



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 provide services that ensure youth with disabilities have the knowledge, skills, and experience they need to successfully transition into the world of work.

IDHS/DRS' Transition Initiatives for Youth include:

- Secondary Transitional Experience Program (STEP)
- Interagency Collaboration
- Education Services offered through three schools
- NEXT STEPS

For more information about DRS services for youth with disabilities, contact:

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Division of Rehabilitation Services  
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Springfield, Illinois 62704

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[drs.illinois.gov/success](http://drs.illinois.gov/success)

[www.dhs.state.il.us](http://www.dhs.state.il.us)



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## Transition Services for Youth with Disabilities

# Secondary Transitional Experience Program





## ■ ■ ■ 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 learn to become productive, self-sufficient adults through a variety of STEP experiences. These experiences:

- Assist students in developing desirable work habits and realistic career goals;
- Provide opportunities for students to explore careers;
- Offer meaningful work experiences through on-the-job placement; and
- Encourage students to develop 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 specialists work with students to individualize STEP services to meet their needs. Other services include:

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

In STEP work-based learning experiences include in-school and work site training options, including internships, with the goal of having an employer paid job in an integrated setting in the community.

## ■ ■ ■ ACCESSING STEP SERVICES

High school students with a physical and/or mental disability may be eligible to participate in STEP if they receive 504 services, special education services or other assistance because of a disability.

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**

**Living Independently**

