

School to Work Transition

Guidelines and Best Practices



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Florida Department of Education
The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

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The Role of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) in School to Work (STW) Transition Services

VR assists secondary education school students with disabilities to transition from school into postsecondary education, training or directly into employment with the ultimate goal of inclusion in the adult community as productive citizens. The Transition Counselor and the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Technician work closely with staff at local schools to:

- **Provide** assistance with transition planning.
- **Develop** appropriate VR referrals.
- **Educate** school staff, parents, students, and others about the VR programs.

The Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) should be completed as soon as eligibility has been determined and the necessary information has been gathered. An IPE should be in place prior to graduation or exit from school. The IPE is to be coordinated with the student's Transition Individual Educational Plan (TIEP or IEP) that is developed by the school system's transition team. The transition team may include, but is not limited to the following members:

- Student
- Parent or Guardian
- Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Teacher
- General Education Teacher
- Vocational Education Teacher
- Other necessary school services personnel
- Support Coordinator
- Invited agency representatives
- Others who may be instrumental in the student's successful transition

Shared Transition Counselor and VR Technician Responsibilities

The Transition Counselor and VR Technician may carry out the following responsibilities as VR agency representatives:

- **Providing outreach** to educate individuals about the VR process and services.
- **Processing referrals** and applications.
- **Conducting** preliminary assessment interviews.
- **Securing** preliminary eligibility **documentation/** student records.
- **Completing** case note documentation.
- **Attending** Transition IEP **meetings** as the VR agency representative when invited by the school.
- **Providing guidance** about informed choice, disability issues, and employment
- **Conducting** follow-up.

- **Networking activities** that contribute to the successful employment outcome of Floridians with disabilities.

Outreach activities of the Transition Counselor and VR Technician are primarily focused on providing information about VR to school staff, students, parents, community professionals, and others interested in transition services. Outreach to these students should occur as early as possible during the transition planning process and must include, at a minimum, a description of the following:

- Vocational Rehabilitation program purpose
- Eligibility requirements
- Application procedures
- Scope of services that may be provided to eligible students

The Transition Counselor or VR Technician can provide information regarding VR services that can be passed on to students and their families by contacting the ESE Director, ESE Teacher, Transition Coordinator, Transition Specialist, or School Counselor.

Ways the Transition Counselor and VR Technician may conduct outreach include:

- **Providing** VR brochures and business cards to the school.
- **Presenting** at the first Open House or Orientation held at the school.
- **Conducting** regularly scheduled school visits.
- **Participating** in transition and job fairs at the school.
- **Attending** school IEP meetings when invited.
- **Speaking** about VR services at school staff meetings, teacher in-service training, student/parent group meetings, or interagency meetings.

Transition Counselors and VR Technicians should work with school staff to ensure referrals of students with disabilities to the VR program at the beginning of the school year as follows:

- Referral and application for VR services is recommended at age 16 for students who are involved in or plan to be involved in Community Based Work Experiences (CBWE).
- All other students are encouraged to apply for VR transition services two years prior to school exit.
- Students at high risk of dropping out should be referred if they are old enough to begin training or searching for employment.
- The Transition Counselor may act in an advisory capacity for at risk youth who are too young to apply and/or do not have disability.

This should allow sufficient time for determining eligibility, identifying VR service needs, referring students to community services, and developing the approved IPE prior to the student's exit from school.



Best Practice: *The VR process may be expedited by having the referring school provide the Transition Counselor or VR Technician with copies of the student's important school documents at time of referral or application. These documents include:*

- *Current IEP or 504 Plan*
- *Medical and/or psychological records, to include the most recent 3 year re-evaluation*
- *Transcripts or academic reports*
- *Attendance and tardiness reports*
- *Behavioral reports, if applicable*
- *Vocational training records and/or career assessments, if available*
- *Involvement with any other agencies, if applicable*

Responsibilities of the VR Transition Counselor

The Transition Counselor is responsible for completing the following:

- VR eligibility determinations
- IPE development
- Payment of necessary VR services from application to case closure

The Transition Counselor may use school records and information from the student, teachers, parents, and/or employers to help identify impediments to employment, to assess the need for VR services, and to assist with developing an employment plan to transition the student from school to work. The Transition Counselor will need to obtain an appropriate assessment or evaluation if existing school records or other records do not meet VR documentation requirements.

VR STW Transition Activities

The VR STW Transition activities outlined below are a general guide. Activities may vary based upon individual circumstances.

