

Department Of Labor: Youth Services



Maine Department of Labor provides Equal Opportunity in employment and programs. Auxiliary aids and services are available to individuals with disabilities upon request

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December 2023

Part of Maine's Workforce System with Offices
Co-located in CareerCenters across Maine

MAINE
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Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired

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- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
 - ❖ Division of Deafness, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened
- Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired

What Guides Our Work: Employment First

- **First and preferred service or support option.** When providing services or supports to a person with a disability, a state agency shall offer to the person, as the first and preferred service or support option, a choice of employment services that will support the acquisition by the person of integrated community-based employment or customized employment. (LD 1352, 2013)
- Governor Mills signs LD 1874, **An Act to Amend the Laws Governing the Subminimum Wage** on March 19, 2020 eliminating subminimum wage for people with disabilities

What Guides Our Work: Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014

- Reauthorized the Rehabilitation Act
- Increased the focus on competitive, integrated employment
- Required VR agencies to set aside 15% funds to work with students with disabilities on five “Pre-Employment Transition Services”
- Strengthened collaboration and partnership within the workforce system

What is Vocational Rehabilitation

- A State of Maine program that receives federal and state funding to assist individuals with disabilities to prepare for, find, keep and advance in integrated and competitive employment.
- **We provides services to:**
 - ❖ Transition aged (14-24) students and young adults (including potentially eligible students with a disability)
 - ❖ Adults of all ages seeking an employment outcome

Vocational Rehabilitation Services for Youth

- ▶ Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)
 - Along with the Division for the Blind & Visually Impaired, located in the Maine Department of Labor
 - 25 targeted DVR Counselors who serve transition-age youth (14-24)
 - More than 40% of the individuals DVR serves are of transition age
 - Every Maine high school has an assigned DVR Counselor
 - Preparing youth to enter employment through such services as career exploration, self-advocacy, peer mentoring, work-based learning, guidance and counseling, education and training, and job development and placement
 - Under the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act, DVR must set aside 15% of funding for targeted Pre-Employment Transition Services for students

Paid Work Experience Matters

“All studies measuring this variable reported paid work experience during high school was significantly and positively related to post-secondary competitive employment (Carter et al 2012; Gold et al., 2013; Joshi et al., 2012; LoBlanco & Kleinert, 2011; Papay & Bambara, 2011; Simonsen & Neubert, 2013; Siperstein et al., 2014). In fact four of the seven studies suggested **paid work experience more than doubles the likelihood of post-secondary competitive employment outcomes** for people with disabilities.” (Southward & Kyzar, 2017)

“Students who participated in work-based learning were **more likely to attend college or go to work** compared to their peers (Jobs for the Future, 2007).”

“One of the most important findings from the research shows that work experiences for youth with disabilities during high school (paid or unpaid) help them **acquire jobs at higher wages** after they graduate (Colley & Jamison, 1998).”

“In addition, research studies suggest that work-based learning may **increase school attendance, decrease dropout rates**, reduce school suspensions, and increase school engagement (Medrich, Calderon, & Hoachlander, 2002)

Pre-Employment Transition Services

1. **Job Exploration Counseling**
 - Available to students with disabilities ages 14 to 22
2. **Work-based Learning Experiences**
3. **Counseling on Opportunities for Post-Secondary Training and Education**
 - Can be delivered in groups in collaboration with schools
4. **Workplace Readiness Training to Develop Social Skills and Independent Living**
5. **Instruction in Self-Advocacy**
 - Easy one page registration form

VR Services (Note: Some services are purchased; some services are provided directly by VR staff)

- Vocational Guidance and Counseling
- Career Exploration
- Work-Based Learning
- Education/Training needed for employment
- Job development and placement
- Job coaching
- Assistive technology
- Support services, tools, uniforms or other equipment needed to start employment
- Self-employment
- Orientation and Mobility
- Vision Rehabilitation Therapy
- Progressive Employment
- Pre-Employment Transition Services for students with a disability

DVR Virtual Orientation

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) is pleased to offer a monthly virtual orientation to Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services for individuals with disabilities. The orientation will be an opportunity to learn about VR services and how VR can support you in obtaining, maintaining and advancing in employment.

