

Connecting Students to DORS: A Referral Guide for DORS and Local School Systems

What is DORS?

The Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) is a branch of the Maryland State Department of Education that provides vocational rehabilitation (VR) services to youth and adults with disabilities. DORS has a counselor assigned to every public high school in Maryland.

DORS has two programs available for students with disabilities:

1. Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS):

This program is for students with varying disabilities who are still enrolled in school. The goal is to provide exposure and experiences related to employment and/or post-secondary education, which will better prepare students for transitioning out of school.

Pre-ETS may cover job exploration counseling, counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or post-secondary education programs, work-based learning experiences, workplace readiness training, and self-advocacy through activities, lessons, and workshops. Students may participate in all activities or just a few.

All students at least 14 years of age and up to the students' 22nd birthday with a documented disability who are enrolled in secondary school or an approved post-secondary education are qualified to receive available Pre-ETS services.

2. VR Employment Services:

DORS VR employment services help individuals with a range of disabilities to reach their employment goals. Although only those students with the most significant disabilities will receive VR employment services, all students with disabilities requiring employment support are encouraged to apply. Eligible individuals who do not have "most significant" disabilities are placed on the [Waiting List](#). DORS will serve those on the waiting list as soon as resources are available. Individuals on the waiting list the longest will be served first. DORS is actively working to reduce the waiting list.

Eligible individuals with most significant disabilities will receive an individualized plan of services to support them in obtaining competitive integrated employment.

If you work with students with disabilities who are interested in either Pre-ETS or VR Employment Services program, you may submit an [online referral](#) on their behalf, as long as a parent or guardian provides consent. Completing the referral will connect students with a DORS counselor. Please share school documentation (such as an IEP, 504, and/or psychological assessment) for each student referred with your DORS liaison, as appropriate.

There is "no wrong door" to DORS services for students! Regardless of referral type (Pre-ETS or VR), DORS transition counselors will discuss both programs with students and families and assist them with pursuing additional services as appropriate.

See these resources for additional information on how DORS may support students with disabilities with their career goals:

- [Services for High School Students](#)
- [Pre-Employment Transition Services Fact Sheet](#)
- [Transitioning to Adulthood: What's Next?](#)