General Activities: VR staff should be a resource for school districts and families to help educate students about supports needed for a smooth transition from school to work, further training, or education.

- **Consult** with and **educate** schools, parents, students, and other agencies about VR services.
- **Conduct outreach** to include VR orientation presentations, dissemination of VR brochures, and technical assistance with transition IEP planning.

- **Participate** in transition fairs, job fairs, and other activities targeting parents, and students to increase appropriate referrals.
- **Conduct** early identification and **assessment of student needs** for transition services.
- **Communicate** relevant VR policy which may impact a student's application or eligibility for VR services.

Specific Activities: Typically, a student is at least 16 years old and engaged in CBWE before the VR representative participates in a Transition IEP meeting (unless the student is at risk of dropping out of school).

- **Participate** in IEP meetings at the invitation of the school or assist in other ways if unable to attend the meeting.
- **Link** the student with other appropriate youth and adult agencies that may provide services during the transition process and/or after the student exits school.
- **Encourage** student application for VR transition services.
- **Communicate** relevant VR policy that may impact a student's application or eligibility for VR services during the IEP.
- **Determine** eligibility (Transition Counselor only).
- **Coordinate** and **provide** payment for any assessment necessary for VR services (Transition Counselor only).
- **Counsel** the student, parent and/or guardian on vocational goals, evaluations, recommendations, and options for VR services/providers so that they can make informed decisions.
- **Encourage** career exploration, CBWE, professional and & peer mentoring, job shadowing and community service.
- **Provide** guidance and counseling about work attitudes, habits, and behaviors generally required by employers.

Counseling may encompass regular attendance, punctuality, orderliness, grooming/hygiene, diligence, acceptance of authority, and adherence to established rules and procedures, including the use of community rehabilitation programs and work experience placements at community work sites.

- **Provide guidance and counseling** about postsecondary training and education opportunities, as needed.
- **Develop** an approved **IPE** coordinated with the school's IEP before the student exits school (Transition Counselor only).
- **Coordinate** comparable **services** and provide VR services outlined in the IPE that are vocationally relevant and necessary to obtain employment.
- **Provide VR services** when there are no comparable benefits available (Transition Counselor only).

Communication with School Officials

Communication with referral sources and others directly involved with the transition student is essential for establishing positive working relationships, appropriate referrals, and successful employment outcomes.



Best Practice: *When a student with a disability is referred to VR from the school system, it is a good practice to receive a signed copy of the school's release of information form with the school records. The Transition Counselor will notify School District liaisons of changes in VR policy or procedure that may affect the transition process.*

At age 16, agencies that may be able to provide or pay for the transition student's needs after exiting school are invited to attend the student's IEP meeting. At times, the Transition Counselor or VR Technician may not be able to attend IEP meetings when invited. When this occurs, alternative methods of networking with the referral source and the student may be employed. This will ensure that students with disabilities are provided with information about VR transition services and are given an opportunity to apply at least two years before the student exits school. Alternatives to physical attendance include:

- Telephone contact
- Conference calls
- E-mail
- VR Counselor provide written input for school use in documenting agency participation

School follow-up is necessary for effective IEP implementation. Schools usually designate a staff person as a Transition IEP Coordinator. This person is responsible for communicating the student's transition services needs to agency representatives who were unable to attend.

The school must obtain agency commitments to provide or pay for needed transition services or reconvene the IEP team to determine alternate methods for meeting the student's needs. It is important for the Transition Counselor to respond to school staff on the progress of mutual students, with appropriate parental, legal guardian, or student (at age 18) consent.

Confidentiality, Waiver of Confidentiality, & Mutual Consent to Exchange Information

All VR Counselors are bound by Florida Statutes (413.341) covering the release of records as well as confidential and privileged information.



Best Practice: Encourage a student to name representatives for communication and networking purposes. This will allow the exchange of pertinent information between the Transition Counselor and the student's natural supports (including school staff) in the rehabilitation efforts. The Transition Counselor or VR Technician should encourage the student to complete a Waiver of Confidentiality form (RIMS template VCMT066) to share information with designated representatives in the VR process. The Transition Counselor or VR Technician will want to assure that all parties understand the assistance from representatives should only apply if requested by the student, thus empowering the student to advance in his/her independence during the transition into employment.

Obtaining Signatures on VR Forms

Parents of minor aged students and legal guardians must be involved in the VR process and sign VR forms. Parental involvement and other natural supports are critical to ensure a successful transition to employment, especially if the student is dependent upon them for assistance. If the student is of majority age (18 years old) and without an assigned legal guardian, only the student will be required to sign VR forms.