- Topics that will be covered:
 - What is DVR?
 - Eligibility for DVR
 - Application process
 - Transition Services
 - VR Services
- DVR orientation is offered virtually every third Thursday of the month from 9-10 am. No pre-registration necessary. Captioning and ASL will be available.
- Join Zoom Meeting
[DVR Orientation](#)
Meeting ID: 859 2169 2602
Passcode: 48226391

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation & Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired
Foster Care Liaisons

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Portland (Cumberland and York)

Contact Libby Stone-Sterling- DVR Director
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DBVI – Statewide

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WIOA Youth
Formula
Program

MAINE

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Bureau of Employment Services

Eligibility

- Eligibility **In-School** Youth:
- At time of Enrollment is:
- Aged 14-21
- Attending School (*HS, Alternative Ed, College*)
- **Low Income and** one or more of the following:
 - Basic Skills Deficient
 - English Language Learner
 - Offender
 - Homeless
 - Pregnant or Parenting
 - Individual with a Disability
 - Individual who requires additional assistance per Local Area definition (*Only 5% of ISY can eligible under this barrier*)
- Eligibility **Out-of-School** Youth:
- At time of Enrollment must be:
- Age 16-24
- **Not attending any school and** one or more of the following:
 - High School Dropout
 - Within compulsory school attendance age but hasn't attended for most recent school quarter
 - Has HS Diploma or Equivalent but is Low Income and Basic Skills Deficient
 - Subject to the Juvenile Justice System
 - Homeless
 - Pregnant or Parenting
 - Individual w/ disability
 - In or aged out of Foster Care
 - Individual who is Low Income and Requires Additional Assistance per local area definition

Assessments

- The WIOA youth program design requires an objective assessment of academic levels, skill levels, and service needs of each participant, which includes a review of basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests, aptitudes, supportive service needs, and developmental needs. Assessments must also consider a youth's strengths rather than just focusing on areas that need improvement.
- All youth, including youth with disabilities, can benefit from participation in career assessment activities, including, but not limited to, assessments of prior work experience, employability, interests, and aptitudes. Multiple assessment tools may be necessary since there is no standard approach that will work for all youth, including youth with disabilities.
- These assessments may be provided directly through WIOA youth program staff, and/or through referrals to national and community-based partners and resources.

WIOA Youth Service Elements



Most often requested services:

Work Experience

- structured learning experiences that take place at a business for a limited period of time
- Service provider, EMDC, pays the wages and covers the workers' compensation
- Employer gets to "observe" the participant who is not an employee of the business

On-the-Job-Training:

- Training takes place at the business
- Employer selects the participant to be trained (from their applicant pool or a referral)
- Up to 50% of the participant's wages are reimbursed for a specified number of hours
- The person is an employee of the business

Occupational Skills Training: (only for out-of-school youth)

- Up to 2 years (if a degree program, it would be the last 2 years)
- Must lead to a credential
- Can be short-term such as Cert. Medical Assistant or CDL
- Must apply for financial aid

Supportive Services:

- Examples are; travel, childcare, clothing for work or school, tools for work, computer for work or school if not provided, driver's education

The youth training/service plan must identify all services to be provided

Local Providers

- **Coastal Counties - Workforce Solutions, operated by Goodwill**
 - *Counties:* York, Cumberland, Sagadahoc, Lincoln, Knox and Waldo
 - *Email:* intake@workforcesolutionsme.org
 - *Phone:* 207-930-7047
- **Central Western and Northeastern – Eastern Maine Development Corporation (EMDC)**
 - *Counties:* Androscoggin, Franklin, Oxford, Kennebec, Somerset, Hancock, Penobscot, Piscataquis and Washington
 - *Contact:* workforce@emdc.org
 - *Phone:* 207-991-0147
- **Northeastern – Aroostook Community Action Program (ACAP)**
 - *Counties:* Aroostook
 - *Email:* kwilliams@acap-me.org
 - *Phone:* 207-554-4137

Information and Resources

- [Maine DVR- Youth and Transition Services](#)
- [Maine DVR Consumer Handbook](#)
- [DVR Application](#)
- [Register for DVR Pre-ETS Services](#)
- [Maine DBVI Youth and Transition Services](#)
- [Maine DBVI Application](#)
- [Bureau of Rehabilitation \(BRS\) Offices](#)
- [Bureau of Employment Services](#)

Contact Information

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