, Regs, and Policy](#)*

## Counseling on Post -Secondary Education

**(Counseling opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or post- secondary educational programs at institutions of higher education)**

Maximum flexibility in the career decision making process is important in the early phases of Post-Secondary

Education (PSE) planning. This includes gaining an awareness of the wide range of career pathway options and labor market realities and projections. The U.S. Department of Labor has created clusters of careers to help schools to provide instruction and monitor student experience<sup>1</sup>. The following 16 broad categories encompass virtually all occupations from entry through professional levels, including those that require varying degrees of education and training, as exemplified by the sample careers within each cluster:

- Agricultural & Natural Resources
- Business and Administration
- Education and Training
- Health Science
- Human Services
- Law and Public Safety
- Government and Public Administration
- Scientific Research/ Engineering
- Arts, A/V Technology & Communications
- Architecture and Construction
- Finance
- Law & Public Safety
- Hospitality & Tourism
- Information & Technology
- Manufacturing
- Retail/Wholesale Sales & Service
- Transportation, Distribution & Logistics

Choosing a career requires student exploration and planning. It is important that students connect the present to the future. It is essential for them to see how skill development and knowledge relate to future opportunities in postsecondary Education (PSE) settings and employment.

Individualized student strategies to support a smooth transition from high school to postsecondary education (PSE) include:

- document academic accommodations
- advocate for needed accommodations & services
- identify interests, abilities,
- talents, needs, learning style preferences and goals
- promote use of executive function skills
- assist with researching career & PSE options
- promote participation in PSE preparation classes, etc.
- connect to PSE resources/ services/websites
- promote use of self-advocacy skills
- assist with application/ enrollment process
- identify financial aid options
- take career vocational assessments
- familiarize with education and vocational laws
- identify technology needs
- identify admission tests accommodations
- attend college fairs & tours
- apply for Vocational Rehabilitation services, if eligible
- provide PSE information to family members
- access services & supports from developmental/ intellectual disabilities service agency, if eligible

It is essential that students and their family members are provided information and guidance on a variety of post-secondary education and training opportunities. This includes information on:

- Community Colleges (AA/AS degrees, certificate programs and classes)
- Universities (Public & Private)
- Career pathways related workshops/training programs



- Trade/Technical Schools
- Military
- Post-Secondary programs at community colleges and Universities for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)<sup>2</sup> of 1990 upholds and extends the nondiscrimination mandates set forth in Section 504<sup>3</sup> of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to include both public and private colleges and universities regardless of their receipt of federal financial assistance, but does contain exceptions for private clubs and religious entities.

In addition, it is essential to the PSE planning process to learn about the special departments and/or supports available at the PSE institutions of higher learning. The college tour should include a visit to the office that oversees provision of disability services and supports, where available. This office has a variety of names depending on the PSE site, including: Special Services, Student Services, Disabled Student Services, Disability Support Services, etc. It is important to note that these services vary depending on specific office and should be investigated as part of the fact finding efforts in deciding on a PSE institution.

In order to receive academic adjustments as a student with a disability, the student must identify himself or herself as having a disability and needing academic adjustments. To ensure the provision of appropriate services, a student must present current and comprehensive documentation to DSS or similar administrative office. It is also important for students to be aware of and understand the privacy or confidentiality policies of the college. Generally, these records are covered under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the federal law that protects the privacy of student education records<sup>4</sup>.

**Summary of Performance (SOP):** To promote easier access to needed supports after school exit, each student should leave the secondary school system with a Summary of Performance (SOP). The SOP is required under the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004. The language as stated in IDEA 2004 regarding the SOP is as follows: For a child whose eligibility under special education terminates due to graduation with a regular diploma, or due to exceeding the age of eligibility, the local education agency "shall provide the child with a summary of the child's academic achievement and functional performance, which shall include recommendations on how to assist the child in meeting the child's postsecondary goals" §Sec. 300.305(e)(3). The Summary of Performance, with the accompanying documentation, is important to assist the student in the transition from high school to higher education, training and/or employment. This information is necessary under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act to help establish a student's eligibility for reasonable accommodations and supports in postsecondary settings. It is also useful for the Vocational Rehabilitation Comprehensive Assessment process. The information about students' current level of functioning is intended to help postsecondary institutions consider accommodations for access<sup>5</sup>.

## **Workplace Readiness Training<sup>1</sup>**

### **(Workplace Readiness Training to develop social skills and independent living)**

Workplace readiness traits describe a number of commonly expected, skills that employers seek from most employees. Work readiness skills are a set of skills and behaviors that are necessary for any job. Work readiness skills are sometimes called soft skills, employability skills, or job readiness skills.

These abilities help employees learn how to interact with supervisors and co-workers. They help reinforce the importance of timeliness and build an understanding of how we are perceived by others. Employers value employees who can communicate effectively and act professionally. No matter what technical skills a job may require, every job requires good social skills/interpersonal skills.

### **Specific social/interpersonal skills include:**

- communication
- positive attitude
- teamwork
- problem solving
- talking/writing
- cooperation

- active listening
- decision making
- conflict resolution
- body Language
- empathy
- professionalism
- good manners
- supporting others
- respectful

**The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS):** In 1990, the Secretary of Labor appointed a commission to determine the skills our young people need to succeed in the world of work. The commission's fundamental purpose was to encourage a high-performance economy characterized by high-skill, high-wage employment. The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) was asked to examine the demands of the workplace and whether today's young people are capable of meeting those demands. Specifically, the Commission was directed to advise the Secretary on the level of skills required to enter employment. In carrying out this charge, the Commission was asked to:

- Define the skills needed for employment;
- Propose acceptable levels of proficiency;
- Suggest effective ways to assess proficiency; and
- Develop a dissemination strategy for the nation's schools, businesses, and homes.

