



OFFICE OF ADULT CAREER AND CONTINUING EDUCATION SERVICES - Vocational Rehabilitation
89 Washington Avenue – Room 580 EBA
Albany, NY 12234
(518) 473-1626 - P
(518) 473-6073 - F

Dear School Administrator:

The start of the school season is upon us, and ACCES-VR looks forward to working with you and your students. As we collaborate with you to support your students' transition from school to work, we are sharing the below information about ACCES-VR services.

- **ACCES-VR Orientation:** ACCES-VR provides in-person orientation. Additionally, ACCES-VR has the following orientation recordings available on its webpage at: <http://www.acces.nysed.gov/vr>
 - **Overview of ACCES-VR Services: Your Journey to Employment Begins Today**
 - **How to Apply for ACCES-VR Services**
 - **Do You Want a Job that Requires a College Degree?**

As a reminder, ACCES-VR's orientations, both in-person and recordings, are for everyone interested in receiving services. These presentations provide an overview of ACCES-VR services and students' rights and responsibilities and are designed to help students and families make an informed decision about applying to ACCES-VR.

- **Applying for ACCES-VR Services:** Assisting a student and their family in fully completing the ACCES-VR application will help to avoid delays in the determination of eligibility and receipt of services. This includes making sure that:
 - Applications are submitted as early in the school year as possible.
 - The ACCES-VR application is signed by the student and, when the student is under 18 or has an appointed legal guardian, their parent/legal guardian.
 - All release of information forms are signed by the student and, when the student is under 18 or has an appointed legal guardian, their parent/legal guardian. These forms need to be included with the application.
 - Documentation relevant to the student's disability (e.g., IEP, psychological assessment, 504 Plan, medical documentation) is included with the application so that an eligibility determination can be made. **Note:** Completion of eligibility determination may take up to 60 days from receipt of the ACCES-VR application.

Applications and documents needed for eligibility determination can be submitted to ACCES-VR by email (accessvrapplications@nysed.gov), via postal mail to the local District Office (<http://www.acces.nysed.gov/vr/district-offices>), or in-person.

Note: ACCES-VR determines eligibility for services based upon the person's disability, whether they have the ability to benefit from vocational rehabilitation services, and that they require vocational rehabilitation services to gain employment.

- **ACCES-VR Intake:** All in-person meetings, including intake, are **by appointment only** or may be conducted remotely (e.g., telephone, Zoom). Intakes should be scheduled starting in the Fall of each school year. This allows enough time for the student and the ACCES-VR counselor to establish a counseling relationship and develop an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) prior to school exit. Ideally, meetings with students should begin in October and end in May. **Note:** For students under the age of 18, or with an appointed legal guardian, an ACCES-VR application and release of information form must be signed by the student and parent/legal guardian prior to an ACCES-VR counselor meeting, either in-person or remotely, with a student or receiving any records. Please schedule in-person or remote intake meetings accordingly.
- **ACCES-VR Services:**
 - ***Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS):*** ACCES-VR provides Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to students with disabilities. Pre-ETS are designed to give students an early start to career exploration and exposure to the world of work and postsecondary education/training options prior to their exiting from school. Referrals of students **before** their last year of school are encouraged as this will allow ACCES-VR counselors to discuss and provide these service options. **Note:** Depending on the location and type of service, Pre-ETS may be provided remotely or in-person, based on the choice of the student and their family.
 - ***Vocational or Educational Training for Employment:*** ACCES-VR funds vocational rehabilitation services that will meet an individual's agreed upon employment goal that leads to a job. When appropriate, this may include vocational training (career school) or educational training (BOCES or college). Please note, vocational training at a career school will allow a student to achieve their employment goal and ACCES-VR counselors will also explore these options with students and families.

Note: ACCES-VR is not a financial aid service or program. Financial support for college is not guaranteed. ACCES-VR financial support for college may only be considered when:

- **The student and the ACCES-VR counselor have agreed upon an employment goal that requires a college degree, and**
- **The student meets ACCES-VR's financial need threshold.**

When vocational or educational training is provided, all awarded financial aid (e.g., Pell, TAP), is applied to training costs before ACCES-VR funds are utilized. Additionally, the maximum financial support provided by ACCES-VR for college tuition is at the SUNY/CUNY/Community College current published rate.

The ACCES-VR District Office values our relationship with your school. We recognize that many changes have happened as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and that together we will continue to support students' seamless transition from school to their future employment. If you have any questions, please contact your ACCES-VR liaison.