

Revised 5/2021

Vendor Guide
Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) for Potentially Eligible
Students with Disabilities (SWD)

Table of Contents

Purpose.....	3
Overview.....	3
What is Pre-ETS?.....	3
Who can participate?.....	4
Potentially Eligible Students with Legal Blindness.....	6
ACCES-VR staff.....	7
Electronic Reporting System (ERS).....	8
Physical Case Records.....	9
Electronic Submission of Required Case Documentation.....	10
Referring SWD for VR services.....	10
Five Required Activities.....	11
Contract Terms.....	13
Quarterly Report.....	15
Payment.....	17
Billing for Services.....	17
Required Staff Qualifications.....	19
Additional Questions.....	21

Please note: This Vendor Guide is a living document, subject to change as processes are updated, so shall this document be updated.

Purpose

The purpose of this vendor guide is to provide information that will assist vendors in the delivery of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) that are consistent with the initial Request for Proposal and contract with ACCES-VR. This guide provides information about ACCES-VR expectations related to the Pre-ETS for Potentially Eligible Students with Disabilities Project.

Overview

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was signed into law on July 22, 2014. Both the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended under WIOA and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) create a platform on which to improve options for students with disabilities (SWD). The emphasis is on the essential need for students to transition smoothly and seamlessly from secondary education to post-secondary education options, independent living and competitive integrated employment.

Students with disabilities, during their high school experience, are frequently in need of supplemental supports to overcome gaps in service that are the result of specific barriers they encounter, and to foster post-secondary success. Students with disabilities that have begun post-secondary studies are often also in need of assistance while navigating the rigors of post-secondary education. It is vital that identified evidence-based predictors of successful post-secondary outcomes are used to assist students with disabilities in achieving success.

Whether the student's next step is employment, entering a post-secondary training or an educational program, it is important for students with disabilities to obtain as much work experience as possible to prepare for adult life. The National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth (NCWDY) reports that work experience, whether paid or unpaid, helps students acquire jobs at higher wages after they graduate and increases the likelihood of competitive employment for students with disabilities.

Studies have also identified evidence-based predictors of positive post-secondary outcomes for all students in secondary education as they transition to live independently and experience vocational success. These predictors include career awareness, community experiences, interagency collaboration, occupational courses, paid work experience, parental involvement, financial literacy, independent living, informed choice, advocacy and social skills.

What are Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)?

Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) are designed to address the career

development needs of students with disabilities who are not already receiving vocational rehabilitation services. Pre-ETS prepares students with disabilities for employment, explores their post-secondary education options, develops their employment related soft skills and assists them in obtaining work experience. Pre-ETS provides a meaningful way to enhance the development of a student's career direction. The goal is for Pre-ETS to prepare students to become engaged in their own transition and vocational planning as well as for successful long-term employment consistent with their individual strengths, abilities, interests, and informed choice.

Note: For further information on Pre-ETS click on this link: [Pre-ETS](#)

Who Can Participate in the Pre-ETS Project? Potentially Eligible Students with Disabilities

A student may participate in this project if they meet the following criteria:

1. The student is not currently receiving services from ACCES-VR
 - This will require communication with the Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Transition and Youth Services (SVRC TAYS) to confirm that vocational rehabilitation services are not being provided.
 - A release must be obtained from the student to share information with ACCES-VR. The vendor must obtain a release signed by the student; if the student is under the age of 18, a release signed by the parent or guardian allowing for the provision of Pre-ETS and the collection of supporting documentation. The vendor's release must also acknowledge that by applying to receive Pre-ETS through this contract, the vendor may obtain or release information about the student with ACCES-VR, vendor agency partners and the school or agency who referred the student.
 - If a student previously had an ACCES-VR case that is now closed, then they are considered "Potentially Eligible" and may receive Pre-ETS through this project. The exception is if the case was closed when the applicant was deemed ineligible for ACCES-VR services. The student is then not eligible to receive Pre-ETS services as a Potentially Eligible SWD.
2. The student is between the ages of 14-21
 - Student has reached 14 years of age.
 - Once the student turns the age of 22, they can no longer participate in this project and, if appropriate, should be referred to the SVRC TAYS to receive information about the ACCES-VR application process. The referral process should start at least 6 months prior to the student's 22nd birthday.

