



Virginia Intercommunity Transition Council  
A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

**VITC**

Transition Services for Students with Disabilities

## **TRANSITION SERVICES**

### **What are transition services?**

The term “transition services” means a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that are designed to be within a results-oriented process. The services focus on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child’s movement from school to post-school activities. These activities include postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation.

Services are based on the individual child’s needs, taking into account the child’s strengths, preferences, and interests. This may include instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

### **What is included in the IEP and when are transition services provided?**

Transition services are provided to each child with a disability beginning not later than the first IEP, to be in effect when the child is 14 (younger if determined appropriate by the IEP team) and updated annually thereafter.

Appropriate measurable postsecondary goals for employment, education, training and, as appropriate, independent living are developed, based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and where appropriate, independent living skills. When the IEP Team determines that education and training overlap, it is acceptable to develop one postsecondary goal that covers both.

The transition services, including courses of study, needed to assist the child in reaching those goals are identified in the IEP.

Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child turns 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team, and updated annually, the IEP shall also include a statement, if appropriate, of interagency responsibilities or any linkages.

Beginning at least one year before a child reaches the age of majority, the IEP must include a statement that the child and parent(s) have been informed of the rights that will transfer to the youth on reaching the age of majority. In Virginia the age of majority is 18.

### **What can transition services do to help youth with disabilities?**

Transition services help youth with disabilities develop the skills and plans to go to school, seek and keep a job, live more independently, and receive additional assistance. Making these connections before graduation is important to ensure quality planning is in place to move the students toward post-school goals.

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**ASK, LISTEN, RESPECT, COMMIT!**

### **How are transition services identified?**

Identifying transition service needs begins with a conversation among the student, the student's parents, and school personnel about the student's education, career and adult living goals. Needed services and supports that will help the student obtain his/her post-school goals are then determined using transition assessment data. Sometimes additional people help identify services that the student needs or will need to move closer to their vision of adult life. These services and supports may include:

- Assessments:
  - Vocational
  - Functional behavior
  - Interest inventories
  - Learning styles
  - Assistive technology
- Specialized instruction and/or training
- Community-based work experiences
- On the job training

### **Who should be involved in transition planning?**

The student, family, special educator, guidance counselor, career and technical education teacher, general education teacher, vocational evaluator, therapists, adult agency service providers, and others that the family or school identify as members of the IEP transition planning team should be involved in transition planning. Students must be invited to participate in transition planning.

### **What agencies or organizations might be identified as transition service providers?**

- [Local school divisions and Virginia Department of Education](#)
- [Training and Technical Assistance Centers](#)
- [Virginia Community College System](#)
- [Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired](#)
- [Virginia Department of Social Services - Division of Family Services](#)
- [Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services – Division of Rehabilitative Services](#)
- [Virginia Employment Commission/Workforce/One Stop](#)
- [Social Security Administration](#)
- [Independent Living Centers](#)
- Local recreation departments
- [Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities](#)
- Local associations for people with disabilities
- [Virginia Department of Correctional Education](#)
- Student support services from colleges and universities

### **What questions should be asked when planning transition services?**

What are the student's needs, strengths, interests, and preferences? The acronym SPIN (strengths, preferences, interests, and needs) may help students and families remember this list.

- What are the future hopes, goals, and dreams for independence after leaving high school?
- What activities and services are needed to prepare the student to reach those goals?
- Who should be involved in the transition planning?
- When should adult services and agencies be included in transition planning?
- Are specialized supports needed to achieve desired results?

### **How do I find out more about transition services?**

Talk to the special education teacher or guidance counselor in a school division. Many school divisions have parent resource centers (PRC) that provide needed information. The [Parent Education Advocacy and Training Center \(PEATC\)](#) is another organization to contact. Talk to the special education director in your local school division or your local Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services - Division of Rehabilitative Services office. For more information, contact the [Virginia Department of Education](#).

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