

Ohio

**Rehabilitation Services
Commission**

Education



Transition



Employment



**A Guide to Transition Services:
Helping Students with Disabilities
Move from School to Work**

**(800) 282-4536
www.rsc.ohio.gov**

WHAT IS RSC?

The Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission (RSC) is a state agency that assists persons with disabilities prepare for, obtain, or maintain a job. The two bureaus within RSC that work with transition age youth are the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR) and the Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired (BSVI).

WHAT IS TRANSITION?

Transition services are a coordinated set of outcome-oriented activities for a student that promotes the movement (or transition) from school to post-school activities.

The coordinated set of activities is based on a student's needs, preferences, and abilities and may include:

- Instruction and related services,
- Community experiences,
- Development of employment,
- Post-school adult living objectives,
- Daily living skills instruction, and
- Functional vocational evaluation.

The outcome-oriented process for the transition aged student means working at a job.

The post-school activities presented by transition may include:

- Postsecondary education,
- Vocational training,
- Integrated and/or supported employment,
- Continuing and adult education,
- Adult services,
- Independent living services, and
- Community participation.

RSC'S ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN TRANSITION SERVICES

RSC's goal is to provide vocational rehabilitation services to eligible students in order to reach the employment goal as identified on the approved individual plan for employment (IPE).

When appropriate and feasible, the RSC counselor will participate in the student's individual education program (IEP) or 504 planning meeting for transition services. The employment plan must be coordinated with the IEP or other education plans in terms of goals, objectives, and services. In developing RSC's IPE, the student and RSC counselor must establish an appropriate work goal.

REFERRING STUDENTS TO RSC

Any student with a disability, who needs vocational guidance and counseling to obtain or maintain employment, may be referred to RSC.

A referral may be initiated by the local school district, the student, a family member, or other educational or community resource. Students referred may be participants in special, vocational, career-technical or regular education programs.

Some RSC offices may have designated counselors who specifically work with transition students. A list of RSC area offices is included in the back of this document. Contact the area office representing your county of residence to locate the RSC field office closest to you. RSC's web site, at www.rsc.ohio.gov, is a further source for locating the nearest RSC field office.

WHEN TO MAKE A REFERRAL TO RSC

The time to refer a secondary student to RSC is when the school district has begun to identify transition or other postsecondary services targeting an employment outcome or an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or other education plans for students with disabilities in a special, vocational/career-technical, or regular education program.

Ideally, students should be referred two years prior to exiting high school. If you are unsure of when to make a referral, contact your local RSC office.

INFORMATION TO INCLUDE WHEN MAKING A REFERRAL

RSC needs documentation of a student's disability to establish eligibility services and plan transition services. The school must obtain written parental consent before releasing student information to RSC. The following most recent information from a student's records is needed:

- Medical, psychological, and any specialty evaluations such as vocational and mobility evaluations. Please provide evidence of the diagnosis and functional limitations;
- Current IEP;
- The Evaluation Team Report (ETR);
- The Summary of Performance;
- Results of age-appropriate transition assessments;
- 504 Education Plan;
- Individualized Academic Career Plan;
- School transcripts;
- Ohio Graduation Test (OGT) results;
- Department of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities children/adult eligibility determination instrument - either the Children's Ohio Eligibility Determination Instrument (COEDI) or, for adults, the Ohio Eligibility Determination Instrument (OEDI);
- A copy of the SSI/SSDI award letter or verification status; and
- Other assessments as deemed appropriate.

Other helpful things to do or remember when making a referral:

- Please make a student's parents or legal guardian aware that you are making a referral of their son or daughter to RSC, and
- If the transition student is less than 18 years of age, a parent or legal guardian must sign all necessary forms. If a student is over age 18, and wants parental involvement, the student must sign forms allowing the parent to obtain that information.

THE INITIAL INTERVIEW

Following a referral, a RSC counselor will contact the student and his or her family to schedule an initial interview. During the interview, they should be prepared to discuss the student's disability and how it affects his or her ability to work.

They also should be prepared to provide the following information to RSC during the meeting:

- A medical history related to the student's disability including but not limited to names and addresses of doctors and specialists, hospital admissions, names of medications, and previous treatment experiences;
- An educational history;
- The student's current school schedule;
- The expected date of graduation; and
- A job history, including volunteer and unpaid work experience, if applicable.

DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY

RSC's services are based on eligibility; not from an entitlement program. Students must be determined eligible by a RSC counselor. The counselor must determine (1) that the student has a disability and (2) that the disability substantially interferes with his or her ability to prepare for, get or keep a job. The student must also demonstrate a need for RSC services in order to pursue or retain employment.

