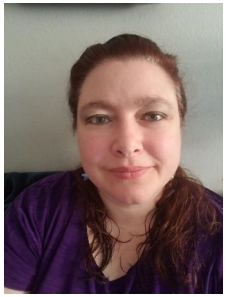
ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

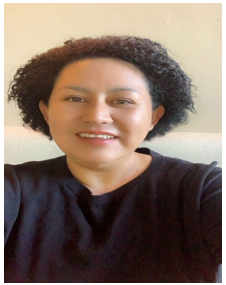
Elevating Student Outcomes Through Coordinated Transition

Presenters



Traci Przecioski, MA, CRC
Vocational Rehabilitation
Statewide Transition
Coordinator

I received my master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling from the University of Arizona and am a certified rehabilitation counselor. I have spent 19 years working to help individuals with disabilities through Vocational Rehabilitation to achieve their employment goals. I have spent the last 8 years working to improve transition services for students with disabilities through collaboration with Arizona school districts, community organizations and other state government agencies.



Nelly Sanchez
Arizona Department of Education
Secondary Transition Specialist

I hold a K–12 Cross-Categorical Teaching Certificate and earned my degree from the University of Arizona in 2014. I taught students with intellectual disabilities for seven years before joining the Department of Economic Security as an employment specialist supporting youth in community-based employment. I later worked as a vocational rehabilitation transition Specialist, providing technical assistance to schools in the TSW program. Since April 2024, I have served as a secondary transition specialist with the Arizona Department of Education, focused on strengthening transition services and improving postsecondary outcomes statewide.

Mentimeter

What are research or evidence practices that predict positive post school outcomes for transition age youth?

Join at menti.com - use code 1817 0050

Evidence Based

This session is grounded in national and Arizona-specific research demonstrating that **high-quality transition practices significantly improve post-school outcomes** for students with disabilities. Evidence reviews from The National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT:C) and The Institute of Education Sciences (IES) identify **key predictors of success**—including work-based learning, career development, self determination, and strong interagency collaboration—as essential components of effective transition systems. Improving Post High School Outcomes, National Technical Assistance on Transition

Research also shows that coordinated VR–education partnerships, supported by WIOA, enhance access to competitive integrated employment by aligning Pre-ETS with school-based transition services. Transition

Additionally, Arizona-specific analyses highlight the importance of early paid work experiences and data-driven collaboration to improve VR effectiveness and reduce employment disparities for transition-age youth. Analysis of Vocational Rehabilitation Services for Transition, Worksupport

NTACT THE COLLABORATIVE | National Technical Assistance Center on Transition

Total: 23

Predictors/Outcomes	Education	Employment	Independent Living
Career Awareness	Promising	Promising	
Career Technical Education	Research-based	Evidence-based	
Community Experiences		Promising	
Exit Exam Requirements/High School Diploma Status		Promising	
Goal Setting	Research-based	Research-based	Research-based
Inclusion in General Education	Research-based	Research-based	Research-based
Interagency Collaboration	Promising	Promising	
Occupational Courses	Promising	Promising	
Paid Employment/Work Experience	Research-based	Research-based	Promising
Parent Expectations	Promising	Research-based	
Parent Involvement		Promising	
Program of Study	Research-based	Research-based	
Psychological Empowerment	Promising	Promising	Promising
Self-Care/Independent Living Skills	Promising	Promising	Research-based
Self-determination/Self-advocacy	Research-based	Research-based	Promising
Self-realization		Promising	Promising
Social Skills	Promising	Promising	
Student Support	Promising	Research-based	Promising
Technology Skills		Promising	
Transition Program	Research-based	Promising	
Travel Skills		Promising	
Work Study		Research-based	
Youth Autonomy/Decision Making	Research-based	Research-based	Promising

Secondary Transition Predictors of Postschool Success

Known Evidence and Research Based Practices in Arizona:

- Goal Setting
- Career and Technical Education
- Career Awareness
- Paid Employment/Work Experience
- Self-determination/Self-advocacy
- Student Support
- Work Study
- Youth Autonomy/Decision Making
- Parent Expectations

Interagency Collaboration

How working together can improve predictors of post-school outcomes.

Transition Is A Team Sport!

