

*Monthly tips and resources featured in **What's Next?** are created for young adults, their families, and supporters who are exploring options for life after high school in Indiana.*

Gaining Experience with Pre-Employment Transition Services

Issue No. 11, June 23, 2021

During the last few years of high school, both at home and at school, you talk a lot about what's next. Leaving high school is the beginning of your life as an adult, so your family and school are preparing you for that transition.



To make the transition easier, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) made changes to federal Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) law and added **pre-employment transition services**, simply referred to as Pre-ETS, for students who have a documented disability.

The goal of WIOA is to increase the number of people with disabilities who have jobs. One national study indicated that **students involved in a real work experience while they were in school doubled their chance of employment as an adult**. As a result, this legislation requires VR to offer Pre-ETS to students with disabilities so they have access to meaningful career counseling and other activities (see the list below). In Indiana, VR has chosen community service providers to work with schools and deliver Pre-ETS to eligible students.

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That means you can get help to move ahead to *your* “what’s next” by learning and experiencing some new things. Exploring careers in high school can help you with that transition to employment or postsecondary training or education.

Am I Eligible for Pre-ETS?

Pre-ETS are available for students, ages 14-22, who have a documented disability. Note that Pre-ETS are not available for youth with disabilities who are not in some kind of secondary or postsecondary training program such as high school or college. Those youth who have a disability and are not currently students should apply directly to Indiana VR to see if they are eligible for VR. (See the Resources section, below.)

What Types of Things Will I Be Doing?

Pre-ETS activities vary across the state and at different school systems. Here are the types of services that many Pre-ETS programs are offering.

1. Job exploration counseling

- Discussing vocational interests
- Reviewing the local job market and the industries and occupations many employers are seeking applicants for
- Exploring non-traditional employment options
- Identifying career pathways of interest

2. Work-based learning experiences

- Participating in apprenticeships and job shadowing
- Participating in paid and non-paid internships and/or work experiences
- Doing informational interviews
- Volunteering

3. Education/training opportunities after high school

- Exploring career pathways
- Learning about college degree and certification opportunities
- Attending college fairs and tours

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- Accessing services and supports from agencies that assist people who have disabilities
- 4. Workplace readiness training**
- Learning about new independent living skills
 - Learning communication, problem solving, and other specific social skills to help you build relationships as an adult, both at work and in your community
- 5. Self-advocacy**
- Learning about self-awareness
 - Learning how, if, and when to tell someone about your disability (“disclosing your disability”)
 - Knowing your individual rights and responsibilities

You may take part in some Pre-ETS activities in small groups, such as camps, classes, work experiences, internships, clubs, events, and volunteering. You’ll work with a Pre-ETS counselor to personalize these activities for you based on your interests and, especially, as you move closer to your transition to adulthood. Depending on your Pre-ETS plan, you may participate in Pre-ETS activities at school, in your community, and virtually.

Who Will I Be Working with in Pre-ETS?

Pre-ETS is offered and managed through Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation (VR). They work with area schools and with community service providers that have experience working with students and job seekers with disabilities.

Currently, Indiana VR has eight youth counselors assigned full time to work with 12 Pre-ETS service providers, who are collaborating with other providers to deliver required services in all Indiana counties. Although over 400 schools are currently participating, VR is working to increase the number of schools offering Pre-ETS.

In the Resources below you’ll find a list of the Pre-ETS service providers. If you are interested in learning more about Pre-ETS, would like to request that services be made available in your

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school, or want to refer specific students for services (if you're a parent or teacher), please contact the agency representative offering services in the county where you live.

How Do I Enroll in Pre-ETS?

Most providers take referrals directly from the school systems. Talk to your school about a referral to a Pre-ETS provider. The school will send a release of information form and disability documentation (your IEP, Section 504, or other documentation) to the provider in your county.

The Pre-ETS provider will schedule an intake meeting and begin by setting some goals with you.

If you need assistance, you can contact the Pre-ETS provider in your area (see the list below) or send an email to fssa.pre-ets@fssa.in.gov.

For more information about Pre-ETS, contact Indiana VR's Will Colteryahn at (317) 232-1966 or william.colteryahn@fssa.in.gov or Jonathan Kraeszig at (317) 417-4847 or jonathan.kraeszig@fssa.in.gov.

Resources

- [Indiana Pre-ETS Provider List](#)
- [Pre-Employment Transition Services Webinar](#), from Work to Include
- [“Students share experiences with Pre-Employment Transition Services,”](#) video from Stone Belt Arc

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WHAT'S NEXT?

FINDING YOUR
PATH IN LIFE

Enroll now!

Join us at **Facing the Future Together**, Indiana's virtual 2021 transition conference. Presentations will include insight, discussion, and information on benefits, ABLE accounts, employment, **Pre-Employment Transition Services**, and postsecondary education.

[See more info and register now!](#)

Facing the Future
Together



JULY 21-23

INDIANA'S VIRTUAL 2021
TRANSITION CONFERENCE

The July/August issue of *What's Next?* will feature more information about **Indiana VR**, including how to apply, what types of services are available, and eligibility.

What's Next? is a project of the Center on Community Living and Careers and the Indiana Department of Education.

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