Only a RSC counselor may determine whether a student is eligible for services. Counselors have special training and experience interpreting disability documentation and making eligibility decisions. Existing records, staff observations, and a student's self-evaluations will assist the counselor in making a determination.

CONSUMER CONTRIBUTION

A student and his or her family are expected to pay for services to the extent possible. If a financial contribution is not made by the student or family, the counselor must provide an explanation in the student's case record. However, eligibility for services is not dependent on a consumer's ability or willingness to pay.

INDIVIDUAL PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT (IPE)

After eligibility is determined, the student will work with the counselor to define an employment goal and develop an IPE. The IPE is designed to match a student's unique vocational strengths, abilities, and interests. The IPE and related individualized education plan (IEP) should be aligned to ensure a unified plan of employment for the student.

COLLEGE ATTENDANCE

For some transition age students, obtaining a college degree is a necessary step towards reaching the employment goal. RSC has a Postsecondary Training Rule which guides how it funds a transition student's postsecondary education and guides a student's choice of where to attend college. RSC's postsecondary program is a financial needs-based program and each individual student receives an individualized level of funding. No student is guaranteed funding for postsecondary training by RSC.

There are four major criteria to RSC's postsecondary program:

- RSC is the "last payer" for postsecondary expenses. Students must apply any obtained federal and state grants, scholarships, and their expected family contribution (EFC) to their college expenses before RSC determines its level of contribution;
- All RSC consumers requesting agency financial assistance for postsecondary training are required to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and provide the counselor a copy of the resulting student aid report (SAR) which will include the EFC;
- RSC will fund an eligible student at the least cost level. In a student's first two years of schooling the least cost level is generally considered to be the cost at the local community college; and
- RSC has a "time to degree" stipulation which requires consumers to complete one academic year of college classes within 18 calendar year months.

SUCCESSFUL COMPETITIVE EMPLOYMENT AND CASE CLOSURE

The goal of RSC transition services is to help a student obtain and keep competitive employment. A student's case is considered successfully closed when vocational rehabilitation services on the IPE have contributed to the student's employment and the student has been working successfully for at least 90 days. The employment must be in an integrated setting and the student must be earning at least minimum wage.

A student's RSC case may be closed before a student completes school when the student, family, RSC counselor and school IEP team agree that the student has reached the employment goal and no longer requires additional vocational rehabilitation services.

WHAT RSC CAN PROVIDE TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS

If requested, RSC will provide the following documentation to the local school district office of regular education, vocational or career-technical education or special education or their designee: a copy of the student's IPE, the plan's annual review, and a copy of the IPE Closure Statement.

HOW CAN SCHOOL PERSONNEL HELP?

Helping students prepare for competitive employment requires a systematic approach to career development. To prepare students for employment and RSC involvement, school personnel can:

- Create work-based learning opportunities such as job shadowing, mentoring, and work experiences with the student;
- Utilize assessments to effectively assist students prepare for employment;
- Make academics relevant to the world of work by noting employment applications for reading, writing, computing, thinking, etc;
- Invite RSC representatives to speak to staff, students, and parents regarding RSC services.
- Discuss with students how they might benefit from RSC assistance;
- Discuss a student's strengths and needs with a RSC counselor;
- Help students understand their disability and how to request accommodations in higher education and employment settings; and
- Align accommodations provided in school with those the student may realistically receive in postsecondary education and employment settings.

RSC Area Offices

Southeast Area Office
2200 W. 5th Ave., 1st Floor
Columbus, OH 43215-1047
(614) 466-9364
TTY: (614) 995-1162
Fax: (614) 995-1163
Consumer use only: (800) 681-9964

Southwest Area Office
8050 Beckett Center Dr., Suite 216
West Chester, OH 45069-5001
(513) 942-8909
TTY: (513) 942-4176
Fax: (513) 942-3045
Consumer use only: (800) 686-9506

North Area Office
14650 Detroit Ave., Suite 300
Lakewood, OH 44107-4210
(216) 227-3250
TTY: (216) 227-3292
Fax: (216) 227-3290
Consumer use only: (866) 325-0026

North Area Office
5241 Southwyck Blvd., Suite 100
Toledo, OH 43614-1568
Voice and TTY: (419) 866-5811
Fax: (419) 866-1669
Consumer use only: (800) 589-5811

RSC Service Areas





www.rsc.ohio.gov
800-282-4536

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