This report results from the Commission's discussions and meetings with business owners, public employers, unions, and workers and supervisors in shops, plants, and stores. It builds on the work of six special panels established by the Commission to examine all manner of jobs from manufacturing to government employment. Researchers were also commissioned to conduct lengthy interviews with workers in a wide range of jobs. Although the commission completed its work in 1992, its findings and recommendations continue to be a valuable source of information for individuals and organizations involved in education and workforce development.

**Independent living skills include the following:**

- good hygiene
- time management
- healthy lifestyle
- using a cell phone
- using transportation
- money management
- nutrition/meal preparation
- using technology & assistive technology
- accessing community
- services & supports
- community participation
- civic responsibility
- community safety
- developing friendships
- appropriate dress
- appropriate behavior

**Instruction in self-advocacy**

**(Instruction in self-advocacy which may include peer mentoring)**

Self-advocacy refers to: an individual's ability to effectively communicate, convey, negotiate or assert his/her own interests and/or desires. Self-determination means that individuals with disabilities have the freedom to plan their own lives, pursue the things that are important to them and to experience the same life opportunities as other people in their communities<sup>1</sup>. It means taking the responsibility for communicating one's needs and



desires in a straightforward manner to others. The development of self-advocacy skills should be started at an early age. These skills will be needed in education, workplace and community settings.

**Self-advocacy skills include:**

- self-awareness
- disability understanding
- disability disclosure
- decision making
- set goals
- evaluate options
- identify independence
- accommodations
- request & utilize accommodations
- know your rights & responsibilities
- self-determination
- know how to request & accept help
- intrinsic motivation
- taking a leadership role
- in support plans
- assertiveness
- listen to others opinions
- problem solving
- monitor progress
- positive self-talk

Self-determination is a concept reflecting the belief that all individuals have the right to direct their own lives. Students who have self-determination skills have a stronger chance of being successful in making the transition to adulthood, including employment and independence. To accomplish this goal, students must be prepared to participate in planning for their future<sup>2</sup>.

Information on accommodations is available through many learning disability organizations. **The Job Accommodation Network (JAN)**<sup>3</sup> has qualified people to help you find the best accommodation solutions. Another resource is **Learning Disabilities Association of America**<sup>4</sup> that provides tips on becoming an effective self advocate in the workplace.

Peer mentoring is a process through which a more experienced individual encourages and assists a less experienced individual develop his or her potential within a shared area of interest. The resulting relationship is a reciprocal one in that both individuals in the partnership have an opportunity for growth and development. Peers are individuals who share some common characteristics, attributes or circumstances. These may relate to age, ability, interests, etc. Peer mentors are individuals who have more experience within that common area along with additional training in how to assist another in acquiring skills, knowledge and attitudes to be more successful<sup>5</sup>.

**Mentoring:**

**Mentoring relationships may take different forms<sup>6</sup> :**

- **Peer Mentoring:** A person close in age to his or her mentee may act as a sounding board for ideas and plans and provide guidance in an informal manner.
- **Disability Mentoring:** A person with a disability mentors another person, usually with a similar disability. The relationship generally focuses on a specific area such as living independently, recovering from a traumatic event, obtaining employment or being new to the workforce. The mentor serves as a role model and provides information and guidance specific to the mentee's experience.
- **Group Mentoring:** A mentor may work with a group of mentees.
- **E-mentoring:** An adult mentors a young person through email or the Internet.

When identifying potential mentors, the following factors should be looked at:

- Expertise in a particular career area or occupation
- Flexibility
- Good people skills
- Enthusiastic
- Comfortable with youth and young adults
- Able to identify potential problems and find solutions
- Provide constructive evaluation and feedback to nurture learning
- Perceive possible benefits to mentoring
- Ability to pass background check

Mentoring relationships can keep students from special populations in school, contribute to positive self-esteem, and identify realistic career and academic goals. Research indicates that mentoring is especially effective in helping youth with disabilities transition into the workplace and adulthood.

### **What are additional *authorized* Pre Employment Transition Services?**

If funds remain, VR agencies may provide the following to improve the transition of students with disabilities from school to postsecondary education or an employment outcome:

- implement effective strategies that increase independent living and inclusion in their communities and competitive integrated workplaces;
- develop and improve strategies for individuals with intellectual and significant disabilities to live independently, participate in postsecondary education experiences, and obtain and retain competitive integrated employment;
- provide training to vocational rehabilitation counselors, school transition staff, and others supporting students with disabilities;
- disseminate information on innovative, effective, and efficient approaches to implement pre-employment transition services;
- coordinate activities with transition services provided by local educational agencies under IDEA;
- apply evidence-based findings to improve policy, procedure, practice, and the preparation of personnel;
- develop model transition demonstration projects;
- establish or support multistate or regional partnerships that involve States, local educational agencies, designated State units, developmental disability agencies, private businesses, or others; and
- disseminate information and strategies to improve the transition to postsecondary activities of those who are traditionally unserved.