3. The student is attending a recognized secondary or post-secondary program; or a non-traditional or alternative secondary education program, including home schooling.
 - Students in other recognized educational programs, such as those offered through the juvenile justice system, foster care system etc., are also eligible.
4. The student has a disability. The vendor must obtain supporting documentation ensuring that a student receiving Pre-ETS has a disability. Documentation may include any of the following:
 - Referral form for pre-employment transition services with the identification of a student's disability, signed by school staff and parent/guardian if the student is under the age of 18
 - Individualized Education Program (IEP)
 - Social Security Administration (disability) beneficiary award letter
 - School psychological assessment
 - Documentation of a diagnosis or disability determination
 - Documentation relating to 504 accommodation(s)
- 5a. The student is eligible for and receiving special education or related services under IDEA. The student must have and receive services identified in an Individualized Educational Program (IEP); **or**
- 5b. The student is eligible for a Section 504 plan of the Rehabilitation Act and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
 - The student must have a disability that makes them eligible for a 504 plan. The student can have a 504 plan but is **not** required to have one; the student must be an individual with a disability for purposes of section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.
 - Students with disabilities may be eligible for special education and related services under Section 504 because Section 504's definition of disability is broader than the IDEA's definition. To be protected under Section 504, a student must be determined to:
 - i. have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities;
 - ii. have a record of such an impairment; or
 - iii. be regarded as having such an impairment.
 - In order to meet the definition of a disability under the ADA, the impairment must substantially limit one of more major life activities. Conditions that may be in remission also qualify. There is no exhaustive list of disabilities or what constitutes a "major life activity" or "substantial limitation".

6. For students who may be taking a "gap year or semester," the vendor will demonstrate that the student with a disability is enrolled in a recognized education program. The length of time or gap is not limited. There are four documents required:
 - Documentation that the individual with a disability graduated from a secondary education program; **and**
 - Documentation that the individual with a disability has been accepted into a post-secondary education institution/training program; **and**
 - Documentation that supports the intent of the individual with a disability has accepted the invitation to enter the post-secondary program; **and**
 - Documentation that the individual with a disability has been informed by the institution their "seat" or "spot" is being held for them for the "gap year" or "gap semester".

Potentially Eligible Students with Legal Blindness

Vendors are responsible for identifying when a student with a disability has a visual disability that meets the definition of legal blindness. When a student whose disability is of legal blindness, the student may not be served under the ACCES-VR Potentially Eligible Contract. The vendor must contact New York State Commission for the Blind (NYCB) to coordinate the delivery of Pre-ETS for the potentially eligible SWD. The contact for all referrals for NYCB is the Statewide Coordinator of Children and Transition Services:

Lauren Corp, MS, CRC
Statewide Coordinator of Children and Transition Services
Associate Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor

New York State Office of Children and Family Services
Commission for the Blind (NYSCB)
52 Washington Street, South 201
Rensselaer, NY 12144
Phone: (518) 474-6956
Fax: (518) 486-5819
visionloss.ny.gov

Requests for service delivery and payment for potentially eligible Pre-ETS to a legally blind student, will be declined and vendor will be referred to NYSCB to coordinate services for the identified student.

ACCES-VR Staff

Pre-ETS for Potentially Eligible Students with Disabilities vendors must work closely with the SVRC TAYS in the District Office where they have a contract to provide Pre-ETS. The SVRC TAYS or designee (where there may not be a SVRC TAYS) has full oversight and responsibility in managing this project on behalf of ACCES-VR. Expectations, duties, and roles of the vendors are detailed within this guide.

Informed decision making is the process of choosing from options based on accurate information and knowledge. It is vital that students and their families participating in this project are able to make an informed decision as to which Pre-ETS the student needs. Pre-ETS options should be explored by the student, their family, possibly the school or other agencies involved with the student, and the vendor in a partnership that will empower the student to make decisions about the services they will receive.

The vendor must identify and share with the SVRC TAYS their approach to how they determine which of the five Pre-ETS the students will receive. Vendors must share with the SVRC TAYS how students and their families will be given enough information about the five Pre-ETS to be able to make an informed decision about which of the five Pre-ETS the student will receive.

The vendor must submit the proof of disability for each student to the SVRC TAYS. This action must be completed prior to the initial service for the student. Late or non- submission of the documentation of disability will delay payment.

The SVRC TAYS and ACCES-VR Central Office Transition Unit will review on an ongoing basis, the results of:

- 1) The vendor's strategies to identify students with disabilities who are interested in receiving Pre-ETS including:
 - Family involvement strategies incorporated to facilitate the students' movement toward greater independence in vocational development and vocationally related pursuits;
 - Obtaining documentation confirming that the student meets the definition of potentially eligible student with a disability prior to starting services;
 - Process for obtaining parent/guardian consent for minors who participate;
 - Process for identifying the Pre-ETS services that meet the need of each student and;
 - Methods utilized for measurement of the impact of the project on expanding the provision of pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities, including increasing skills attainment and increasing employment outcomes.

