

# Working with Transitioning Youth

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Division of Rehabilitation Services

# Objectives:

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- ✓ Introduce DORS
- ✓ Introduce DORS Pre-Employment Transition Services program and Vocational Rehabilitation program
- ✓ Provide information on how to get students involved with DORS

# What is DORS?

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- DORS is a state agency that offers programs and services that help people with disabilities go to work.

# DORS Provides Services Through:

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- Office of Field Services (OFS)- with offices in more than 20 communities throughout Maryland
- Office for Blindness and Vision Services (OBVS)- specializing in services for people who are blind/visually impaired
- Workforce & Technology Center (WTC)- a comprehensive assessment and training facility

# DORS Transition Services:

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- DORS offers two programs to help youth with disabilities prepare for employment:
  - Pre-employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) for students at least 14 years old and no more than 21.
  - Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services for adults and students beginning in their second to last year of high school.

# Who may receive DORS transition services?

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- Pre-Employment Transition Services
  - Student's with disabilities defined as one who:
    - is enrolled in high school, post-secondary education program, or other recognized educational program and has not exited, graduated, or withdrawn;
    - is at least 14 years old but less than age 22; and
    - has a disability documented with an IEP, 504 plan, medical records, or a doctor's note.

# Pre-Employment Transition Services

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- Goal is to receive Pre-Employment Transition Services and consists of the following limited services:
  - Job exploration counseling
  - Work-based learning experiences
  - Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or post-secondary educational programs
  - Workplace readiness training
  - Instruction in self-advocacy

# How do I begin DORS services?

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- Pre-Employment Transition Services
  - Referral (online, paper, or contacting your local office) via self-referral, school system, or other interested parties
  - There is no waiting list (must provide DORS with documentation that one is a “student with a disability”)
  - Requesting Pre-Employment Transition Services does not make one eligible for individualized vocational rehabilitation services! One must still apply and be found eligible for vocational rehabilitation.



# Who may receive DORS transition services?

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- Vocational Rehabilitation Services
  - Youth (and adults) in at least their next to last year of high school who have a goal of competitive integrated employment and:
    - Have a physical, emotional, cognitive, sensory, or learning disability that impacts working;
    - Have an IEP, 504 plan, or significant health condition, and
    - Need vocational rehabilitation in order to get or keep a job.

# Vocational Rehabilitation Services

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- Goal is to obtain and maintain competitive integrated employment for a minimum of 90 days. Services may include:
  - Counseling and referral
  - Career decision making
  - Assistance with higher education
  - Technical/vocational training

# Vocational Rehabilitation Services

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- Assistive technology
  - Job preparation
  - Job search assistance
  - On-the-job training and support
  - Supported employment
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- Workforce Technology Center (WTC)

# Who pays for DORS services?

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- DORS is a State and Federally funded program.
  - There is no cost to the students or their families for Pre-employment Transition Services.
  - There is a sliding scale based on family income for some VR services.
  - Students who receive SSI/SSDI are not required to pay toward the cost of services, unless they choose a more expensive service than would meet their needs

# Is there a waiting list for DORS services?

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- There is no waiting list for Pre-Employment Transition Services.
- For VR services, federal law requires that students with the most significant disabilities must be served first; therefore some students will be placed on a waiting list for additional DORS services.

# How will DORS provide services?

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- A DORS counselor is assigned to every public high school in Maryland. Your DORS counselor will:
  - Attend IEP meetings whenever possible.
  - Help develop the Pre-employment Transition Services Agreement or the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).
  - Provide and arrange DORS services.
  - Collaborate with school, community, and workforce partners.

# When can I begin receiving DORS services?

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## **Pre-Employment Transition Services**

- As early as 14 years of age and in at least high school
- One can continue to receive services as long as they continue to meet the definition of a “student with a disability”

## **Individualized Vocational Rehabilitation Services**

- Beginning the fall semester of ones next to last year of high school
- If eligible, one may continue to receive services upon exiting a school program

# How do I begin DORS services?

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- Vocational Rehabilitation Services
  - Referral (online, paper, or contacting your local office) via self-referral, school system, or other interested parties no earlier than the fall semester of your next to last year of high school
  - A DORS counselor will:
    - Determine eligibility for services
    - Review existing documentation and arrange for assessments if necessary
    - Determine if an individual has “most significant”, “significant,” or “non-severe” disability



# Questions?

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