The Transition Counselor needs to make sure that the student or student's representative provides copies of the court order or other paperwork necessary to establish the legal rights of the guardian. This is described in the Operational Policies and Procedures for VR Counselors (Chapter 4.063). When the court order is not available, the guardians can sign and date a statement to the effect that they are the student's legal representative, which will serve as case record documentation.



Best Practice: Even though the minor's signature is not required, the student should be encouraged to review and sign VR forms along with his/her parent or guardian. This will help to better prepare the student for his/her transition from school to work. It also helps to prepare the parent or guardian for the student's transition to the age of majority.

STW Transition Referrals

Students may be self-referred or referred by a school, a family member, a guardian, or other interested persons. Anyone living in Florida with a mental or physical impairment who is legally able to work may apply for VR services.

The Transition Counselor or VR Technician should establish a consistent point of contact with a designee from the local school(s). This is to encourage schools to make referrals early in the school year. The designee may be the:

- ESE Director
- Transition Coordinator
- Employment Specialist
- Special Education Teacher
- Guidance Counselor
- School Nurse
- Principal
- Other representative



Best Practice: *The Transition Counselor or VR Technician should:*

- *Visit the assigned school(s) at least once a month, starting in the fall of the school year.*
- *Visit more frequently depending on the needs of the school and the local agreement with the VR field office.*
- *Maintain regular communication.*
- *Meet with the school designee at the beginning of the school year to review referral procedures and to identify transitioning students who may benefit from VR services.*
- *Allow sufficient time for the Transition Counselor to assist the student in identifying his/her vocational goal and needs so that the IPE can be finalized prior to the student's graduation or exit.*
- *Request referrals at the end of the school year for students whose parents do not generally attend the IEP so that VR staff can attempt to schedule appointments over the summer prior to their last two years in order to increase the likelihood of engaging the parents or guardians.*
- *Seek out school referrals of those students with disabilities who do not qualify for special education or are under a Section 504 plan in accordance with the Rehabilitation Act.*

Eligibility for VR STW Transition Services

VR eligibility criteria are the same for students as for any adult individuals applying for VR services.

Use of existing information: School documents/applicant and family information should be used whenever possible to ensure that VR eligibility determination is made in 60 days of student application or earlier. Section 102 of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended, stresses the importance of using existing information to the maximum extent appropriate, especially

information used by education officials, the Social Security Administration, and information that can be provided by the applicant or family.

Out of state records: Records originating from outside of Florida may be used to the extent that they meet the State of Florida and the Operational Policies and Procedures for VR Counselors requirements for medical and psychological information.

Mental health diagnosis: The diagnosis of a mental health disorder is acceptable from a licensed psychiatrist, or a licensed clinical psychologist. A licensed school psychologist may be used for all developmental diagnoses. The required diagnosis should follow the coding established in the most current Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM).

Intellectual Disability: Is a disorder with onset during the development period that includes both intellectual and adaptive functioning deficits in conceptual, social, and practical domains. This is described in the Operational Policies and Procedures for VR Counselors (Chapter 4.16).



Best Practice: *Use Intellectual Disability when speaking with the individual or family members about the student's disability. The individual or his/her representative should be able to communicate identified needs as they relate to the disability when required. The Transition Counselor should access the services from a local VR Psychological Consultant for assistance in interpreting school or other psychological records as an alternative to securing a new psychological evaluation whenever the option would meet VR recency requirements.*

Specific Learning Disorders: Reports generated by schools in Florida, which document a Specific Learning Disability diagnosis, are VR acceptable documentation for transition students applying for VR services, though the report must still meet VR recency requirements. A VR acceptable diagnosis of Specific Learning Disability should be based on age-appropriate assessments. This is described in the Operational Policies and Procedures for VR Counselors (Chapter 4.17).

It is reasonable to expect that the student may have benefited from special education programs and/or acquired adaptive behavior to compensate for learning disabilities. Based on this, the student may no longer test as having a learning disability diagnosis and would not be VR eligible unless other psychological or medical disabilities are noted.

The transition student's disability and need for special education as demonstrated on the IEP or 504 plan can be translated into substantial impediments to employment and can be used to demonstrate the need for VR services. A copy of the student's most recent IEP or 504 plan and any plan thereafter should be included in the VR case file. Applicants who meet VR eligibility criteria are presumed to be able to benefit from VR services to obtain an employment outcome, unless trial work or extended evaluation demonstrates that the applicant is incapable of benefiting due to the severity of the individual's disability.