2) Progress of all partnerships

- Discuss additional potential partnerships with their SVRC TAYS for approval of the partnership
- Discuss the process for referring students to ACCES-VR if vocational rehabilitation services are needed or requested.

3) Underperforming Vendors

- SVRC TAYS will work directly with any vendor not meeting project expectation in an effort to improve performance.
- Continued and ongoing performance concerns may result in termination of the contract.

Potentially Eligible Electronic Reporting System (ERS)

Vendors are required to use the web based Potentially Eligible Electronic Reporting System (ERS) that supports the submission of all data and reports mandated within the Pre-ETS for Potentially Eligible Students contract including the following:

- Demographic information about each student engaged in Pre-ETS activities
 - Unique identifier
 - Social security number (if available)
 - Date of birth
 - Race and ethnicity
 - Student's disability
 - Start date and end date of Pre-employment Transition Services
- Types of Pre-ETS services received
- Reports on the delivery of Pre-ETS
- Required Quarterly Reports

Vendors are required to avoid duplication of student records in ERS. Before entering the student's information into ERS, vendors are required to search ERS for the above identifying information to minimize a duplicate student record. Discussion with SVRC TAYS to determine whether the student is known to ACCES-VR and the status, if known.

The submission of handwritten or printed data or reports is not allowed unless expressly requested by ACCES-VR. Only the vendor signed quarterly Claim for Payment requests and accompanying documentation printed from the ERS will be accepted by ACCES-VR through the mail for payment processing. The vendor is responsible for using the most current form available through the ERS site.

Within the ERS, there is a technical guide to navigate the system. There is a technical guide for vendors and a separate one for SVRC TAYS or their designee. The guide is only available within the system and is updated when the system is updated. Vendors and ACCES-VR staff are encouraged to utilize their respective guides.

Required forms/documents uploaded to ERS must contain a naming convention as specified below:

Use of the student's legal name only (no use of shortened names or nicknames or preferred names permitted). The name and other identifying information will be supported with evidenced documents in the student's case record. The vendor is responsible for maintaining a case record for each student.

The student's unique identifier generates through the ERS.

The method will be last name; underscore; first name; underscore; student id.

Example: John Smith Legal name: Johnathon Smith

Upon entering the information in ERS, the system will generate the student id. The naming convention for the report forms will be:

Smith_Johnathon_123

For hyphenated names the naming convention for Carmine Vasquez-Smith with student id of 487 will be:

Vasquez_Smith_Carmine_487

This will be consistent throughout the delivery of services of the individual.

ERS has assigned a reporting code to each required activity and a flat fee for cost of service:

Job Exploration Counseling	JOBEXP	\$200
Counseling on Post-Secondary Opportunities	POSTOP	\$200
Work Based Learning Experience	WORKBL	\$400
Workplace Readiness Training	WRKRDY	\$200
Instruction in Self-Advocacy	SLFADV	\$200

Physical Case Records

Vendors are required to maintain a physical record of the student's case. The physical record must be updated and maintained as long as the student continues to receive Pre-ETS and up to age 22. For fiscal requirements, case documentation must be maintained seven years plus the current year from the last date of service delivery payment.

The physical record must contain the following documents:

- Intake and or Referral forms
- Consent and Release forms
- Proof of Disability
- Proof of enrollment in an educational program (i.e. referral from school, report card, other documentation from educational program)
- Student Attendance Sheets
- Claim for Payment forms and supporting documentation

Vendors are responsible for submitting to the SVRC TAYS updated consent and release forms and proof of enrollment at least annually.

Electronic Submission of Required Case Documentation

Vendors are required to electronically submit the required case documentation including consents/releases, disability and enrollment documentation using one PDF file. The electronic submission is via email to the SVRC TAYS. The following format is to be entered in the subject line of the email to the designated ACCES-VR staff: PESWD, District Office, vendor initials, Student name (first name, last name). The district office staff will then electronically submit to the Central Office TAYS manager all the documentation that the vendor is required to collect on each student. Prior to approving vendor service report forms, SVRC TAYS confirms, by checking the designated PESWD spreadsheet, ensuring the required documentation has been submitted to the Central Office TAYS Manager.

