**Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services**

**OVR/OVRB Policy and Procedure Manual**

# **Pre-Employment Transition Services**

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In July 2014, the [Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA)](https://www.congress.gov/113/bills/hr803/BILLS-113hr803enr.pdf) was signed into law. WIOA requires a vocational rehabilitation (VR) agency to reserve a minimum of 15% of its federal funds to provide Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) statewide to all students with disabilities who need them. This section includes guidance for providing these services statewide in collaboration with State and local education agencies.

Pre-employment transition services include a specific set of activities (under section 113 of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 C.F.R. 361.48(a)) including:

Five *Required Activities* (section 113(b) of the Act and §361.48(a)(2))

Four *Pre-employment Transition Coordination Activities* that are essential for arranging and providing pre-employment transition services (section 113(d) of the Act and§361.48(a)(4))

*Nine Authorized Activities* (section 113(c) of the Act and §361.48(a)(3)), if funds remain, VR agencies may provide the *nine authorized activities* to improve the transition of students with disabilities from school to postsecondary education or an employment outcome.

## **9.0 Target Population**

Pre-ETS are provided to "students with disabilities" who are either:

1. Eligible for VR services; or
2. Potentially eligible for VR services (i.e., all students with disabilities, including those who have not applied or been determined eligible for VR services)

A "**Student with a Disability**" is one who meets all of the following criteria in the state of Mississippi:

1. Is at least 14 but no more than 21 years of age (i.e., has not yet reached 22nd birthday).
2. Is eligible for, and receiving, special education or related services under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1411 et seq.); or (2) Is a student who is an individual with a disability, for purposes of section 504.
3. Has documentation confirming enrollment as a student in an educational program, including:
4. Secondary school, including home school and alternative school programs (e.g., those housed within the juvenile justice system).
5. Post-secondary education programs approved by a state’s Higher Education Commission (i.e., Institutions of Higher Learning).
6. Adult basic educational programs which lead to a recognized educational credential (e.g., GED® or high school equivalency)
7. State, nationally, or industry recognized certificate programs leading to a credential (e.g., Certified Nursing Assistant, Phlebotomy Technician, Microsoft Certification, Commercial Driver’s License Certification, Automotive Service Excellence Certification).
8. Comprehensive Transition Programs (CTP) approved by the U.S. Department of Education (e.g., ACCESS or RISE programs)

Enrollment documentation must be current and may include an IEP, 504 Plan, report card, college acceptance letter, college registration receipt, or other documentation from the educational program.

**Homeschooling** is recognized as a valid educational program when a compulsory-school-age child receives instruction through a bona fide home school program administered by a parent, guardian, or custodian. If an OVR/OVRB counselor has questions or concerns regarding the legitimacy of a homeschool program, they must consult with the Transition Program Coordinator for further direction. To be considered an officially recognized educational setting, a homeschool program must have a Certificate of Enrollment issued by the Office of Compulsory School Attendance Enforcement within the State Department of Education. The OVR/OVRB counselor is responsible for obtaining this Certificate of Enrollment annually to confirm that the homeschool program continues to meet state requirements and is recognized as a legitimate educational environment for the student.

A **Potentially Eligible (PE) Student** is an individual who meets the definition of a student with a disability, as substantiated by school records, but who has not yet applied for, or been determined eligible for, Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services. It is important to emphasize that students are not required to apply for, or be found eligible for, VR services to access Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS).

## **9.1 Five Required Services and Statewide Availability**

The primary purpose of Pre-ETS provided or coordinated by OVR/OVRB is to help students begin to identify career interests and to learn skills in preparation for transition to employment and/or post-secondary education. OVR/OVRB will provide or coordinate the following services to ensure statewide availability.

**Description of Required Services** – Pre-ETS may be provided in a group or generalized classroom setting and/or an individualized setting for students with disabilities who need them and the scope of Pre-ETS is limited to any or all of the five required services outlined below:

### **9.1.1 Instruction in Self-Advocacy**

[**Instruction in Self-Advocacy**](https://mdrsmsgov.sharepoint.com/%3Ab%3A/r/sites/OVR/PreETS%20Procedures/handout_Self-Advocacy_Activities-Guiding-Questions_2024_01-05_print.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=g8eVqF) supports a student’s ability to effectively communicate, negotiate, and/or assert his or her own interest and/or desires, including the development of the skills necessary for self-determination. It may include, but is not limited to:

* teaching about their rights and responsibilities;
* learning when and how to request accommodations or services and supports needed during the transition from secondary to post‐secondary education and employment;
* developing strategies on when/how to disclose his/her disability;
* understanding how to use due process;’
* gaining experience in decision making;
* mentoring with education staff (e.g., principals, coaches, teachers, or office staff);
* arranging peer mentoring with individuals in an integrated setting (i.e., college campus or on a job site);
* Providing general information to help understand how disability impacts employment and benefits;
* participating in youth leadership activities offered in an educational or community setting; and
* providing counseling and information by VR counselors related to self-advocacy topics, such as, self-awareness, self-determination, problem solving, disability understanding, and decision making.

