pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & INDUSTRY

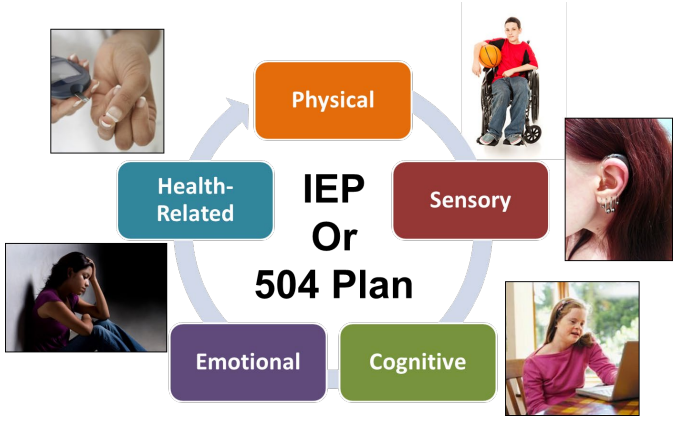
The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)

Mission

OVR serves people who have disabilities that present a barrier to employment. Services are provided to individuals to prepare for, enter into, engage in, retain, or advance in employment. We work with individuals with: physical, sensory, cognitive, emotional, and health related disabilities. Eligible students have an IEP, 504 plan, medical records, or a perceived disability.

Eligibility Requirements

A student must apply and be found Eligible to receive OVR services as OVR is an Eligibility-based program. OVR looks for functional limitations in these areas: mobility, self-care, work-tolerance, interpersonal skills, communication, work skills, or self-direction. **If you are a student between the ages of 14 – 21 years old, you are able to receive Pre-Employment Transition Services. Pre-Employment Transition Services may include: Job Exploration Counseling, Counseling on Post-Secondary Exploration Options, Workplace Readiness training, Self-Advocacy Instruction, Work Based Learning.**



1. **Physical disability**: People with this type of disability may have difficulties with movement or mobility. They may use assisted devices such as wheelchairs or walkers. (Cerebral Palsy, Paralysis, Amputation)
2. **Sensory disability**: People with this type of disability may have difficulty hearing or seeing, or both. Individuals with visual impairments may use Braille, canes, or large print to assist them. People who are hard of hearing or deaf may use hearing aids or cochlear implants. (Hard of Hearing, Deaf, Blind)
3. **Cognitive disability**: People with this type of disability may have difficulty learning, communicating, and remembering information. They may also have trouble with problem-solving, paying attention, or understanding reading, math, or visual information. They may use daily planners, more time on tests, or quiet areas to study. (Learning Disabilities, ADHD, Autism, Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities)
4. **Psychiatric and Emotional disability**: People with these types of disabilities may have difficulty with emotions and behaviors. Often these individuals are diagnosed with Depressive Disorder, Drug Addiction, Anxiety Disorder, Psychotic Disorder, and/or Mood Disorder. People with this type of disability may use medications, coping skills, or counseling.
5. **Health-related disability**: People with this type of disability might have a physical condition that affects their overall health. They may have limited strength, vitality, or alertness due to chronic or acute health problems such as a heart condition, rheumatic fever, asthma, hemophilia, and leukemia.

To Apply to OVR:

1. **Have the Parent/Guardian sign a release of information for OVR.**
2. **Contact: High School Transition Coordinator or OVR Vocational Counselor for online application information.**
3. **OVR needs: completed OVR application, copy of school/photo ID, copy of student's IEP and Re-Evaluation Report**

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation – Reading District Office
3602 Kutztown Road, Suite 200 | Reading, PA 19605 | P 610.621.5800 | F 610.621.5807 | TTY 877.475.7326 | www.dli.pa.gov

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.
Equal Opportunity Employer/Program

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Pre-Employment Transition Services for High School Students:

*****Without Applying for OVR services*** - (Potentially Eligible Student):**

1. **Group Services – OVR staff or an Agency funded by OVR will provide these trainings in your High School or program setting**: Job Exploration Training, Independent Living Skills Training, Self-Advocacy Training, Workplace Readiness Training **(A Reading District Office Group Menu will be provided to the school)**
2. **Workplace Tours/Group Job Shadowing – OVR staff or an Agency funded by OVR will provide Group Job Shadowing –** in a group, students will visit an employer, observe employees working, and be given the opportunity to ask questions relevant to job exploration
3. **Group Travel Training - OVR will fund for an Agency to provide Group Travel Training –** in a group, assessment and training for use of public transportation or ride-sharing apps like Uber/Lyft

*****After Applying for OVR Services*** - (Potentially Eligible Applicant) - Student must submit an OVR application and meet with a VR Counselor**

a. **Job Shadowing –** 1 to 5-day job shadowing experience, in an occupation of interest, in the community. Students will shadow employees and obtain an overview of knowledge, tasks, and abilities needed to work in that job. Includes **25 hours** with provider staff to **observe** careers of interest. This is an experience intended to provide information,
b. **Paid Work Experience –** Students will be provided with options for work experiences that teach skills needed to obtain competitive integrated employment or transition to post-secondary training. **45 hours of paid part time temporary work** with the support of provider agency staff.
c. **Identification – Student** will be assisted with obtaining a PA state ID or replacement card as required for a Job Shadow, Paid Work Experience, or Community Work Instruction (CWI).
d. **Community Work Instruction (CWI) –** A group work experience, 4 students to 1 coordinator, no more than 8 students per worksite. Students will also receive independent living skills training or workplace readiness training with their work experience.

Other Individual Services: (May occur before and continue after High School exit)

1. **Assessment/Testing services** – OVR will fund testing to determine presence of a disability, the extent of a disability, or assistive technology needed. Testing may also assess an individual's ability to work. Includes: psychological, neuropsychological, physiatric (physical assessment), **Community-Based-Work-Assessments –** used to assess an individual's ability to work, AT (assistive technology), **Discovery/Customized Employment** – an in-depth assessment for individuals with very significant needs (intellectual disabilities, autism)
2. **Vocational Counseling and Guidance** – OVR Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors provide counseling on vocational options, post-secondary options, connect individuals to other services/supports;
3. **Benefits Counseling** – for SSI/SSDI recipients, SSA Benefits Counseling can help you understand the advantages of earning a paycheck versus SSA benefits, and other programs like: Student Earned Income, Plan to Achieve Self Support Program
4. **Supported Employment** – Individualized support to prepare a resume, conduct a job search, practice for a job interview, learn job tasks, request accommodations at work. Includes **Discovery/Customized Employment**
5. **Training** – OVR support for accredited training programs – College, Tech/Trade School, Certificate Programs, Comprehensive Training Programs (college programs for individuals with intellectual disabilities),
6. **Driver Evaluation/Training –** assessment and training for safe vehicle operation.
7. **Job Placement Assistance** – OVR hosts workshops for: Job Searching, Resume Writing and Job Interview workshops
8. **Hiram G. Andrews Center –** Training Center in Johnstown, PA - www.dli.pa.gov/hgac - Offers Associates degree and Certificate programs. Student will visit for a Vocational Evaluation (1-2 weeks) to determine successful placement in chosen program before attending.

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