- IDEA and The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended of the Title IV the Workforce Innovations and Opportunities Act (WIOA) include regulations that require both vocational rehabilitation (VR) and state education agencies (SEA) to collaborate on transition Services for students with disabilities.
- **Positive agency and student outcomes** can be impacted through performance indicator alignments, understanding of each agency's goals, and making sure the individual student's goals are aligned across agencies for maximum benefit.
- National Technical Assistance Center on Transition The Collaborative resource: Transition Side by Side

Interagency Collaboration Benefits

- Cooperative goal pursuit, support and planning
- Coordinate and comprehensive services
- Earlier and more effective planning
- Improved access to resources
- Stronger family engagement
- Increased employment and postsecondary Success
- Reduced barriers and service gaps
- Shared professional expertise

How Does Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Collaborate for Youth?

- ★ Conduct to schools and community about VR services for youth
- ★ Provide technical assistance to schools and youth on Individualized Education Plan for transition planning and career exploration
- ★ Deliver Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)
- ★ Coordinate VR services & coordination of services to help youth achieve employment
- ★ Partner with schools and employers for Project SEARCH programs

Why Collaboration Matters at School Level

- Build collaborative relationship with colleagues, students and families
- Engage vocational rehabilitation counselors
- Involve Families
- Embrace collaboration
- Promote timely communication

What age should students start thinking about transition?

A. Age 18
B. Age 16
C. Age 14
D. Childhood

Transition Services for Students to be in Effect

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

- Provides training and rehabilitative services for people with disabilities (ages 14 and up) to help them become competitively employed in the community making at least minimum wage.
- Services to students could include Pre-Employment Transition Services and Transition Services.

Arizona Requirements - Arizona Department of Education (ADE)

- Transition services for students to be in effect in the IEP in place when the students end 9th grade or age 16, whichever is first, or earlier, as determined necessary by the student's IEP team.

Board rule **A.A.C.R7-2-401(G)(4)**

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Exceptional Student Services
Special Projects
Secondary Transition Team

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Secondary Transition is

- A process to prepare students with disabilities for after high school
- A bridge between school programs and the opportunities of adult life
- Key to engaging students and making school relevant as they plan for adulthood

Early Meaningful Transition Planning

Transition plan in place with best practices

Positive post school outcomes

Transition plan in place without best practices

Challenging post school outcomes

Early Transition planning that incorporates the Predictors of Post School Success helps identify and address potential challenges ***before*** a student exits high school.

Transition Planning

Result Oriented

- Schools are held accountable for providing an educational program and transition services that will facilitate the movement from high school to postsecondary goals.