Example using Southern Tier District Office and Community Options as the vendor and a fictitious name as the SWD; email subject line reads:

PESWD.STDO.COM. OP. Mary. Smith

Only Central Office maintains the physical case file of a SWD; the District Office does not maintain a physical or electronic case file.

Referring Potentially Eligible Students for Vocational Rehabilitation Services

At any time during or after this project, a student may apply or be referred to ACCES-VR for vocational rehabilitation services. The SVRC TAYS will work with the vendor to establish a procedure that will facilitate discussion and the seamless transition of any student who is receiving Pre-ETS through this contract to ACCES-VR for vocational rehabilitation services. The vendor must obtain the appropriate signed releases and will provide the SVRC TAYS with all of the identifying and disability documentation that they have in their possession for the student being referred to ACCES-VR.

When a SWD is receiving Pre-ETS under this project and has applied for VR services, the vendor, SVRC TAYS and the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC), coordinates the efforts to ensure potentially eligible services are not duplicated during the transition from this contract and vocational rehabilitation services. The VRC notates in CaMS that services are being delivered under potentially eligible services. The services are never abruptly stopped. The services, if needed, would be completed and no further services would be provided under the vendor's potentially eligible contract. The VRC is simultaneously working with the individual to complete the eligibility determination and to develop an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). If Pre-ETS are required and the participant meets the definition of SWD, the Pre-ETS are authorized on the IPE, as are all VR services are to be on an IPE.

Once a student has applied for, been determined eligible for ACCES-VR services, and is receiving services from ACCES-VR through a signed Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE); that student will **no longer** receive Pre-ETS under this contract; they will instead receive Pre-ETS, if needed, as indicated on their IPE.

When a potentially eligible student is receiving a required activity service and begins receiving VR services through an IPE, the vendor and SVRC TAYS must review the expected completion of the required activity the student has engaged in, prior to the initiation of the IPE. The vendor will make the completion of the activity a priority for the student to complete and transition seamlessly into VR services.

Note: *Not all students with disabilities who receive Pre-ETS as potentially eligible students are expected to need or want ACCES-VR services and therefore would **not** be referred for ACCES-VR services.*

Five Required Pre-ETS

The five Required Pre-ETS available to Students with Disabilities align with evidence-based predictors of post-secondary success and will enable students with disabilities ages 14-21 to gain a solid foundation upon which they can build successful, integrated, long-term careers and independence.

Students may receive all or some of the required Pre-ETS. Pre-ETS activities may be delivered to a single student or a group of up to ten students. Pre-ETS must be delivered in a way that utilizes experiential training approaches, must promote family involvement and must take place in age appropriate, integrated setting.

The five required Pre-ETS are as follows:

1. **Job Exploration Counseling** - To assist students to explore career options and identify career pathways of interest, learn about skills needed in the workplace and for specific jobs, uncover vocational interests, understand the demands of the labor market, and learn about non-traditional employment options. Some sample activities include:
 - Administration of vocational interest inventories
 - Identification of career pathways of interest to the students
 - Career Awareness
 - Career Speakers
 - Career Student Organization

2. **Work Based Learning Experiences** - To assist students to develop work skills through participation in paid and nonpaid experiences in integrated community workplaces, apply classroom knowledge to the workplace, gain understanding of general employability skills (i.e., soft skills) important for success in the workplace, and learn from people currently practicing in the occupations and career of interest

to the individual student. This may include in-school or after school opportunities, or experience outside the traditional school setting (including internships) that is provided in an integrated environment to the maximum extent possible. Some sample activities include:

- Job Shadowing
- Informational Interviews
- Volunteering
- Workplace Tours/Field Trips
- Career Mentorship
- Career Related Competitions
- Internships
- Paid and non-paid Work Experience (non-paid work experience must be in compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act)

3. Counseling on Opportunities for Enrollment in Comprehensive Transition or Post-Secondary Educational Programs - The post-secondary options that should be explored include: Community Colleges (AA/AS degrees, certificate programs, and classes); Universities (Public and Private); Career pathways related to workshops/training/apprenticeship programs; Trade/Technical Schools; Military; and, Post-secondary programs at community colleges and Universities for students with intellectual and development disabilities. Assist with researching career and post-secondary educational options. Individualized student strategies to support a smooth transition from high school to postsecondary education include:

- Discuss the difference between special education services in K-12 education and post-secondary education disability services;
- Learn about accommodations for college entrance exams;
- Explore post-secondary opportunities associated with career fields;
- Provide resources that may be used to provide financial assistance (scholarships, financial aid etc.) and support individual student success in education and training (i.e., disability support services);
- Provide information about college application and admission processes;
- Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA);
- Learn about Achieving a Better Life Experience Act (ABLE) accounts and other financial strategies to save for post-secondary educational or vocational programs;
- Develop “class shadows” in college and vocational training classrooms;
- Advise students and parents or representatives on academic curricula;
- Tour university and community college campuses and talk to disability services on each campus;
- Plan a visit to local Job Corps campus; and

- Types of academic and occupational training needed to succeed in the workplace.
4. **Workplace Readiness Training to Develop Social Skills and Independent Living Skills** - To enhance career exploration and develop soft skills, including social/interpersonal skills, independent living skills, financial literacy, orientation and mobility skills, job seeking skills, and develop understanding of employer expectations for punctuality and performance. Some sample activities include:
- Coach student on the appropriate use of social media
 - Increase financial literacy skills
 - Improve travel skills
 - Enhance understanding employer expectations
 - Improve or develop independent living skills
 - Promote positive social/interpersonal skills
 - Develop job-seeking skills.
5. **Instruction in Self-Advocacy** - To develop self-advocacy skills, defined as learning how to speak up for oneself, making one's own decisions about their own life, learning how to get information so that the individual can understand things that are of interest to the person, finding out who will support the individual in their journey, knowing one's rights and responsibilities, how to request accommodations or services and supports, problem solving, listening and learning, and peer mentoring, knowing one's rights and responsibilities, reaching out to others when the individual needs help and friendship and learning about self-determination. Some sample activities include:
- Assist in the development of positive self-identity
 - Define and develop elevator speech
 - Increase knowledge of rights and responsibilities
 - Develop compensatory skills
 - Develop leaderships skills
 - Explore proactive vs reactive thinking
 - Explore student's intrinsic and extrinsic motivation
 - Promote expressive and receptive skills
 - Develop financial literacy

Contract Terms

- 1a. The contract period for this project is five years beginning January 1, 2020 and ending December 31, 2024.

Year 1 1/1/20 - 12/31/20

Year 2 1/1/21 - 12/31/21
Year 3 1/1/22 - 12/31/22
Year 4 1/1/23 - 12/31/23
Year 5 1/1/24 - 12/31/24

1b. For New York City contracts, the period for this project is five years beginning October 1, 2020 and ending September 30, 2025.

Year 1 10/1/20-9/30/21
Year 2 10/1/21-9/30/22
Year 3 10/1/22-9/30/23
Year 4 10/1/23-9/30/24
Year 5 10/1/24-9/30/25

2. On a yearly basis, each vendor must provide Pre-ETS to a minimum of 250 students with disabilities between the ages 14 -21 who are enrolled in an educational program. All students serviced must meet the WIOA definition of a Potentially Eligible Student with a Disability. Each contract will be funded up to \$300,000 per contract year unless additional funding becomes available in future years. Funding not used within a contract year by the vendor will not carry over from year to year during the five-year contract period. The maximum payment for services provided to an individual student per contract year is capped at \$1,200.
3. In order to receive payment under this contract the vendor must ensure that participating students that are provided Pre-ETS meet the WIOA definition of a student with a disability and that they are potentially eligible for ACCES-VR services. If any questions arise regarding a student's eligibility to receive Pre-ETS through this contract, the vendor must immediately advise and work with the SVRC TAYS or designee to clarify and address any and all concerns.
4. The vendor must use and maintain personally identifiable information relating to students who may or actually receive services pursuant to the Master Contract, or any other information, data or records marked as, or reasonably deemed, confidential by the State (Confidential Information) only for the limited purposes of the provision of Pre-ETS and in conformity with applicable provisions of State and Federal law. The vendor has an affirmative obligation to safeguard any such Confidential Information from unnecessary or unauthorized disclosure and must comply with FERPA. This information should be made readily available onsite to the SVRC TAYS or designee for review.
5. The vendor must establish, and maintain, all required files including but not limited to appropriately signed releases, documentation of disability, student signed attendance sheets specific to each activity the student has received, under this project. The files should contain complete and accurate documents, and other evidence directly pertinent to performance and accountability under this project. All project records should be retained for the balance of the term of the project, for

the remainder of the year from the last payment made under the project and then seven additional years.

