

Transition Overview

The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) and the Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) want to share important resources that can help your student achieve their goals of employment and post-secondary education.

What services are available to help my child with a disability(ies) start preparing for work while in school?

- *Individualized Education Program (IEP) Transition Plan*
A plan developed by the IEP team to help a student move from school to employment and/or a post-secondary program. The IEP team should include families, teachers, staff who work directly with the student, public agency representative responsible for transition services (if appropriate) and most importantly, the student. However, individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the student may also be invited to the meeting.
 - At age 14, the IEP team must start talking about a student's post-school goals and choosing courses to move towards those goals.
 - At age 16, the IEP team must develop a plan to meet post-school goals based on the student's preferences and interests. This plan can include a vocational evaluation, training for work and adult living skills, courses, community experiences, and related services.
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- *Pre-Employment Training Services (Pre-ETS)*
Pre-ETS are extra employment training services available to students who are 14-21 years old with an IEP or 504 plan, or documentation of a disability. Pre-ETS is available through different programs or schools depending on where your student lives. Students can receive Pre-ETS one-to-one or as a group. More information about Pre-ETS is below.
- *[Office of Vocational Rehabilitation \(OVR\)](#)*
Students with disabilities can also apply for more employment services from OVR, such as job placement, job training, and adaptive equipment at work. Sometimes your school will coordinate meetings with OVR, but you can also contact them directly at (502) 564-4440 or (800) 372-7172.

What are OVR's Pre-Employment Transition Services?

With the [Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act \(WIOA\)](#), states must spend at least 15 percent of their federal Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) dollars on *pre-employment transition services* for transition-age youth with disabilities. Pre-ETS include the following:

1. *Job Exploration Counseling*, such as career counseling, learning about jobs in the community, and job search assistance.
2. *Work-Based Learning Experiences*, including internships, job shadowing, job placement assistance, and on-the-job training.
3. *Workplace Readiness Training*, to develop social and independent living skills, such as the 'soft skills' that are important to any job.

4. *Post-Secondary Counseling*, which may include exploring opportunities for enrollment in postsecondary educational programs at colleges and universities.
5. *Instruction in Self-Advocacy*, which may include teaching students to set their own life goals, benefits planning and financial readiness.

What programs offer Pre-ETS in Kentucky?

There are several ways in which schools and families can obtain Pre-ETS services. The services may be provided through district partnerships with different entities or programs. Contact your student's teacher, school principal, or district administrator to determine which of the following are available in your district or OVR at 800-372-7172 (V/TTY):

1. The [Community Work Transition Project \(CWTP\)](#) is a collaborative project between KDE, OVR, and the [Human Development Institute](#) to offer Pre-ETS and individualized transition services. Over 100 school districts in Kentucky are presently participating in this program. Ask your teacher to find out if your high school participates in CWTP.
2. Your [Regional or Special Education Cooperative](#) offers Pre-ETS trainings and student workshops. These regional cooperative trainings are open to transition-age students with disabilities, whether or not your student's district participates in the CWTP. Ask your teacher about these trainings.
3. **Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs)** offers Pre-ETS services through OVR. A number of CRPs are offering free Pre-ETS services to eligible transition-age students. In some areas, the CRPs have partnered with the schools and arranged to provide in-school or after-school Pre-ETS weekly workshops or trainings, and in some areas, summer projects are developed. Talk with your school about this possibility.
4. [Jobs for Kentucky's Graduates \(JAG KY\)](#) is a national program in which some Kentucky school districts are participating. Students receive training in such areas as career development, job attainment, job survival, leadership and self-development, and life skills. For schools participating in JAG, a Specialist or Career Coach is assigned to the school.
5. [The Kentucky Community & Technical College System \(KCTCS\)](#) offers Pre-ETS instruction to students in public or private schools, home schooled students, postsecondary institutions, adult education programs, alternate school settings such as Juvenile Services, and other underserved student populations. Certified special or general education teachers with related experience provide these services at the 16 community colleges throughout Kentucky. Ask your student's teacher about this program.
6. [The Carl D Perkins Vocational Training Center](#) is a residential campus operated by OVR offering comprehensive vocational training and rehabilitation. Pre-ETS and individualized transition services are offered as part of its curriculum. Slots are available monthly for schools and families to sample each vocational training area offered, as well as have a dormitory living experience. Ask your teacher or counselor to schedule a date.

Individualized Transition Services: Beyond Pre-ETS

Pre-Employment transition services (Pre-ETS) can be an important part of your student's pathway to work. However, your student may need more *individualized* transition services, including:

- in-depth job exploration,
- vocational assessment focused on career goals, and
- job placement while still in high school.

Districts offer these more intensive, individualized services in a variety of ways. Over 100 school districts participate in the Community Work Transition Program (CWTP), and several districts offer their own programs to provide these individualized services. Your student has the right to the transition services needed to reach his or her post-school goals. Schools must update your student's transition goals and services with you and your student at least annually on their IEP. The transition goals on the IEP should always consider your student's current interests. Talk with your student's school about how it provides these services.

Helping Families and Students Envision Post-School Success

Families should address the potential changes in government benefits, including Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and health insurance through Medicaid, should their student go to work. Families may not realize that their student is almost always financially better off working than not working, and that they may keep their government benefits, including Medicaid health insurance, when they go to work; as well as gain valuable life experience. Here are three resources that can help you understand how working can affect your student's government benefits.

1. [***KentuckyWorks Benefits Module: A Guided Study of Your Own Situation***](#) is a free, online resource on how earned income may affect eligibility for entitlement to Social Security Disability benefits and Supplemental Security Income (SSI).
2. *OVR Benefits Counseling*. Students eligible for VR services, as part of their employment plan, can work with a Benefits Counselor to discuss their current government benefits and how working may affect their benefits. OVR has two Benefits Counselors on their staff. Students should ask their OVR Counselor to refer them to one of these two Counselors.
3. There are two Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) service agencies in Kentucky. Their services are free. The counseling service will be done by phone and not in person. They are:

[Center for Accessible Living](#) – serving Franklin County and West – 844-689-6620

[Goodwill Services](#) – serving Fayette County and East – 866-336-3316

Finally, if your student receives SSI, you need to know that your student, upon turning 18, will be re-determined for SSI eligibility under adult eligibility guidelines. This is called the [Age 18 Re-Determination by Social Security](#). This re-determination will occur regardless of whether or not your student goes to work.

Other Resources

Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center (undated). [CRP Pre-ETS guidebook: Strategies for community rehabilitation providers to collaborate on Pre-ETS.](#)

[Disability Benefits 101](#) gives you tools and information on health coverage, benefits, and employment to plan and learn how work and benefits go together.

The [Transition](#) page of the KDE website offers a variety of resources for students and parents. This page provides web links that students and parents might find helpful as they are planning and preparing for life after school.