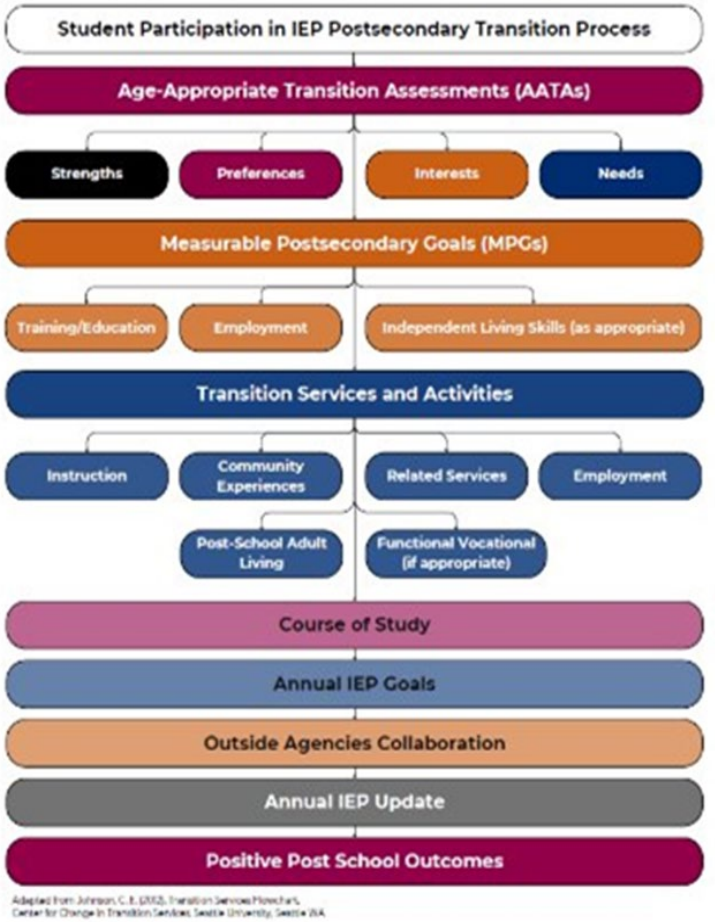
Student Centered

- Student interest
- Student Preferences
- Student strengths and needs

Coordinated Effort

- School
- Student/Family
- Agencies and Support services

Secondary Transition Flow Chart



Additional Arizona Requirements

- A transition plan in place by the end of the student's 9th grade year.
- The student's estimated date of graduation is documented in their educational record.
- Written notification about graduation is provided to parent(s) at least one year before the student's exit.

Arizona State Board of Education rule A.A.C.R7-2-401(G)(4)

Oct.21,2024

Taxonomy for Transition Programming

Over the past three decades, transition research demonstrated:

- Post school outcomes improve when educators, families and multiple stakeholders work together
- Transition Planning is the fundamental basis of education that guides development of students' educational programs
- The impact of transition-focused education is enhanced when services, systems, and programs connect and support the implementation and application of such learning

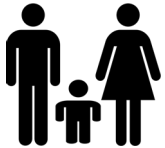
Taxonomy for Transition Programming

Collaboration in Transition Planning

Referral to VR through DDD if the student is a DDD member

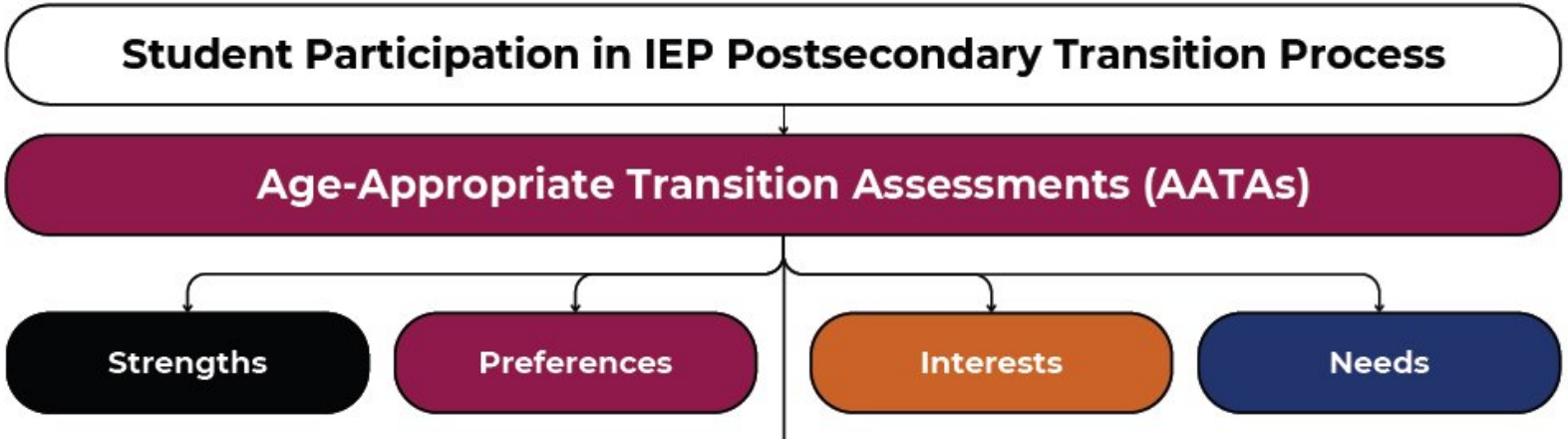
Referral to VR through Behavioral Health