6. Over the course of the project, the vendor's project/contract manager will meet regularly with the District Office SVRC TAYS to review performance indicators, progress, expectations, outcomes and next steps. Regular meetings will include a combination of local, regional and statewide in-person meetings, conference calls, webinars and electronic communication on a frequent basis. This level of contact is expected to be maintained throughout the life of the contract.
7. The vendor and their partners must make available and accessible to the SVRC TAYS, the students, and where applicable, their families served under this project. The SVRC TAYS or designee must be able to observe the actual provision of Pre-ETS under this project by appointment as well as impromptu visits when services are being provided.
8. The vendor must make all files readily available to SVRC TAYS and/or their designee including ACCES-VR Quality Assurance. (QA) and State Education Department officials or its representatives. Additionally, audit or litigation will "freeze the clock" for records retention purposes until the issue is resolved.
9. The vendor must have and maintain appropriate staffing to meet the project requirements outlined in the contract. When staffing changes occur, the vendor is required to notify the SVRC TAYS or their designee in the ACCES-VR District and Satellite Office(s) impacted, and a temporary plan for continuance of services must be reviewed by ACCES-VR SVRC TAYS or designee. Staff credentials should be commensurate with the knowledge and skills necessary to competently serve students with disabilities.
10. Each vendor is required to utilize the online Potentially Eligible Students Electronic Reporting System (ERS) to capture and report all the mandatory data elements as required to meet U.S. Department of Education federal reporting standards on the provision of Pre-ETS to students with disabilities that are potentially eligible for ACCES-VR services.
11. As required by ACCES-VR, vendors must complete standardized report forms for services rendered. All reports submitted will be reviewed and approved for payment by the SVRC TAYS or designee. Reports that do not meet the criteria for payment approval will be returned to the vendor through the ERS for correction and resubmission. The SVRC TAYS will assist the vendor with any difficulties they are having with the reports they create and submit for approval.

Quarterly Report

The vendor's Quarterly Report must be uploaded to the ERS Quarterly report folder beginning April 1, 2020, no later than the 30th of each month following the end of the contract quarter and must include for the previous quarter:

- A. The total number of students with disabilities (who are potentially eligible for ACCES-VR services) that received each specific Pre-ETS required activity during the quarter, itemized by:
 - a. Age 14-21;
 - b. Educational program type: secondary school, home-school, alternate school, 2-year college, 4-year college, vocational or technical school, High School Equivalency (HSE) preparation, adult literacy, or other recognized education program such as those offered through the juvenile justice system; and,
 - c. Type of Pre-ETS required activity delivered and completed during the quarter.
- B. Progress on performance measures outlined in the vendor's Operational Plan based on written agreements with their community partners including:
 - a. Quarterly data for each partner's outreach efforts;
 - b. Number of students referred to the project.
- C. Progress with developing relationships with local businesses itemized by:
 - a. Number of contacts made;
 - b. Details of agreements reached per specific business regarding:
 - 1) Job shadowing,
 - 2) Volunteer experiences,
 - 3) Work-based learning experiences,
 - 4) Paid work experiences,
 - 5) Internships or Apprenticeships, or
 - 6) Other Pre-ETS activities.

Quarterly reports must also include the number of students and their ages who over the course of the quarter apply to ACCES-VR as well as the number of students who:

- a. are determined eligible by ACCES-VR; and
- b. begin receiving ACCES-VR services; and
- c. no longer receive Pre-ETS through this contract because they no longer meet the definition of a "potentially eligible student".

Quarterly reports must also include the number of students and their ages who apply and are accepted to post-secondary vocational, technical skills training or college degree programs as this information becomes available.

Each quarterly report should also include **four vignettes** about students who have benefited from specialized work experiences and work-based learning activities. These vignettes should

highlight each student's specific areas of growth related to participating in work-based learning experiences provided by the vendor through this contract.

Tracking data must continue for 30 days after the contract ends.

Payment

This is a fee for service contract and accordingly, the vendor is paid for the provision of Pre-ETS after services are provided and proper documentation is uploaded to the ERS and approved. Payment for services rendered are paid quarterly using all-inclusive single payment rates per Pre-ETS. To earn the flat fee, students must be provided with at least four activities that fall under one of the five Pre-ETS. The vendor will bill after providing the four activities for the Pre-ETS. (i.e. four Job Exploration Counseling activities are required to be reported on through the Potentially Eligible Student ERS to earn the \$200 flat fee)

The minimum duration for each activity is forty-five (45) minutes. Each of the five Pre-ETS can be delivered in a group setting with a maximum size of ten students. The maximum payment for services provided to an individual student per contract year is capped at \$1,200.00. The student must complete at least four activities in order for payment to be made. There are no partial payments if a student drops out of the project.

