



Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

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TO: VR Staff, CRP/SESP Staff, Special Education/Transition Personnel
FROM: Brenda Simmons, Regional Director, Transition
RE: **VR Transition Assessment FAQ**
DATE: June 14, 2010

VR has prepared a Transition Assessment FAQ to supplement and help clarify information contained in the memo sent out on April 23, 2010 regarding the discontinuation of CTA/CBTA services for transition age youth. VR will continue to work closely with school districts and providers in the provision of quality transition services for transition age youth.

VR Transition Assessment FAQ

1. Will Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) continue to provide Comprehensive Transition Assessment (CTA) and Community Based Transition Assessment (CBTA) services to students during the 2010-2011 school year?

No. Effective August 1, 2010, VR will discontinue the provision of CTA and CBTA as a separate, stand-alone service for transition age youth. The reason for this change is two-fold:

First, VR does not want to duplicate services that local education agencies (LEAs) are already required to provide for students with disabilities who are receiving transition services through an IEP. Federal law (IDEA 2004) requires “appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills.”

The Division of Special Education has worked with the Transition Coalition to provide guidance documents relative to transition assessment, purchased transition assessment toolkits for transition liaisons to share with LEA staff, and offered numerous other professional development opportunities for teachers/LEAs to receive training/technical assistance to ensure schools have the knowledge and expertise to conduct age appropriate transition assessments for students in accordance with the law. Therefore, it would be a duplication of service for VR to purchase transition assessments for students who are already required by law to be receiving those types of assessment services as a part of their IEP transition planning through the local school district.

Second, as a result of the most recent Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) monitoring review, RSA is requiring VR to restructure fees and services for programs through local Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) and Supported Employment Service Providers (SESPs) to place less emphasis on vocational evaluation/assessment, and greater emphasis on services that lead directly toward an employment outcome. Even though CTA/CBTA will no longer be authorized as a stand-alone service; if the student is referred to a CRP/SESP for employment services, and it is mutually agreed upon by the school, student/family, VR, and provider that the student requires some type of assessment-related services in order to reach a successful employment outcome, some individualized assessment services may be included/provided as part of the provider's employment services.

Therefore, VR will continue to partner with school districts and CRP/SESP providers in serving transition age youth, however these services will have more of an employment, rather than an assessment focus; and students will no longer be referred to a CRP/SESP simply for a transition assessment.

2. What services will Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) offer students being referred for transition services who are still in the secondary school setting, and will the student receive any type of assessment?

For those students who have been referred and are determined eligible for VR services, the counselor will conduct a comprehensive assessment of the student's rehabilitation needs, in order to develop a plan for post-secondary education/training or employment.

This comprehensive assessment may include a number of things, to include, but not limited to, gather and evaluate all existing academic/achievement information; open discussion with student/family; career exploration using on-line career assessment/interest inventories such as Missouri Connections, CareerScope, Choices; exploration of the local job market/potential training programs/educational settings; job-shadowing, observation in school-based/off-campus work experience settings, etc.

In addition to the above services, VR may be able to provide career guidance and counseling, on-the-job training, internships, COOP, resume development, job-coaching, assistive technology, etc. Many other employment and training related services can also be provided after the student graduates/exits school.

3. Can the student still receive supported employment assessment services and/or other services from local CRP/SESP providers while the student is still in school?

Yes, the VR counselor may continue to authorize/provide a supported employment assessment and subsequent job coaching services through a local CRP/SESP to assist transition-age youth in obtaining and maintaining successful competitive level employment.

In addition to supported employment, and depending upon the individual needs of the student, VR will continue to partner with CRP/SESP providers for services to include, but not limited to, employment services, assistive technology/rehab engineering assessments, drivers evaluations, etc.

4. Can VR assess students for their program without a current school district assessment to include an adult cognitive test and an academic achievement test?

Yes, VR can meet with a student and open a case without current testing. VR cannot refuse to open a case, or assess an individual's eligibility for VR services due to insufficient cognitive, and/or achievement testing.

At the time of referral, the VR counselor will make every attempt to gather/utilize existing records, and request a copy of the most recent cognitive, intelligence, and achievement testing; IEP or 504 plan, diagnostic summary/re-evaluation, medical/psychological records, etc., in order to determine the student's eligibility for VR services.

If available records are insufficient to determine eligibility, the VR counselor will schedule the student for additional testing in order to make an appropriate eligibility determination.

Additional information regarding VR transition services may be obtained at

<http://dese.mo.gov/vr/transition.htm>