Referral to VR/Pre-ETS through the school



Parent/student initiates referral to VR

Where to Start: AATAs



Existing AATA Data

Student's Data

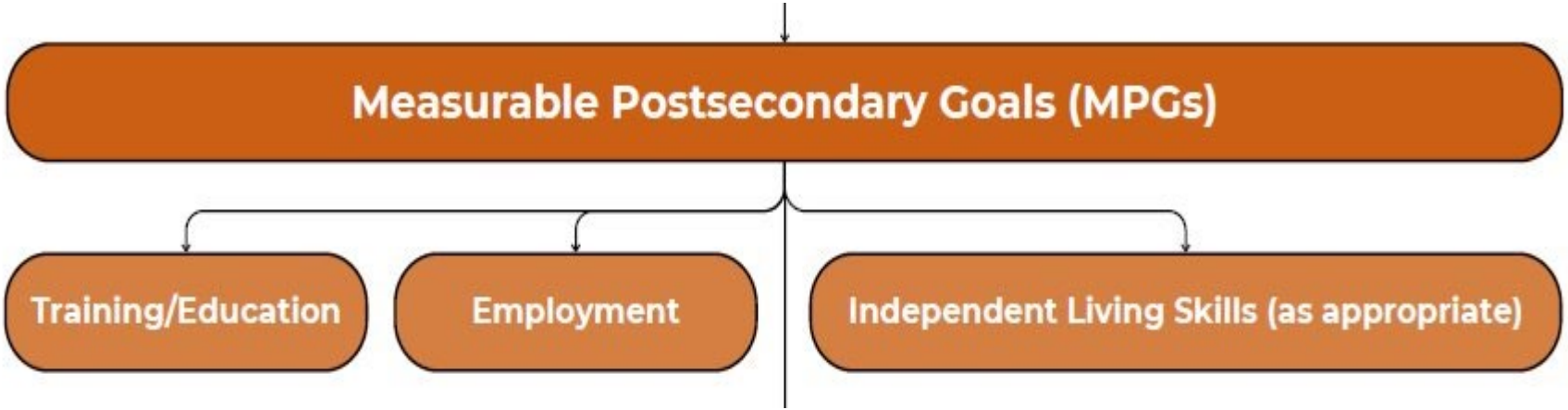
- Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP)
- Assessment data
- Transcripts to include dual enrollment and Career and Technical Education (CTE) classes

Other Sources

- Student Preferences
- Parent and teacher feedback
- Report from outside agencies (VR, DDD, Behavioral Health etc)
- Employer Report

Transition Plan Goal Setting: MPGs

To develop appropriate goals based on the student SPIN data collected from age-appropriate transition assessments in the areas of



Career Exploration Opportunities

Aligned Postsecondary Goals and Actions

- **Exposure to various careers**: Introduce students to a diverse fields, helping them discover interests and strengths.
- Connect to school counseling**: supports informed decision** making about future career paths.
- **Take a Career & Technical Education (CTE) Course**: Practice real-world workability skills

Examples of Partnership in the Transition Plan

Aligned Postsecondary Goals and Actions

- Develop similar employment goals so all agencies are working toward the same outcome
- Goals are driven by Employment First and assessment data
- Identify steps to make progress toward postsecondary goals
- Explore accommodations and assistive technology options for postsecondary education/training and/or workplace

Examples of Partnership in the Transition Plan (cont.)

Collaborative Information Sharing

- Age-appropriate transition assessments that identify a student's Strengths, Preferences ,Interests and Needs (SPIN data)

Transition Activities and Progress Reports :

- On campus: Transition School to Work (TSW), Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)
- In the Community: Work Based Learning (WBL), other VR or DDD services
- Other community experiences

Conclusion

Collectively, these best practices reinforce a unified, student-centered transition framework aligned with federal and state mandates and support Arizona's ongoing efforts to improve post-school outcomes for youth with disabilities across education, employment, and independent living.

Vocational Rehabilitation

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Vocational Rehabilitation is an employment program for individuals:

- Who are at least 14 years of age
- With a documented disability
- Whose disability creates a barrier to employment
- Who need VR services to prepare for, get, or keep a job.