### **9.1.2 Workplace Readiness Training**

[**Workplace Readiness Training**](https://mdrsmsgov.sharepoint.com/%3Ab%3A/r/sites/OVR/PreETS%20Procedures/handout_WRT_Activities-Guiding-Questions_2024_01-05_print.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=LH19bb) is designed to develop social skills, independent living skills, and behaviors necessary for employment; and may include, but is not limited to:

* offering communication and interpersonal skills;
* understanding time management, moving from task to task, and self-monitoring production and performance;
* providing financial literacy, including general information on benefits planning services;
* offering orientation and mobility skills to access workplace readiness training or to learn to travel independently to and from work;
* instructing soft skills needed for employment provided during a work-based learning experience both on or off site;
* exploring job-seeking skills; and
* understanding employer expectations for punctuality and performance, as well as other “soft” skills.

### **9.1.3 Work-Based Learning Experiences**

[**Work-Based Learning Experiences**](https://mdrsmsgov.sharepoint.com/%3Ab%3A/r/sites/OVR/PreETS%20Procedures/handout_WBLE_Activities-Guiding-Questions_2024_01-07_print.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=y9Xl0l)use the workplace or realistic work situations to provide students with the knowledge and skills for future career opportunities. It may include opportunities that are available in school, after school, or outside the traditional school; however, they must be provided in an integrated setting to the maximum extent possible. Services may include, but are not limited to:

* providing On Campus Work Experience (OCWE) in an integrated work environment;
* In-person job shadows and virtual job shadows that students can watch online;
* providing informational interviews;
* attending Job/Career Fairs;
* offering work-site tours to learn about necessary job skills;
* developing career mentoring opportunities;
* creating Community Based Work Experience Opportunities (paid and un-paid); \*
* offering internships (paid and unpaid);
* providing on-the-job training opportunities;
* exploring volunteer work;
* providing practicums;
* attending other area functions relevant to groups of students with disabilities (i.e. Job Fairs, Career Days); and
* Providing group tours of employer businesses.

### **9.1.4 Job Exploration Counseling**

[**Job Exploration Counseling**](https://mdrsmsgov.sharepoint.com/%3Ab%3A/r/sites/OVR/PreETS%20Procedures/handout_JEC_Activities-Guiding-Questions_2024_06-25_print.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=JMlKHk) is designed to assist students explore career options, foster motivation, consider opportunities, and make informed decisions. Real-world activities ensure that students recognize the relevance of a high school and post-school education to their futures, both in college and/or the workplace. Job exploration counseling activities can be done in conjunction with private, for-profit, public or nonprofit businesses in the community. This may include, but is not limited to:

* Administrating and reviewing of vocational interest inventories;
* Providing local labor market information to help a student identity a career pathway;
* Providing career counseling and guidance on the student’s vocational interest inventory results;
* Reviewing information regarding in-demand industry sectors and occupations, as well as, nontraditional employment;
* Assisting students to explore O\*NET Online for career exploration and job analysis; (https: [www.onetonline.org/](http://www.onetonline.org/))
* Arranging for students to hear guest speakers talking about a variety of jobs and careers (online or in person); and
* Exploring how assistive technology, and other types of accommodations can be utilized in various employment settings or career fields

### **9.1.5 Counseling Opportunities for Enrollment in Comprehensive Transition or PostSecondary Education Program*s* at Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs).**

**[Counseling Opportunities for Enrollment in Comprehensive Transition or PostSecondary Education Programs at Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs)](https://mdrsmsgov.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/r/sites/OVR/PreETS%20Procedures/handout_IHE_Activities-Guiding-Questions_2024_01-05_print-2.docx?d=w368852a86021462787715f6d748f4d08&csf=1&web=1&e=adsy4o)** are used to explore the type of academic and occupational training and postsecondary opportunities needed to succeed in the workplace. It may include, but is not limited to:

* exploring the type of academic and occupational training needed to succeed in the workplace;
* providing opportunities to explore available degrees, and credentials offered through various programs at IHEs associated with career fields or pathways;
* advising students and parents or representatives on academic curriculum and offered courses;
* assisting students in identifying accommodations and services in an educational program and providing resources that may be used to support individual student success in education and training (ex. Disability Support Services);
* Helping students understand the difference between high school and college, in terms of coursework expectations, accommodations/modifications, and supports provided in a post-secondary program.
* providing information about college application and admissions processes; and
* completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) financial aid information form.

## **9.2 Providing Auxiliary Aids and Other Accommodations and Services Under Pre-ETS**

OVR/OVRB will ensure that no qualified student with a disability is denied the benefit of Pre-ETS on the basis of the individual’s disability. Therefore, if a student with a disability requires reasonable accommodations/auxiliary aid or service to access or participate in any of the required Pre-ETS, OVR/OVRB may pay for such costs when no other public entity is required to provide such aid or service.