Recency of Diagnostic Records

The Transition Counselor will determine recency by the current status of the student's condition compared to available reports. When VR will be sponsoring treatment, the information can be no older than a year. This is described in the Operational Policies and Procedures for VR Counselors (Chapter 6.04).

If, in the Transition Counselor's opinion, additional diagnostics or assessments are required to ensure that all necessary VR services are provided, evaluations can be done after eligibility or activation from the waiting list, whichever occurs later. If additional impairments and/or impediments to employment are revealed from additional diagnostics, these should be reflected in a case note entry entitled, Addendum to Certification. This is described in the Operational Policies and Procedures for VR Counselors (Chapter 6.072 and 6.073).

Higher Education: Most Florida public colleges and universities require students with disabilities to have recent adult testing as documentation of learning disabilities prior to requesting and being provided necessary accommodations at the institution.



Best Practice: *Contact the higher education institution to verify documentation needs. If no medical insurance or other comparable benefits are available to cover the cost of learning disabilities' retesting, the Transition Counselor may sponsor a new psychological assessment for the college bound VR eligible transition student. The new assessment should only include those tests required by the university or to address any outstanding vocational issues during plan development. The student must be willing to request accommodations by self-disclosing his/her disability and providing documentation to the college or university service center for students with disabilities.*

Order of Selection

Under Order of Selection, all eligible individuals are assigned to specific categories based on the significance of their disability. Federal law requires that individuals with the most significant



Best Practice: *It is essential for the IPE to be developed well in advance of the student's graduation or exit from school to maximize the chance for the student to smoothly transition into education, training, or directly into employment.*

- *Referral and Application for VR services should be made at least two years prior to graduation or exit, keeping in mind that some students may remain in school until age 22.*
- *Transition Counselors cannot know when an individual will be released from the waiting list and should not try to provide estimates.*
- *Transition Counselors should not authorize vocational evaluations prior to the eligibility determination unless that information is necessary for the eligibility decision to be made.*
- *When additional diagnostics or assessments are required to ensure all necessary VR services are provided on the IPE, then evaluations should be done after the individual is released from the waiting list.*
- *Additional evaluations should not be done prior to eligibility determination, unless the information is necessary for the eligibility decision to be made, and in this way the Transition Counselor ensures that the information from the evaluations will be relevant in the development of the IPE.*

disabilities be served first. More detailed information on the Order of Selection can be found in the Operational Policies and Procedures for VR Counselors (Chapter 7.07).

Transition Counselors can capture the student's interest by providing self-directed resources for vocational exploration and visiting classrooms to provide information on vocational options.

Ways to keep the student engaged in the transition process include the following:

- Provide vocational resource information directly to school staff for use in the classroom in order to develop professional relationships with those who can endorse the VR program.
- Engage students with information on the benefits of CBWE, professional and peer mentoring, job shadowing, and volunteerism.
- Use the most recent VR transition brochures or other VR information available during the IEP or IPE meeting and send it electronically at other times.
- Provide information on how to access Order of Selection information on the VR website, www.rehabworks.org.

Developing the IPE

IPE services and the employment outcome can be mutually amended, as needed. To ensure timeliness in the development of the student's IPE, the employment outcome may be broad (though it must still be appropriate for that student) and amended later to a specific postsecondary school employment goal. The Transition Counselor should include all services that the student receives in school as the school's responsibility, VR responsibilities, and/or shared VR responsibilities, especially as the student prepares to exit school.

Additional assessments and work evaluations may be sponsored if necessary to identify the student's desired employment outcome and IPE services. These assessments may be initiated during the 120 day timeframe allotted between eligibility determination or activation from the waiting list, whichever is later, and IPE development.



Best Practice: Enter an IPE Development case note to document the vocational guidance, counseling, and informed choice of the student used to identify an appropriate employment outcome and the services needed to reach the student's goal. The IPE will be coordinated with the IEP and/or 504 Plan, where appropriate.

Supported Employment (SE) IPE

The Supported Employment IPE is developed **for students who:**

- Meet the requirements of having a **most significant disability**.
- Initially **need intensive support** (Phase I) to obtain competitive employment in an integrated work setting.
- **Need ongoing support** (Phase II) to maintain competitive employment.