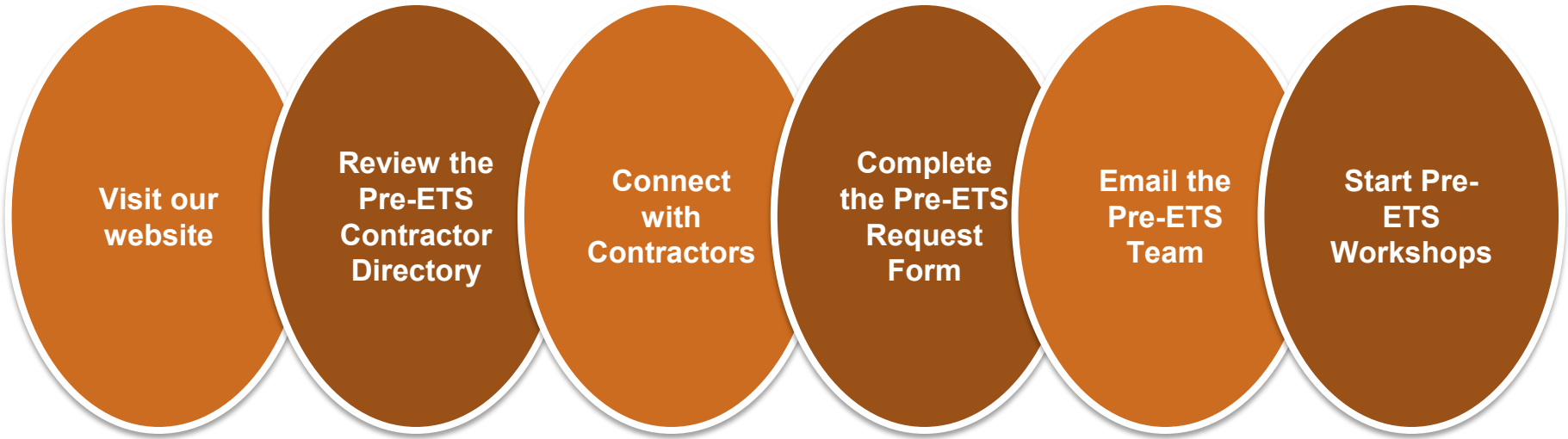
Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)

- ❑ Instruction in Self Advocacy
- ❑ Job Exploration Counseling
- ❑ Work Readiness Training
- ❑ Work-Based Learning
- ❑ Counseling on Post-Secondary/Training Opportunities

Available to any student with a disability (age 14-22) and can be conducted virtually

These students do not have to be VR clients to receive Pre-ETS.

Pre-ETS Process



Pre Employment Transition Services -Pre ETS

Referral to Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

When is the best time?

At any point age 14 or older

When the student/youth wants to address career goals

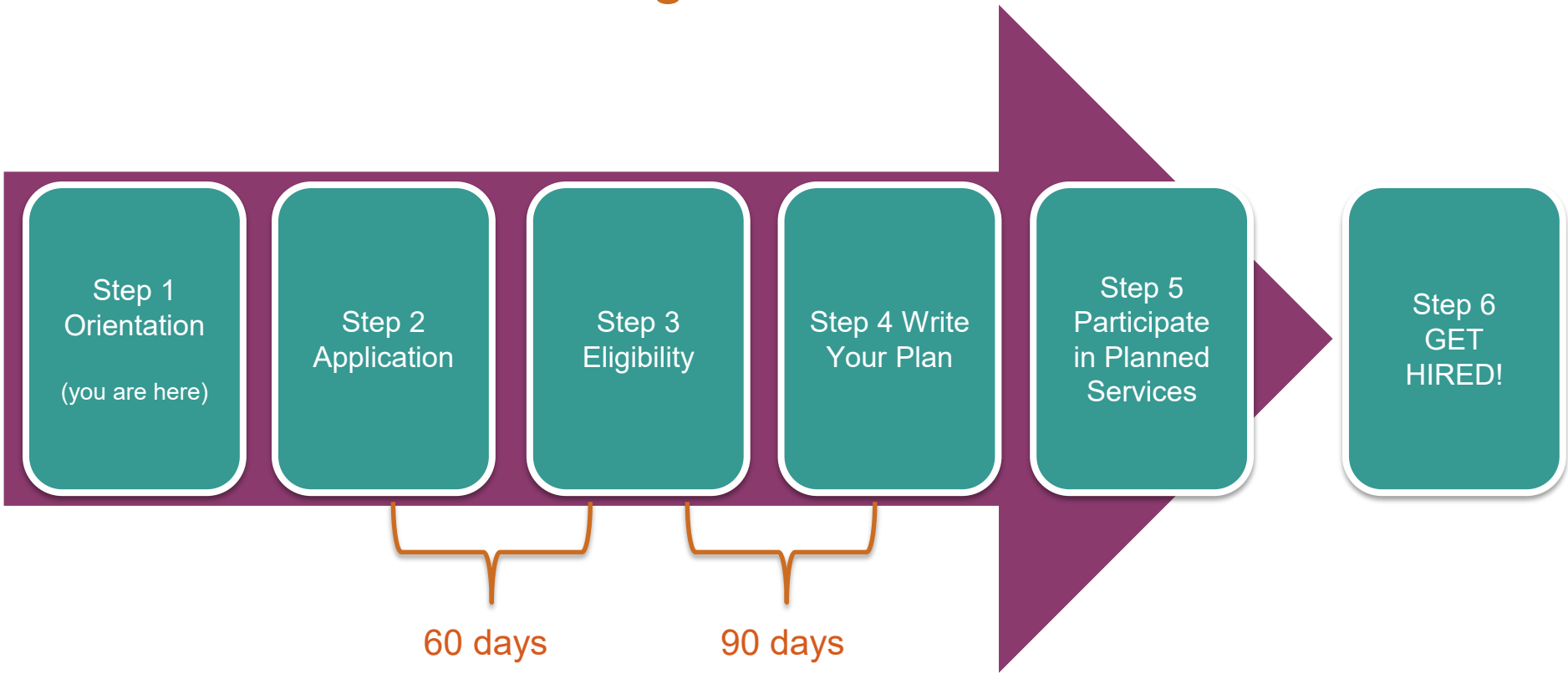
When the youth is willing to work with a VR Counselor on career exploration and other work-related topics.