### **9.2.1 Reasonable Accommodation/Auxiliary Aids and Services**

1. Accommodations, aids, and services for deaf and hard-of-hearing students, including:
* Qualified interpreters onsite or through video remote interpreting (VRI) services
* Note takers
* Real-time computer-aided transcription services
* Written materials
* Exchange of written notes
* Telephone handset amplifiers
* Assistive listening devices
* Assistive listening systems
* Telephones compatible with hearing aids
* Closed caption decoders
* Open and closed captioning, including real-time captioning
* Voice, text, and video-based telecommunications products and systems, including text telephones (TTYs, videophones, and captioned telephones, or equally effective telecommunications devices)
* Videotext displays
* Accessible electronic and information technology
* Other effective methods of making aurally delivered information available to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing
1. Accommodations, aids, and services for blind, visually impaired and deaf-blind students, including:
* Support Services Provider (SSP) for the deaf-blind
* Qualified readers
* Taped texts
* Audio recordings
* Braille materials and displays
* Screen reader software
* Magnification software
* Optical readers
* Secondary auditory programs (SAP)
* Large print materials
* Accessible electronic and information technology
* Other effective methods of making visually delivered materials available to individuals who are blind or have low vision
1. Assistive technology (AT) assessments to determine whether modified equipment or devices are needed for a student to participate in Pre-ETS.
2. Non-adapted or adapted equipment or devices, when needed for a student during participation in Pre-ETS. OVR/OVRB will retain ownership of the equipment or device and require its return at the conclusion of the service for which it was provided, so that it may be available for use by other students during Pre-ETS.

Pre-ETS funds may not be used to modify a student’s personal equipment or devices, or to provide personal equipment or devices of which students would retain ownership.

Auxiliary aids and services do **not** include:

* Personal devices (e.g., computers, laptops, tablets, etc.)
* Prescribed devices (e.g., eyeglasses, hearing aids, wheelchairs)
* Readers for personal use or study
* Attendant Care or other services of a personal nature
* Home or vehicle modifications

### **9.2.2 Provision of Other Necessary Support Services**

Funding of services needed shall be determined in collaboration with the local school system and other resources.

1. **Potentially Eligible (PE) Case Type** – When a student requires a personal device to participate in services, OVR/OVRB may refer the student to Project START to loan the device, contingent on availability. This loan will be documented on the by Project START and by the counselor in a Case Note and the student will be required to return the device when no longer required for participation in services. This is also an opportunity to identify that the PE student needs additional VR services and should apply for such and student/family should be offered informed choice regarding the options for receiving additional services.
2. **VR Case Type** – When a student has an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) and requires a personal device or other goods and services—such as uniforms, equipment maintenance, transportation, or a bus pass—to participate in any of the five required Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS), those items may be purchased with Pre-ETS funds in accordance with the IPE. If a device is needed and available, OVR/OVRB may also refer the student to Project START for a loaner. Costs for rehabilitation technology that are reasonably allocable to Pre-ETS activities may be paid from the Pre-ETS funds. Any portion of the cost that is not allocable to Pre-ETS—or, if applicable, the entire cost—must be covered by other VR funds.

## **9.3 Four Pre-employment Transition Coordination Activities**

Each local OVR/OVRB office must carry out responsibilities consisting of—

1. Attending individualized education program meetings for students with disabilities, when invited;
2. Working with the local workforce development boards, one-stop centers, and employers to develop work opportunities for students with disabilities, including internships, summer employment and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year, and apprenticeships;
3. Working with schools, including those carrying out activities under section 614(d) of the IDEA, to coordinate and ensure the provision of pre-employment transition services under this section;
4. When invited, attending person-centered planning meetings for individuals receiving services under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.);

OVR/OVRB representatives participate in Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings for both eligible and potentially eligible students when invited, attending either in person or via teleconference based on their availability. If a counselor cannot attend in either form, another representative should attend or provide written input for the meeting. Additionally, representatives should make every effort to attend person-centered planning meetings for students with disabilities receiving services under Title XIX of the Social Security Act, when invited. They also collaborate with WIN Job Centers, other WIOA partners, and employers to create work-based learning experiences for students with disabilities.

## **9.4 Nine Authorized Activities**

Pre-ETS Authorized Activities are the nine “authorized activities” specified in Section 113(c) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 C.F.R. § 361.48(a)(3) that must be designed to improve the transition of students with disabilities from school to postsecondary education or an employment outcome and support the arrangement or provision of the “required” activities.