Additional services that are necessary for a successful employment outcome also are included in the SE IPE, as in a VR IPE. The Transition Counselor should consider comparable services the student is receiving in school as well as services shared by VR and/or planned services that are the sole responsibility of VR in the SE IPE.

Phase I VR-sponsored SE services are time limited to 18 months unless a longer time is required based on services provided and is specified in the SE IPE or an extension is justified by special circumstances and agreed to by the VR Counselor and the student. The SE IPE itself usually extends well beyond this time limitation, depending on when it is signed and the number of years the student expects to remain in school. More detailed information on Supported Employment can be found in the Operational Policies and Procedures for VR Counselors (Chapter 17.0).



Best Practice: *Initiate referral for Phase I VR-sponsored SE services no earlier than 5 months prior to the student's exit from school. This will allow the VR-sponsored SE provider to utilize the resources and relationships developed through the school district to place a student in employment while he/she is still in school, ensuring a seamless transition to adult life and successful case closure after the student exits school. When the individual is determined to be stable in the job placement by all parties, the Transition Counselor may change the individual's status in RIMS.*

Transition Services and Activities

Transition Counselors may provide various services and activities that can be captured in a Regular or SE IPE and in Guidance and Counseling case notes.

Referral to community services may begin several years before a customer exits high school.

- **Independent Living Centers** provide various services, including transportation training, which are often critical to employment success.
- **The Career and Service Center** should be visited by students early so that they become familiar with the resource room and available training, including Summer Youth.
- **SEDNET**, the Department of Children and Families, and the local Mental Health Center are a few of the resources available to youth with mental health needs.
- **SportsAbility** and the **Florida Disabled Outdoor Association** offer opportunities for social skill growth and recreation.

Community Service benefits parallel many of those found in employment and provide some additional rewards that one may not find on the job. This service can be listed on the IPE as CBWE. Participation in community service allows one to do the following:

- **Practice work and social skills** needed in the labor market.
- **Build a resume** and establish references.
- **Gain exposure** to potential employers and increase community awareness.
- **Grow self-esteem** and develop a work ethic.
- **Identify assistive technology**, job coaching, and other employment needs.
- **Network** with new and varied community members.

Guidance and Counseling should begin right away so the counselor may develop rapport with the student. This relationship will keep students engaged in their rehabilitation program as they transition from high school to training, education, or directly into employment. Some examples include:

- **Discuss** early how employers use social media in hiring and how students can use this to their advantage if they plan ahead.
- **Provide** strategies on how to use technology to stay organized and effectively network (nearly half of all jobs are obtained by networking).
- **Explain** the distribution of jobs throughout Florida and how selecting the right career impacts the number and variety of job offers they can expect.
- **Promote** training options for employment that will provide a living wage and career path.
- **Educate** on the value of health insurance options provided by employers.
- **Compare** salary and hourly rates for informed choice.

Assistive Technology

Schools are responsible for providing equipment and/or assistive technology devices to meet the educational needs of their students with disabilities. The Transition Counselor should address assistive technology in the development of a student's IPE. Providing assistive technology services or devices for community based work experiences is a responsibility that may be shared by the school and VR. In addition, VR may be the sole sponsor of assistive technology services and/or devices, which are newly identified as a need on a student's IPE for postsecondary education or for a successful employment outcome. Although students may request to keep devices provided by the school, students may require updated technology to adequately meet needs they will encounter in new settings.



Best Practice. *The Transition Counselor should attempt to provide needed assistive technology services or devices up to six months before the individual exits school. This will allow the student aspiring to postsecondary education or employment to utilize school supports in learning to use the devices before they exit school and will increase the individual's chance of success. A referral to the Rehabilitation Engineer will*

Employment Specialists

Third Party Cooperative Arrangements (TPCA) may deliver community-based work experience provided by employment specialists. In these cases, funding is shared by VR and the school district to provide VR eligible transition students with valuable community work experiences to assist with the planning and preparation necessary for postsecondary school employment success.

OJT (On-the-Job Training)

OJT is a viable transition service that can be particularly effective for students preparing for employment immediately after exiting school. OJT may be provided in the summer months when school is out or in the months prior to the student exiting the school system and beginning an active job search. Typically, OJT is provided as the student prepares to transition into work, although individual situations may support the provision of OJT services earlier. It is best if the skills acquired during OJT do not have the opportunity to degrade during the school year or become irrelevant based on the time between acquiring the skills and beginning a job search.

