

OVR: SCHOOL TO WORK FACTS AND QUESTIONS

What is School to Work Transition?

School to Work Transition serves as a bridge between school and adult work life. It helps prepare youth and young adults with disabilities for life after high school.

When does it start and who should apply?

OVR may accept referrals of youth and young adults with disabilities at least two years prior to graduation, or earlier on a case by case basis when appropriate. Any youth or young adult with any type of disability who may need vocational guidance and assistance in preparing for, obtaining or maintaining competitive employment should consider applying for OVR services.

How do I become involved?

A youth or young adult with an IEP, 504 plan or a disability can refer themselves for vocational rehabilitation services. A parent/guardian/advocate or school personnel can also initiate the referral. If you are under age 18, you must have the permission of a parent/guardian to become involved with OVR services. A vocational counselor will review the referral and set up an interview to complete an application and determine if you meet the eligibility requirements.

What types of information are required for the application?

A comprehensive medical history detailing the disability and treatment(s) received, a list of medical providers and medications, educational history including: IEP's; psychological assessments; vocational assessments; interest, ability and aptitude testing; work experiences including volunteer work; paid and unpaid internships; apprenticeships, etc.

OVR Eligibility and Order of Selection Requirements?

Vocational rehabilitation is an eligibility-based program. You must meet certain criteria to qualify for services. Your counselor will review the information and determine whether a disability exists and whether the disability substantially interferes with your ability to prepare for, get or keep a job. There must be a demonstrated need for OVR services in order for you to successfully pursue or retain employment. Currently, PA-OVR may only serve individuals with the "Most Significant Disabilities." To meet the criteria, the OVR Counselor determines if the individual's disability significantly limits at least three areas of functional capacity, including mobility, self-care, work tolerance, interpersonal skills, work skills, communication, and self-direction.

Is there a financial component?

Yes. The OVR Financial Needs Test determines the extent to which an eligible youth or young adult with disabilities and his/her family may be required to contribute toward the cost of certain OVR services. Diagnostic and evaluation services, vocational counseling and guidance, rehabilitative teaching, orientation and mobility training and job placement assistance are provided regardless of the student's and/or family's income.

What other types of services are available?

OVR provides services to assist a youth or young adult with disabilities obtain the job skills needed to attain self sufficiency. These may include post secondary education or training, on the job training, apprenticeship or job placement with an employer.

How is this achieved?

The counselor meets with the youth or young adult with disabilities and prepares an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). The IPE is designed to meet the individual's unique vocational strengths and needs, interests and abilities. The IPE and the IEP should be complementary and unified. The IPE will recognize the IEP's vocational outcome as well as the services and service providers that will assist the individual to reach his/her specific vocational goal.

What happens when I leave school?

The OVR counselor will work with you to obtain and maintain competitive employment. This goal is achieved when you are working in a community-integrated setting earning at least minimum wage. OVR services are complete when you achieve your vocational goal and are successfully employed for at least 90 days, after which your case is closed. If necessary, post-employment services may be available.



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OVR's Mission

To assist Pennsylvanians with disabilities secure and maintain employment and independence