Once OVR/OVRB reserves sufficient funds for the provision of required services to students with disabilities who need them, and for staff time spent coordinating those activities, OVR/OVRB may allocate any remaining reserved funds for other authorized activities, in accordance with the agency’s fiscal forecasting. **Such activities are arranged at the state office level and staff will be informed.**

1. Implementing effective strategies to increase the likelihood of independent living and inclusion in communities and competitive integrated workplaces
2. Developing and improving strategies for individuals with intellectual disabilities and individuals with significant disabilities to live independently; participate in postsecondary education experiences; and obtain, advance in and retain competitive integrated employment
3. Providing instruction to vocational rehabilitation counselors, school transition personnel, and other persons supporting students with disabilities
4. Disseminating information about innovative, effective, and efficient approaches to improve the transition of students with disabilities from school to postsecondary education or an employment outcome
5. Coordinating activities with transition services provided by local educational agencies under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.)
6. Applying evidence-based findings to improve policy, procedure, practice, and the preparation of personnel, in order to better improve the transition of students with disabilities from school to postsecondary education or an employment outcome
7. Developing model transition demonstration projects
8. Establishing or supporting multi state or regional partnerships involving states, local educational agencies, designated state units, developmental disability agencies, private businesses, or other participants to improve the transition of students with disabilities from school to postsecondary education or an employment outcome
9. Disseminating information and strategies to improve the transition to postsecondary activities of individuals who are members of traditionally unserved and underserved populations

## **9.5 Outreach and Collaboration Responsibilities**

OVR/OVRB managers, counselors, and Business Relations Specialists shall develop and maintain cooperative working relationships with State and local secondary education staff (including staff from alternative and private school programs), post-secondary education staff, State-operated programs, and workforce development partners (e.g., WIN Job Centers, Mississippi Department of Labor) to coordinate Pre-ETS and ensure students with disabilities have access to high-quality transition services.

a. Encourage all referral sources to identify and refer students with disabilities in secondary education for Pre-ETS as early as age 14. Staff shall actively follow up on referrals to ensure timely coordination and provision of pre-employment transition services.

b. Provide accurate and up-to-date information to all referral sources regarding the full continuum of VR services available to potentially eligible and eligible students with disabilities, including the timeline and application process for VR services.

To fulfill the requirements of this section, OVR/OVRB staff shall:

1. Participate in regular joint planning and coordination meetings with secondary and post-secondary education agencies at least semi-annually to review Pre-ETS implementation, share data, and address systemic barriers.
2. Collaborate with local education agencies (LEAs**)** to identify students, particularly those in underserved populations or alternative education environments, who may benefit from Pre-ETS, and provide targeted outreach and support.
3. Offer training, resources, and technical assistance to education staff regarding OVR/OVRB roles, referral processes, and federal/state requirements for transition planning under IDEA, Section 504, and the State Education Agency (SEA) agreement.
4. Establish and follow referral and data-sharing protocols that comply with FERPA and IDEA to ensure the confidential, timely, and appropriate exchange of information for coordinating and evaluating services.
5. Document all interagency collaborative activities and outcomes (including referrals, services provided, and follow-up actions) in the designated case management system (e.g., AWARE™) to support accountability and continuous quality improvement.
6. Engage parents, guardians, and advocates in the transition process to promote active participation and informed decision-making regarding VR and Pre-ETS services.
7. Serve as designated points of contact for school districts and workforce partners for transition-related inquiries, resolution of interagency challenges, and compliance with the formal SEA-OVR/OVRB cooperative agreement.
8. Monitor and report on the effectiveness of interagency coordination to OVR/OVRB leadership, recommending policy, procedural, or agreement changes as needed to strengthen service delivery and support successful transitions from school to post-secondary education, training, or employment.

When OVR/OVRB staff conduct school visits, they are required to complete the [Timesheet: School Visit Time Log form (MDRS-TY-TSHEET).](https://mdrsmsgov.sharepoint.com/%3Ax%3A/r/sites/OVR/OVRForms/Transition%20and%20Youth%20Career%20Services/MDRS-TY-Tsheet%20SCHOOL%20VISIT%20TIME%20LOG%20eff%2011.4.24.xlsx?d=wce8a1fbc35b34e9d99a1ed377ffe36d1&csf=1&web=1&e=wbun0F) This form shall be submitted weekly to the assigned OVR/OVRB manager with a copy of the OVR/OVRB staff member’s itinerary.

## **9.6 Provision of Pre-ETS to Students with Disabilities**

Pre-ETS provision to students with disabilities shall be:

1. Governed by OVR/OVRB policies and procedures
2. In accordance with:
3. State and federal law and regulation.
4. The statewide educational cooperative agreement developed with the [Mississippi State Department of Education](https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn%3Aaaid%3Asc%3Ava6c2%3Ab57ffa3b-691a-4047-b269-0d8570ee2340).
5. Made available to students with disabilities statewide, to include those who are "potentially eligible" for VR services.
6. Provided based on parental consent to participate in Pre-ETS obtained pursuant to State law, as well as policies of the educational programs.
7. Students with disabilities are not exempt from any of the order of selection requirements for VR services. A student with a disability who needs individualized VR services, in addition to Pre-ETS, must apply and be determined eligible (see Section 4) for the VR program and have an approved IPE (see Section XXXX).