How To Apply For VR

Some first steps to be referral ready.

1. Go to the Vocational Rehabilitation Web page
2. Complete the Referral Form and send it to the email included on the form. If you need assistance completing the form call 1-800-563-1221 or contact a VR office and let them know you want to apply or refer a youth.
3. Gather the documentation required on the Referral Form some examples:
    a. Individualized Education Plan/MET
    b. 504 documentation
    c. Social Security Card or other identity documentation listed on the referral form.

How long does this take?

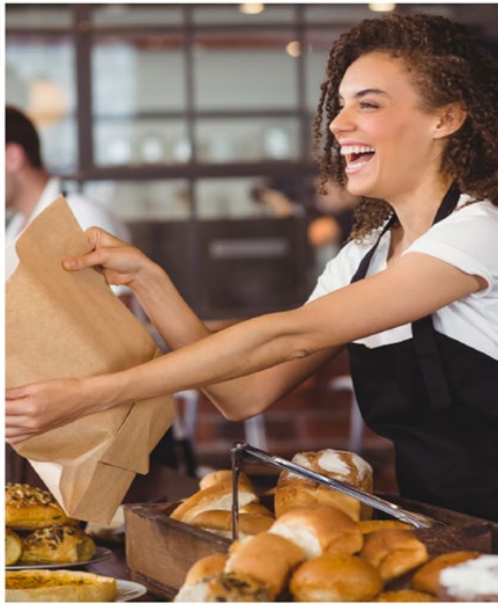


How DDD and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Work Together

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY
Division of Developmental Disabilities

HOW DDD AND VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (VR) WORK TOGETHER

DDD AND VR WORK CLOSELY TOGETHER TO HELP INDIVIDUALS GET JOBS.



WHAT DDD DOES:

- Talks with individuals about work goals as early as age 14
- Gives individuals and families information to help find jobs
- Creates employment goals at each planning meeting when the individual is ready
- Offers services to help individuals eligible for the Arizona Long-Term Care System (ALTCS)
  - Learn skills to be successful in a job
  - Provide ongoing support if needed while working

WHAT DDD AND VR DO TOGETHER:

- Attend all meetings to plan for job-related activities
- Share information to help the individual with job needs
- Help individuals find jobs near where they live
- Stay current on ways to find jobs for individuals

WHAT VR DOES:

- Determines if individuals qualify for VR services within 30 days of applying
- Have skilled staff who focus on jobs for individuals with developmental disabilities
- Has skilled staff who work to find jobs for individuals who are in foster care

DDD/Vocational Rehabilitation Collaboration

- Advance collaboration, cooperation, and communication between DDD/VR
- Increase employment outcomes for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities
- Establish efficient, coordinated and collaborative processes to enable eligible DDD members to participate in VR services and obtain competitive integrated employment.
- Memorandum of Understanding Highlights:
  - Established standards of practice for:
    - Communication & coordination between agencies
    - Referrals
    - Information sharing practices
  - Expedited VR eligibility

