

The Illinois Department of Human Services' Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) is the state's lead agency serving individuals with disabilities.

DRS works in partnership with people with disabilities and their families to assist them in making informed choices to achieve full community participation through employment, education, and independent living opportunities.

DRS is committed to providing youth with disabilities the knowledge, skills, and experience needed to successfully transition into the world of work.

IDHS/DRS' Transition Services for Youth include:

- Collaboration with Public, Private, and Alternative School Districts
- Interagency Collaboration with Service Providers in their last year of school

For more information

about DRS services for youth with disabilities, contact:

1-877-581-3690 voice

TTY or Relay users dial 711

www.drs.illinois.gov/success



Office Locator:

DHS Office Locator (illinois.gov)



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State of Illinois
Department of Human Services

Transition Services for Youth with Disabilities

Secondary Transitional Experience Program (STEP)



DIVISION OF
REHABILITATION
SERVICES



■■■ STEP GOALS

As part of its continuum of coordinated transition services for youth with disabilities, DRS offers a wide range of services to students at local high schools through the Secondary Transitional Experience Program (STEP).

STEP is a work experience program that helps students with disabilities prepare to transition to employment and community participation during and after high school.

Students work towards independence and self-sufficiency through engagement in a variety of STEP experiences. These experiences include:

- Assisting students in developing desirable work habits and realistic career goals;
- Providing opportunities for students to explore careers;
- Offering meaningful work experiences through on-the-job placement; and
- Encouraging students to strengthen the social and personal skills needed to maintain successful employment.

Students who have work experience during high school are more likely to have a job and earn more money after they leave school.

■■■ STEP SERVICES

Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors work with students to individualize STEP services to meet their needs. Students also receive Pre-employment Transition Services (PTS) which include:

- Job Exploration Counseling;
- Work-Based Learning Experiences;
- Counseling on Post-Secondary Education;
- Workplace Readiness Training; and
- Instruction in Self-Advocacy.

Work-based learning experiences occur both in-school and in the community. They can include volunteer experiences, internships, and employer paid positions with the goal of attaining competitive integrated employment.

■■■ ACCESSING STEP SERVICES

Students enrolled between the ages of 14 ½ through 21 with a medical, physical, mental, hearing, or vision impairment, who also have a 504 Plan, IEP, or receive other assistance because of a disability, may be eligible to participate.

All information is confidential and will not be released without consent.

A STEP referral can be made by contacting the local high school or the local IDHS/DRS Office.

When students plan ahead for adult life, they are more successful in:

**Completing School,
Getting a Job, and
Living Independently**