## **9.7 Pre-ETS Referral Process**

To ensure that requests for Pre-ETS are accepted, assigned, and registered in AWARE™ promptly, referrals of students with disabilities shall be managed as indicated below:

1. A referral may be submitted by school personnel, family members, guardians, or other interested persons by completing the OVR/OVRB [Pre-ETS Referral Form (MDRS-VR-64).](https://mdrsmsgov.sharepoint.com/%3Ab%3A/r/sites/OVR/PreETS%20Procedures/Pre-ETS%20Provider%20Forms/MDRS-VR-64%20Pre-ETS%20Referral%20Form%20-%20ENGLISH%20-%20REV%202.27.25.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=FZ1s8K)
2. The OVR/OVRB Pre-ETS Referral Form ([MDRS-VR-64](https://mdrsmsgov.sharepoint.com/%3Ab%3A/r/sites/OVR/PreETS%20Procedures/Pre-ETS%20Provider%20Forms/MDRS-VR-64%20Pre-ETS%20Referral%20Form%20-%20ENGLISH%20-%20REV%202.27.25.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=606OsE)) and documentation of the student’s disability must be submitted to the Transition Services email address at vrtransitionservices@mdrs.ms.gov.
3. When a referral is received through the Transition Services email address, the Pre-ETS Coordinator shall:
4. Pre-ETS Coordinator will review the referral and documentation to confirm that all required data fields are completed correctly by the student, parent/guardian, and/or the referring educational agency.
5. Enter the information into the AWARE™ Referral Module and will assign the referral to the appropriate transition counselor and notify him/her via email.
6. Information received will be uploaded to the Referral Module as an attachment and should be printed and added to the case file.
7. Notify the referring educational agency that the student’s referral has been assigned to the transition counselor.
8. OVR/OVRB staff shall establish referral procedures with school officials to assure that:
9. Parent/guardian consent for OVR/OVRB collaboration with the school is obtained.
10. Student referred for Pre-ETS meets the definition of "student with a disability."
11. Student has medical and/or school documentation substantiating that the individual is a student with a disability (i.e., IEP, 504 plan or medical records) for purposes of providing PreETS.
12. Referrals from school personnel include pertinent and available school-based assessment information (e.g., psychological evaluations, vocational evaluations, and medical or specialty screenings), in the event that the student applies for VR services.
13. When a student is referred for OVR/OVRB services by sources other than the school, the VR counselor will notify the appropriate school personnel of the referral upon obtaining the appropriate authorization for release of information to promote information sharing and collaboration.
14. Within no more than 14 working days of the receipt of a referral, OVR/OVRB staff will provide the individual with the following documents and a cover letter requesting required documentation if not already provided:
* [Client Assistance Program](https://www.mdrs.ms.gov/sites/default/files/2025-05/25%20%20MS%20CAP%20Brochure%20FINAL.pdf)
* [Informed Choice in the VR Process](https://www.mdrs.ms.gov/sites/default/files/2024-05/23%20Informed%20Choice%20VR.pdf)
1. Student information shall remain in the referral module until all required documentation (i.e., enrollment, disability, and the [OVR/OVRB Pre-ETS Referral Form (MDRS-VR-64)](https://mdrsmsgov.sharepoint.com/%3Ab%3A/r/sites/OVR/PreETS%20Procedures/Pre-ETS%20Provider%20Forms/MDRS-VR-64%20Pre-ETS%20Referral%20Form%20-%20ENGLISH%20-%20REV%202.27.25.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=FZ1s8K) signed by the student and, if student is a minor or in high school, the parent/legal guardian) is received.
2. If all required documentation is not provided or the student or parent/legal guardian does not respond to a minimum of three documented OVR/OVRB contacts, the referral may be closed.
3. Contacts will include an initial letter and two additional documented contacts including phone, email, or alternative method of communication as available.
4. The referred individual, student with disability or parent/legal guardian will be notified in writing, contact indicating reason referral has been closed and provide information about how to re-apply (see Section XXXX).

When a referral for Pre-ETS is received for a student who will soon no longer qualify for Pre-ETS or who may be automatically eligible for VR services under an open disability priority category, consult with OVR/OVRB management regarding how best to process the referral.

## **9.8 Provision of Pre-ETS**

Pre-ETS will be provided to students with disabilities with records of service on either a Potentially Eligible (PE) caseload or a VR caseload type in AWARE™. Provision of services shall be managed as follows:

### **9.8.1 Provision of Pre-ETS Using the Potentially Eligible (PE) Case Type**

#### 9.8.1.1 Opening a Potentially Eligible (PE) Case

1. Although an individual receiving only Pre-ETS services does not need to complete a formal VR application, an application date must still be recorded in the AWARE™ system.
2. The date recorded should be when the transition counselor, student, and parent/guardian decide that the student only needs Pre-ETS.
3. Once entered, the status will change in AWARE™ to: **VR-PE/TY-Closed – Opened PE case**.