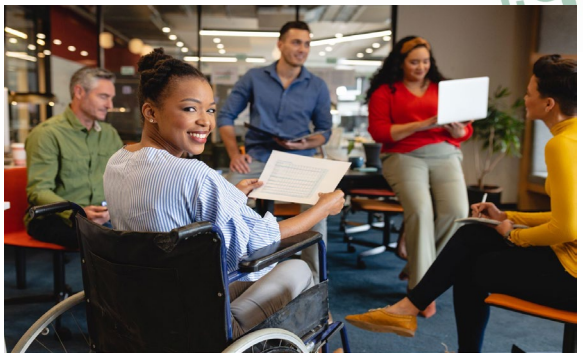
DDD Program Eligibility - Qualifying Diagnosis

Arizona residents with one or more of the qualifying diagnoses may be eligible.

A diagnosis must have manifested before age 18, and be likely to continue indefinitely.

- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Cerebral Palsy (CP)
- Epilepsy
- Intellectual/Cognitive Disability
- Down Syndrome

DDD Mission Statement



The Division of Developmental Disabilities empowers individuals with developmental disabilities to lead self-directed, healthy, and meaningful lives.

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Division of Developmental Disabilities

Opportunities for Building Partnerships in Transition Planning

Referral to VR through DDD

Referral to VR/Pre-ETS through the school

Parent/Student initiates referral to VR

Referral to VR When Youth Are Receiving Services from Other Agencies

Discuss with the parents the intention to refer to VR and that a VR representative will be contacting them.

Identify other agencies or services youth is receiving in the referral.

Involve, coordinate and collaborate with other agencies in the referral process, like the High School Case Manager, Department of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) or Behavioral health agencies, foster care, etc.

It is a best practice to have the parent/guardian of youth under 18 sign a School Release of Information for VR or other agencies to help facilitate coordinating services.

A Release of Information form can be sent with the VR referral form to help agency staff follow up on the referral status.

Vocational Guidance and Counseling

VR Counselors: Guiding Individuals in Career Development

The Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor will work to help the individual to explore employment and how it relates to them specifically.

The Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor will make appropriate referrals, discuss available comparable benefits, and help the individual to develop a service plan that best meets their unique strengths, abilities, needs and informed choice.

How does VR help someone find/keep a job?

When individuals are eligible and able to receive services, VR will:

- Guide them in selecting a job goal and creating an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)
- Help them identify what skills they have or are needed in order to achieve their job goal
- Provide services to help them prepare for, get and keep a job
- Support and guide individuals during the process

Examples of Services for VR Clients

Vocational Counseling & Guidance	Assessments	Pre-Employment Transition Services	Career Exploration
Work Adjustment Training	Assistive Technology	Disability Related Skills Training	Job Development & Placement
Psychological Counseling	Post-Secondary Education	Job Coaching	Work Clothing

* All VR services provided ***must be related*** to helping the person reach their ***specific job goal***.

Collaboration With DDD On Services Once A Member Is Hired

Job Coaching (if needed)	**Transition back to DDD**	**Continuation of Services with DDD**
Job coaching helps person: ● learn job ● Increase independence on job	**Once stable on the job:** ● The team meets ● Funding for job coaching changes to DDD (if ALTCS eligible)	**Once services transitioned to DDD:** ● DDD provides job coaching as long as needed ● VR case closes

Collaboration Summary & Resources

Collaboration Summary

New Quick Reference Guide on Transition

Quick Reference Guide

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Preparing for Life after High School

Transition: What does it mean?

Transition can be thought of as moving from one step in life to another. In order to make the best decision, you should have as much information as possible. Your school, the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) can help you make a transition plan. Here is what you can expect from your school, DDD, and VR when developing your transition plan or career path from high school to adulthood.

School

What you can expect from your Individualized Education Program (IEP) team when you are in high school:

- Be invited to every IEP meeting.
- Help you discover your strengths, preferences, interests, and needs.
- Help you develop ongoing goals you want to reach after high school (work, college, live on your own, etc.)
- Develop an IEP goal that supports your plans for after high school at least once a year.
- Offer you transition activities and classes to help you reach your goals.
- Explain your rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA) when you turn 18.
- Work with others like DDD and VR with your permission to help you achieve your goals.

See reverse for EOE/ADA disclosures

See reverse for EOE/ADA disclosures

Division of Developmental Disabilities

Your Support Coordinator should start talking to you about your plans after high school by the time you turn 14.