Payment is made using the rates below:

1. Job Exploration Counseling (JOBEXP)	\$200
2. Counseling on Post-Secondary Opportunities (POSTOP)	\$200
3. Work Based Learning Experience (WORKBL)	\$400
4. Workplace Readiness Training (WRKRDY)	\$200
5. Instruction in Self-Advocacy (SLFADV)	\$200

Billing for Services

Timely submission and review of reports is critical to the success of this project. The contract is fee for service; and accordingly, it does not provide advance funding for the provision of services. Reports on completed services and the corresponding service documentation should be submitted through the ERS as soon as possible to ensure prompt review and approval for payment.

Quarterly, the vendor must print out their claim for payment documentation (an aggregate total by services) along with the detailed document and send it for payment to:

**NYSED ACCES FAST Unit
89 Washington Avenue
Room 560 EBA
Albany, New York 12234.**

After the close of the quarter the vendor will create their claim for payment in the ERS. Two documents will be generated:

- an aggregate total by services rendered; and
- a detailed document with student IDs, names, services, start date, etc. that will add up to the aggregate total by service.

Both documents must be sent to the NYSED FAST Unit within 30 days from the end of the quarter (April 30, July 30, October 30, January 30). An original signature from the vendor is required on the claim for payment (the aggregate total by services rendered). Any documents submitted to FAST containing writing other than the vendors signature will be rejected for payment. No other documents will be accepted by the FAST Unit for payment under this contract.

To receive reimbursement for services, the vendor must:

1. Complete the appropriate ACCES-VR standardized service delivery report for each service received by a student beginning with the summary activity log on each reporting form within a quarter and upload the report to the ERS.
2. Pre-ETS service delivery reports must include a minimum of four activities related to the specific service provided.
 - a. All ERS service delivery reports will be reviewed and approved for payment by the SVRC TAYS or their designee in the ERS.
 - b. Once a report is approved by the SVRC TAYS, the vendor's ERS will indicate the report is approved for payment.
 - c. If a report is not approved by the SVRC TAYS the report shows up on the vendor's ERS as rejected.
 - d. Once the vendor has made corrections to a rejected report, it should be resubmitted for approval as soon as possible.
 - e. The vendor and SVRC TAYS should work closely together in order to ensure the vendor submits quality reports and they are also able to promptly correct and resubmit rejected reports.
 - f. At the end of each contract quarter the vendor must print out and send in the signed (only original signatures will be accepted) claim for payment document that lists all of the service reports approved for payment during the quarter by the SVRC TAYS and the detailed backup that contains student information.
 - g. All documentation (an aggregate total by service; and document with student information) must be printed out, signed and mailed to ACCES FAST within 30 days from the end of the contract quarter for which payment is being requested, to ensure timely approval and payment.
3. If the vendor fails to submit the signed request for payment to the FAST unit by the end of the month following the end of the quarter, within 30 days from the end of the quarter, for services provided during the quarter, it will be at ACCES-VR's discretion to either process the payment when the report is submitted or to process the payment the following month or quarter.

4. The maximum payment per contract year for services to an individual student is capped at \$1,200.00 and total compensation to the vendor of \$300,000 per contract year. The vendor is responsible for tracking their spending. Funding not used within a contract year by a vendor will not carry over from year to year during the five-year contract period.
5. Services can cross contract quarters as well as contract years. However, the end date of service begins a 90-day clock that requires submission for payment into the new contract year. Submissions that exceed the 90-day post end date of service is deemed beyond the reconciliation period for payment. For example, submissions after March 31, 2021 that contain services that ended on 12/31/2020 and began in the prior contract year January 1, 2020, will not be honored
6. All outstanding quarterly payment data for a contract year must be submitted no later than 90 days after the end of each contract year within the 5-year contract cycle. For example, submissions after March 31, 2021 for the January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020 contract year will not be honored.