#### 9.8.1.2 Providing Pre-ETS Activities

1. OVR/OVRB counselors must offer Pre-ETS activities within **30 days** of receiving a referral. The OVR/OVRB counselor will discuss service options with the student, in either an individual or group setting, either at the school, the OVR/OVRB office, a mutually agreed-upon location in the community, or via phone or video conversation as appropriate.
2. During the initial discussion, the OVR/OVRB counselor shall:
	* Provide VR Orientation, and document this in an AWARE™ case note.
	* Discuss next, including identifying additional appropriate Pre-ETS and providers, consistent with the student’s informed choice and which may be completed before the student no longer qualifies for Pre-ETS.
3. Activities can be provided by either:
	* Contracted providers (with approval from the school district)
	* The transition counselor directly
4. These activities should happen at least once each nine-week grading period during the school year.
5. Once Pre-ETS and providers are identified, the assigned counselor must complete the [Referral for Contracted Pre-ETS form (MDRS-VR-100)](https://mdrsmsgov.sharepoint.com/%3Ab%3A/r/sites/OVR/PreETS%20Procedures/Pre-ETS%20Provider%20Forms/MDRS-VR-100%20Referral%20for%20Contracted%20PreETS%20-%20Begin%20using%20this%20form%206.1.25.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=LxmNLQ) in collaboration with the student and/or their parent/guardian. The MDRS-VR-100 form should be completed annually, and any time a new Pre-ETS goal or activity is identified.

#### 9.8.1.3 Provision of Pre-ETS with Third-party Provider

**Discussion of Available Providers (Informed Choice)**:

1. The OVR/OVRB Transition Counselor will discuss with each Potentially Eligible (PE) or Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) student and/or their parent/guardian all available Pre-ETS Providers within the student's geographic area. Counselors should reference the [Approved Pre-ETS Provider List](https://mdrsmsgov.sharepoint.com/%3Ab%3A/r/sites/OVR/PreETS%20Procedures/PreETS%20Provider%20List%202024-25%20last%20revised%209.17.24/Pre-ETS%20Provider%20List%202024-2025%20-%20Rev%209.17.24.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=vMOfRc) located in the Fee Schedule when providing this information.
2. This discussion will include the specific Pre-ETS activities offered by each Provider and their scheduling options.
3. If only one Pre-ETS Provider is available to serve the student's school, the Transition Counselor will clearly inform the student and their parent/guardian.
4. The student retains the option to either receive services from the sole available Provider or request that services be provided directly by their OVR/OVRB Transition Counselor.
5. Once a PE or VR student selects a Pre-ETS Provider, the Transition Counselor will complete the [Referral for Contracted Pre-ETS Form (MDRS-VR-100)](https://mdrsmsgov.sharepoint.com/%3Ab%3A/r/sites/OVR/PreETS%20Procedures/Pre-ETS%20Provider%20Forms/MDRS-VR-100%20Referral%20for%20Contracted%20PreETS%20-%20Begin%20using%20this%20form%206.1.25.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=yldV6g) in collaboration with the student and/or their parent/guardian.
6. The completed Referral form will detail the student's goals and specify the requested Pre-ETS training.
7. The Transition Counselor will document this information clearly, and the completed [Referral for Contracted Pre-ETS Form (MDRS-VR-100)](https://mdrsmsgov.sharepoint.com/%3Ab%3A/r/sites/OVR/PreETS%20Procedures/Pre-ETS%20Provider%20Forms/MDRS-VR-100%20Referral%20for%20Contracted%20PreETS%20-%20Begin%20using%20this%20form%206.1.25.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=yldV6g) will be provided directly to the selected Provider, with a copy to the student and/or parent.
8. Providers must follow the [Provider’s Business Practices: Pre-ETS for Students with a Disability (MDRS-PTS-11).](https://mdrsmsgov.sharepoint.com/%3Ab%3A/r/sites/OVR/PreETS%20Procedures/Pre-ETS%20Providers%20Guidelines%2C%20Business%20Practices%2C%20Services/MDRS-PTS-11%20Providers%20Business%20Practices--PreETS%20for%20Students%20with%20a%20Disability%20-%20Rev%203.18.25.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=EdkoAp)
9. For Job Extravaganza(JE) event payment purposes: The Transition Counselor must upload the completed [Referral for Contracted Pre-ETS Form (MDRS-VR-100)](https://mdrsmsgov.sharepoint.com/sites/OVR/PreETS%20Procedures/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2FOVR%2FPreETS%20Procedures%2FPre%2DETS%20Provider%20Forms%2FMDRS%2DVR%2D100%20Referral%20for%20Contracted%20PreETS%20%2D%20Begin%20using%20this%20form%206%2E1%2E25%2Epdf&parent=%2Fsites%2FOVR%2FPreETS%20Procedures%2FPre%2DETS%20Provider%20Forms) to the student’s case note in AWARE™. This ensures that the selected goals are visible and accessible for review by the designated reviewer when processing JE event payments.