Job Coaching Services

Job coaching services may be offered by the School District, by Vocational Rehabilitation, or the services may be offered collaboratively. A summary may be viewed in the table that follows:

Summary of Sponsors of Job Coaching Services	
Offered Solely by School District	If the school district offers job coach services to their students without VR funding, it is considered by VR to be a comparable benefit until the student exits school.
Offered Solely by VR	If the job coaching services are not offered by a high school, but the need is identified on the student's IPE as a necessary service for post school employment, then job coaching would be the sole responsibility of VR.
Offered Collaboratively by School District and VR	If the school district offers job coaching as part of a student's CBWE during the school year, VR may assist with job coaching services over the summer when school is not in session to sustain vocational gains made by the student.



Financial Participation



Best Practice: *The Transition Counselor's message should emphasize that every person eligible for VR services will receive some level of assistance.*

- *Explain that several VR services are exempt and some individuals are exempt from the Financial Participation Determination.*
- *Inform the students and/or representatives that they may choose to participate in only the exempted services, if that is their choice.*
- *The most valuable service VR provides is guidance and counseling.*
- *Two exempt services, training and placement, are often important in transition.*
- *It is helpful to explain VR policies in terms that can be easily understood by the individuals VR transition staff will assist.*
- *The VR financial participation determination can be compared to the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) as it is important to reference a more familiar example since school personnel will often address requests for information.*
- *Use handouts with the most recent VR information available to explain financial participation.*
- *Describe how to access financial participation information on the VR website, www.rehabworks.org/.*

The individual's level of participation in the cost of services is based on the individual's plan of services and income, and includes consideration of work-related disability expenses paid by the individual. This process is necessary to maximize the use of available resources and to continue to serve all eligible individuals. More information on Financial Participation Determination can be found in the Operational Policies and Procedures for VR Counselors (Chapter 9.02).



RIMS Coding

Summary of RIMS Coding Procedures	
Transition student	<p>To be identified as a student with a disability, VR must be involved while the student is in school. On the Pre-interview Questions screen in RIMS, there is a SDSE drop-down box, which must be completed when “Education Level 9-12” is selected. Students will be coded as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student covered by section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act • Student receiving services under an IEP • Student with a disability not covered by 504 or an IEP
Student who has exited school	<p>If an individual is referred to VR and has already exited school, they should <u>not</u> be coded as a Student with a Disability in Secondary Education. The following SDSE drop-down box option on the Pre-Interview Questions screen in RIMS should be selected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not a student with a disability in secondary education <p>SDSE will auto-populate this option whenever an individual does not have “Education Level 9-12” selected</p>
Youth or young adult who returns to school	<p>If an individual is not a student at the time of application to VR, but later returns to the school system, SDSE coding can be added on the Pre-Interview Questionnaire screen in RIMS.</p>
Community Based Work Experience (CBWE)	<p>This designation is a VR transition service for VR individuals who are or will be working in the community through a Third Party Cooperative Arrangement or other means. If the student is or will be participating in a CBWE while still in school then it should be included on a student’s IPE as a training service.</p>
Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD)	<p>This designation is found under the Acceptance screen in RIMS as a disability code. It is included under the disability category “Mental and emotional conditions”.</p>

Transition Services Funding

Under IDEA 2004 federal legislation, schools are responsible for providing a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) by funding and meeting the needs of students with disabilities while they remain in school. **Students who have not obtained a regular diploma may choose to remain in school until they turn age 22 or return to school if they have exited.**

The Transition Counselor may sponsor vocationally relevant services that are not provided by the school system to support early work experiences.

The Transition Counselor may also need to sponsor IPE services prior to school exit for students who are not involved in these early work experiences, but who need services initiated prior to school exit to ensure a seamless transition from school services to VR services.

Federal Legislation of Transition Service

VR STW transition services are based upon federal legislation and regulations. The following legislation mandates VR to work collaboratively with other state and local education agencies, as well as other service providers to insure that eligible students with disabilities are given the opportunity to make a seamless transition from school to postsecondary activities within the adult community.

- [Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended in 1998](#)
- [Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, as amended in 2004](#)

Other Resources

- [Effective Practices for Working with the School System PowerPoint](#)
- [Outreach for the School System PowerPoint](#)
- [Memorandum: Guidance for the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation \(VR\) on the provision of services to transition students](#)
- [Memorandum: Services Provided by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation](#)
- [Memorandum: Florida's Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities \(TPSID\)](#)
- [VR Support of Project SEARCH](#)
- [Order of Selection Memorandum](#)

For additional STW Transition services information or questions, please contact:

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