Required Staff Experience Qualification and Oversight Activities

- The vendor's Pre-ETS for Potentially Eligible Students with Disability(ies) (SWD) contract/project manager is required to have a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling, a Human Services Related Field or in Education and two (2) years of relevant experience delivering and/or supervising educational or vocational services to students with disabilities (ages 14-21); or a Bachelor's Degree in a Human Services Related Field or in Education and at least four (4) years of relevant experience delivering and/or supervising educational or vocational services to students with disabilities. The vendor's contract manager will oversee the supervision of all vendor staff involved in the project and work closely with District Office SVRC TAYS or designee to ensure that the deliverables of the project are being met throughout the length of the contract.
- The vendor's staff providing Pre-ETS services under this contract must have a minimum of an Associate's Degree in a Human Services Related Field, or Education (high school equivalency or completion of some college courses) with at least two (2) years providing direct services in the education or employment realm to students with disabilities. All staff involved in the provision of Pre-ETS through the project must have experience using nontraditional community services/resources to engage students with disabilities in career exploration and employment. This includes working with students from diverse populations including but not limited to cross-disability populations, English language learners, multicultural populations, LGBTQ identified students, students with mental illness or substance abuse disorders, and youth involved in the juvenile justice system.

- The vendor's contract manager will oversee all aspects of the project including but not limited to staff supervision, use of ERS including input and uploading of mandatory data elements, reports and billing documents, as required to meet United States Department of Education (US DOE), Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) reporting requirements for pre-employment transition services for potentially eligible students with disabilities. The vendor's contract manager will discuss with and demonstrate to the SVRC TAYS or their designee the internal process they have put in place to carry out these processes as outlined in the contract and their proposal. The vendor contract manager is responsible for submitting a request for access to the ERS using the appropriate form [Pre-ETS Web Reporting User Request](#)
- If a member of the vendor's staff who has access to the ERS gives notice, is reassigned or is no longer employed by them the vendor must immediately notify the SVRC TAYS/District Office without delay. The vendor must also immediately submit The Pre-ETS Web Reporting User Request Form ([Pre-ETS Web Reporting User Request](#)) requesting the staff access to the ERS be removed.
- When staffing changes occur the Pre-ETS for SWD the vendor's contract manager is required to notify the Senior VRC Transition and Youth Services (TAYS) in the ACCES-VR District and Satellite Office(s) impacted. A temporary plan for continuance of services should be presented and must be reviewed by the SVRC TAYS or designee. Staff credentials should be commensurate with the knowledge and skills necessary to competently serve students with disabilities.
- The vendor's contract manager or designee will work closely with the SVRC TAYS to ensure that ACCES-VR project funded services are not supplanting **or duplicating** services for students with IEPs that they are already receiving or are supposed to be receiving through other funding or existing efforts. Funds from this project must not be used to pay for any transition services to students with IEP's that are considered mandated Individualized Education Program (IEP) services under IDEA. Students who have IEPs may receive Pre-ETS through this project to supplement but not supplant services that they are mandated to receive as outlined in their IEPs.
- If applicable, the vendor's contract manager must also work with SVRC TAYS to ensure that Pre-ETS service funds from this contract are not used to provide services to Potentially Eligible Students with Disabilities that the vendor is already funded to provide through another funding source. (i.e. school districts and other local education agencies that fund pre-vocational, transitional or work experience services to students.) or to SWD that have open cases with ACCES-VR.
- All vendors will work with the SVRC TAYS to ensure the performance measures outlined in their proposal/ operational plan are met as well as overseeing the collaborations with community partners, developing relationships with local businesses and taking on new community partners when indicated. Contract

manager will oversee the supervision of staff involved in the processes of identifying students with disabilities who are interested in receiving Pre-ETS, obtaining parent/guardian consent for minors, proof of disability, identifying the Pre-ETS services that meet the need of each student; and developing a process for referring students to ACCES-VR, **if** vocational rehabilitation services are needed. As previously stated, the referral of students to ACCES-VR for vocational rehabilitation services must be done in consultation with the Senior VRC Transition and Youth Services (TAYS).

- The vendor contract manager or their designee overseeing the operation of this contract must attend training provided by ACCES-VR or its appointee, including relevant Consortium for Advancing and Supporting Employment (CASE) training, on issues related to this contract and the delivery of pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities and are expected to work closely with the SVRC TAYS or other designated ACCES-VR staff. The SVRC TAYS or designated ACCES-VR staff will provide overall oversight and monitoring as the vendor carries out the terms of this contract and their submitted proposal. Interaction between ACCES-VR and contract staff will include local, regional and statewide in-person meetings, calls, webinars, emails and other forms of communication.

Note: *Dates for statewide Telephone calls, in person and video meetings will be shared as soon as they are arranged.*

Additional Questions

- All questions related to this vendor guide or about the project should immediately be directed to the SVRC TAYS or designee and/or emailed to vrpeswd@nysed.gov