#### 9.8.1.4 Authorizing for Services

Before Pre-ETS activities may begin for a PE student, the OVR/OVRB Transition Counselor will ensure the Provider selected is approved to provide Pre-ETS. Then, the OVR/OVRB Transition Counselor will issue and send an authorization for the agreed upon Pre-ETS activities and units, with a copy of the [Referral for Contracted Pre-ETS (MDRS-VR-100).](https://mdrsmsgov.sharepoint.com/%3Ab%3A/r/sites/OVR/PreETS%20Procedures/Pre-ETS%20Provider%20Forms/MDRS-VR-100%20Referral%20for%20Contracted%20PreETS%20-%20Begin%20using%20this%20form%206.1.25.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=yldV6g) *See* [*Job Extravaganza Events Desk Reference*](https://mdrsmsgov.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/r/sites/OVR/PreETS%20Procedures/Job%20Extravaganza%20Events%20Desk%20Reference.docx?d=w7f8cd284e1704f5688127e63bf2492db&csf=1&web=1&e=B2lhcm) *for authorization procedures for those events.*

#### 9.8.1.5 Amending or Cancelling Pre-ETS Authorizations

When no services have been provided during the authorization period, VR staff shall proceed as detailed below.

1. Cancel the authorization
2. After discussion with the Provider, student and, if applicable, their parent or legal guardian, a new authorization may be issued, if determined appropriate.
3. If a total of two (2) authorizations have been issued and no services have been provided, VR staff shall determine if a different Provider and/or different service(s) is needed.

#### 9.8.1.6 Third Party Pre-ETS Authorization Payment Process

1. The Provider will send the Counselor the signed and dated authorization, copies of the Provider’s [Pre-ETS Provision Forms (MDRS-VR-61),](https://mdrsmsgov.sharepoint.com/%3Ab%3A/r/sites/OVR/PreETS%20Procedures/Pre-ETS%20Provider%20Forms/MDRS-VR-61%20Pre-ETS%20Provision%20Form%20-%20REV%204.16.25%20-%20BEGIN%20USING%206.1.25%20.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=a8Irtc) and a Pre-ETS invoice for each individual student showing the number of total hours for each activity of Pre- ETS provided during the month. The invoiced total number of hours must match the total number of hours on the Pre-ETS Provision Forms before payment will be issued. All of these documents must be provided no later than seven (7) business days after the last working day of the month services were provided.
2. Payment may be delayed or denied if the invoice is not submitted correctly and/or the required reports are not submitted.
3. The counselor shall **not** issue payment for invoices submitted after ninety (90) days from the date of service.

#### 9.8.1.7 Pre-ETS Provision Form (MDRS-VR-61)

1. The Provider must complete the [Pre-ETS Provision Form (MDRS-VR-61)](https://mdrsmsgov.sharepoint.com/%3Ab%3A/r/sites/OVR/PreETS%20Procedures/Pre-ETS%20Provider%20Forms/MDRS-VR-61%20Pre-ETS%20Provision%20Form%20-%20REV%204.16.25%20-%20BEGIN%20USING%206.1.25%20.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=9IQB9c) for each PE/VR student who received Pre-ETS activities. Each form should reflect one month of services provided.
2. The Director, the individual(s) providing the services, and the PE/VR student are all required to sign and date the [Pre-ETS Provision Form (MDRS-VR-61).](https://mdrsmsgov.sharepoint.com/%3Ab%3A/r/sites/OVR/PreETS%20Procedures/Pre-ETS%20Provider%20Forms/MDRS-VR-61%20Pre-ETS%20Provision%20Form%20-%20REV%204.16.25%20-%20BEGIN%20USING%206.1.25%20.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=9IQB9c)
3. The Provider and OVR/OVRB Transition Counselor understand that preparation and travel time are not billable. Payment will only be issued for Pre-ETS unit costs as documented on the Pre-ETS Provision Forms.
4. The Provider is responsible for ensuring that all Pre-ETS Provision Forms are completed accurately. The OVR/OVRB Transition Counselor will review the forms and return any containing errors to the Provider for correction. Corrected forms must be resubmitted within seven (7) business days.
5. The OVR/OVRB Transition Counselor will keep a copy of the [Pre-ETS Provision Forms (MDRS-VR-61)](https://mdrsmsgov.sharepoint.com/%3Ab%3A/r/sites/OVR/PreETS%20Procedures/Pre-ETS%20Provider%20Forms/MDRS-VR-61%20Pre-ETS%20Provision%20Form%20-%20REV%204.16.25%20-%20BEGIN%20USING%206.1.25%20.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=9IQB9c) in the PE/VR student’s case file.

#### 9.8.1.8 VR Orientation

1. The OVR/OVRB Transition Counselor must provide VR/VRB orientation to every PE student at least once per year.
2. During orientation, counselors give students and parents/guardians:
	* "[School to Career Transition Services](https://www.mdrs.ms.gov/sites/default/files/2025-01/24%20VR%20Career%20Transition%20Services%20Brochure.pdf)" brochure
	* "[Pre-Employment Transition Services](https://www.mdrs.ms.gov/sites/default/files/2025-01/24%20VR%20Pre-Employment%20Transition%20Brochure.pdf)” brochure
3. Record each orientation session in a referral or case note in AWARE™, including a brief description of what was discussed and any decisions the student made.

#### 9.8.1.9 Case Management and Closure

1. PE cases remain open (in "Application" status) until:
	* The student no longer qualifies as a “student with a disability”, **or**
	* The student applies for full VR services.
2. When either occurs record the closure date and note the reason for closure in AWARE™.

