

## Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services Transition School-to-Work Program

DRS serves youth with disabilities aged 16 and older who are still working toward completing requirements for high school. This includes students on IEPs, Section 504 Plans, and other documented disabilities. Students and families must follow the procedures below to apply for services through DRS.

1. Referral is made to DRS by school personnel, physicians, families, and others.
2. DRS Counselors receive the referral, meet with families, and complete an application for services.
3. Applications are completed, and DRS Counselors gather documentation to determine eligibility.
4. Eligibility is determined, and priority group placement is made. We have three priority groups (PG)—PG 1: those individuals with the most significant disabilities demonstrating at least three significant impediments to employment; PG 2: those individuals with significant disabilities demonstrating at least two significant impediments to employment; and PG 3: those individuals with the least significant disabilities demonstrating a significant impediment to employment.
5. The DRS Counselor will work with the student, family, and school on making a plan for the student's future and the Counselor will develop an individualized plan for employment (IPE) that will document the services DRS will provide to the student.
6. Services begin once the DRS Counselor authorizes and notifies schools and families.
7. Counselors maintain the student's case through high school and after graduation until the client is in his or her competitive community employment position of choice for at least 90 days.
8. The case is closed; however, clients may always reapply for services should something change in the future.

### Services provided through the Transition School-to-Work Program include:

- *Counseling and Guidance*
- *Vocational Evaluation/Assistive Technology Evaluation and Services*
- *Work Experiences\**
- *Work Adjustment Training\*\**
- *Job Club*

\*The school/district may enter into a contract with DRS to provide various work experiences. There are three types provided. Students may participate for up to 24 months (does not have to be consecutive).

1. *School Work Study:* Students are employees of the school/district, work somewhere in the school/district, get paid by the school/district, receive high school credit, and the school/district is reimbursed by DRS.
2. *Work Site Learning:* Students are employees of the school/district, work in the community, get paid by the school/district, receive high school credit, and the school/district is reimbursed by DRS.
3. *Employer Work Study:* Students are employed in the community, get paid by the community employer, and receive high school credit. There is no reimbursement to the employer.

In each type of work experience, students may only work up to 15 hours per week while school is in session, and 20 hours per week in the summer (with 50% reimbursement to schools through June 30, 2016 and 100% reimbursement beginning July 1, 2016). No student may begin working until the DRS Counselor has informed the teacher and student that authorization has been given. State and Federal Income tax are withheld; however, FICA and FUTA are not (except in the summer when not enrolled in school). Teachers must submit to DRS Counselors monthly time sheets, progress reports, and payment

Competitive Employment in the Community

Competitive Employment in the Community

For students who are receiving SSI or SSDI benefits that want to work through SWS, WSL, or EWS, there is a Student Earned Income Exclusion (SEIE) through Social Security Administration that can be applied for through a simple one-page letter that DRS has and can provide. Ultimately, our goal is for all students to be competitively employed in the community to their ability. DRS has Benefits Planners who can meet with students and families to discuss how working may affect their benefit amount, if at all.

*\*\* Work Adjustment Training (WAT) may be provided in the community through a Community Rehabilitation Provider (if one is available in the area). Schools/districts may also enter into a contract with DRS to implement their own WAT program onsite. WAT is a work readiness preparation program for students with more significant disabilities who need more assistance in preparing for the world of work. Participants in WAT are not quite ready to enter into work experiences such as Work Study; however, a natural progression would be for a student to participate in WAT, learn work skills, and move into a work experience through Work Study. In WAT students are not paid; the school/district may receive up to \$375.00 per month per client that participates in a WAT program (this figure may vary depending on the amount of time students participate in the program daily). Students may participate for up to 18 months (does not have to be consecutive).*

DRS also has counselors in specialized areas, such as Visual Services, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services, and Hispanic Community Services. These counselors may collaborate with the home DRS Counselor or may become the designated counselor for a specific case, depending on the need for services. Each school district has a DRS Counselor assigned to it. Counselors may also partner with school to provide job clubs/job readiness activities, such as mock interviews, filling out job applications, how to search for a job, “The Top Ten Things That Will Get You Fired,” and more. For more information, please contact your local DRS Counselor or Ms. Kimberly Osmani, Transition Coordinator, at (405) 635-2768, or by e-mail at [kosmani@okdrs.gov](mailto:kosmani@okdrs.gov).

**Service Comparison**

	Student must be a DRS client	Student receives pay	Student receives credit	Student goes into community	School maintains liability	School is the one paying	DRS Reimburses School
School Work Study	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Work Site Learning	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Employer Work Study	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Work Adjustment Training	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No cost to school	Yes
Vocational Evaluation/Assistive Technology	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Job Readiness Training	No	No	No, unless already embedded in a course	Possibly, depending on activities	Yes	Possibly, depending on activities	No
Benefits Analysis	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

DRS helps people with disabilities prepare for, obtain, and maintain competitive integrated employment.