At age 14, your Support Coordinator can refer you to Vocational Rehabilitation to help you prepare for work after graduation.

Your Support Coordinator can tell you about available employment services if you are eligible:

- **Individual Supported Employment** - Allows you to have a job after school or during breaks.
- **Pathways to Employment** - Helps you learn about your interests, strengths, and abilities. You can practice different jobs and learn new skills to find the best fit for you.
- **Group Supported Employment** - Allows you to work with your peers and earn a paycheck.

Your Support Coordinator can attend your IEP meetings to help with transition planning and goal development, if you invite them.

Contract services are funded under contract with the State of Arizona.

Learn more at **des.az.gov/ddd/employment-services**.

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

The Vocational Rehabilitation program provides optional services to persons with disabilities. The goal of these services is to help you get and keep a job.

- Services can start as early as age 14.
- A VR counselor can:
  - Provide you with information about the VR program and the services they have to help you reach your career goals.
  - Attend your IEP meetings to help with transition planning.
  - Organize services with your DDD Support Coordinator.
- Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) has services called Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS). Pre-ETS are workshops that help with career exploration and job readiness. These services are available to students with a disability between the ages of 14 and 22.

Learn more at **des.az.gov/vr**.

Equal Opportunity Employer / Program • Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities • To request this document in alternative format or for further information about this policy, contact the Division of Developmental Disabilities Customer Service Center at 1-844-770-9500; TTY/TDD Services: 7-1-1 • Disponible en español en línea o en la oficina local

DDD-2366A FLYENG (08/25)

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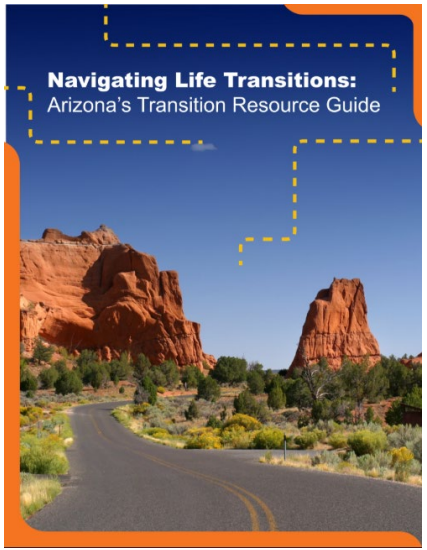
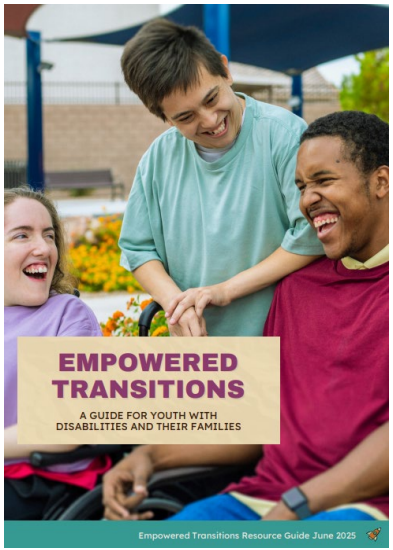
[DDD New Guide]

Arizona Community of Practice on Transition (AZCoPT) Guides

Navigating Life Transitions: Arizona's Transition Resource Guide (English and Spanish)



Empowered Transitions: A Guide for Youth with Disabilities and their Families English and Spanish



Contact Information

RSA Transition Team
1-800-563-1221 (toll free)

RSA Pre-ETS
RSATransition@azdes.gov

VR DD Coordination Team
RSADDCoordTeam@azdes.gov

VR Website
www.des.az.gov/vr

DDD Employment Specialist Team
DDDESS@azdes.gov

DDD Customer Service Line
Toll Free (844) 770-9500, Option #1
(TTY/TDD 711)
DDDCustomerServiceCenter@azdes.gov

DDD Website
www.des.az.gov/services/disabilities/developmental-disabilities

ADE/Exceptional Student Services (ESS)
(602) 542-4013
ESSInbox@azed.gov

ADE/ESS Secondary Transition Team
ESSTransition@azed.gov

ADE/ESS Secondary Transition Website
https://www.azed.gov/specialeducation/secondarytransition

Thank You!