#### 9.8.1.10 Record Keeping

1. Transition counselors must keep a hard-copy file for each PE student.
2. If a full VR case is opened later, transfer all PE documentation into the new VR file.

**9.9 Job Extravaganza Events**

Job Extravaganza Events are structured, provider-led career exploration and skill-building events designed to deliver Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to students with disabilities. These events are implemented in collaboration with Transition Counselors, local education agencies (LEAs), and the Pre-ETS Referral Coordinator to ensure coordinated service delivery and alignment with each student’s transition goals.

The primary objective of Job Extravaganza Events is to provide participants with exposure to various career pathways, employment-related experiences, and essential workplace skills that support their transition from school to post-secondary education or competitive integrated employment. These events are hosted by approved Job Extravaganza Providers in partnership with Transition Counselors, local educational agencies, and other agencies and/or entities.

**9.9.1 Job Extravaganza Purpose**

The purpose of a Job Extravaganza Event is to expose participants to a range of employment-related experiences, including but not limited to:

* Job exploration and career awareness activities
* Workplace readiness training
* Information about postsecondary education and training opportunities
* Instruction in self-advocacy and soft skills development
* Opportunities to interact with employers or participate in mock interviews or job shadowing experiences

These events serve as a practical platform to help students build critical skills, gain exposure to real-world career environments, and enhance their preparedness for employment or further education after high school.

Job Extravaganza Providers are responsible for organizing and conducting Job Extravaganza events in coordination with the designated Transition Counselor and local school districts. These events are designed to deliver Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to eligible clients through referrals provided by educational and vocational rehabilitation partners.

**9.9.2 Job Extravaganza Procedures**

1. **Event Planning and Referral Coordination**
	1. Job Extravaganza Providers shall plan and host Job Extravaganza events in collaboration with the Transition Counselor and local school districts.
	2. Providers must obtain client referrals from Transition Counselors and local education agencies for participation in the event.
2. **Event Promotion and Service Disclosure**
	1. Providers shall distribute a flyer outlining the services offered during the Job Extravaganza to the Transition Counselor, school representatives, and the Pre-ETS Coordinator.
	2. Providers must submit a detailed list of Pre-ETS services to be delivered during the event to the Pre-ETS Referral Coordinator. This list must include:
		1. The specific Pre-ETS activities offered
		2. The estimated number of service hours allocated for each activity
		 This information must be submitted prior to the scheduled event date.
3. **Client Identification and Approval**
	1. The Transition Counselor is responsible for identifying clients who would benefit from attending the Job Extravaganza event, as aligned with the goals outlined in the [Referral for Contracted Pre-ETS Services Form (MDRS-VR-100).](https://mdrsmsgov.sharepoint.com/%3Ab%3A/r/sites/OVR/PreETS%20Procedures/Pre-ETS%20Provider%20Forms/MDRS-VR-100%20Referral%20for%20Contracted%20PreETS%20-%20Begin%20using%20this%20form%206.1.25.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=TWQxIK)
	2. Upon identification, the Transition Counselor shall provide the Pre-ETS Coordinator with an approved list of eligible clients.
4. **Participant Confirmation**
	1. The Pre-ETS Coordinator shall compile and transmit a final list of approved participants to the Job Extravaganza Provider prior to the event.
5. **Post-Event Documentation and Invoicing**
	1. Upon completion of the Job Extravaganza event, the Provider must submit the following documents to the Pre-ETS Coordinator:
		1. A completed Pre-ETS Invoice detailing the services rendered
		2. A separate [Pre-ETS Provision Form (MDRS-VR-61)](https://mdrsmsgov.sharepoint.com/%3Ab%3A/r/sites/OVR/PreETS%20Procedures/Pre-ETS%20Provider%20Forms/MDRS-VR-61%20Pre-ETS%20Provision%20Form%20-%20REV%204.16.25%20-%20BEGIN%20USING%206.1.25%20.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=a8Irtc) for each participating client
6. **Data Entry and Record Maintenance**
	1. The Pre-ETS Coordinator shall enter the actual service data for each participant and utilize the submitted invoice for payment processing.
	2. The completed [Pre-ETS Provision Forms (MDRS-VR-61)](https://mdrsmsgov.sharepoint.com/%3Ab%3A/r/sites/OVR/PreETS%20Procedures/Pre-ETS%20Provider%20Forms/MDRS-VR-61%20Pre-ETS%20Provision%20Form%20-%20REV%204.16.25%20-%20BEGIN%20USING%206.1.25%20.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=Fiz134) and corresponding service data pages shall be forwarded to the Transition Counselor, who is responsible for filing these documents in the clients’ official case files.

## **9.10 Initiating VR Services After Beginning Pre-ETS**

Students with disabilities are not required to apply or be determined eligible for VR services before receiving Pre-ETS. Students who have provided adequate documentation of their disability and enrollment in a recognized education program shall not have their participation in Pre-ETS delayed by the process of applying for VR services. OVR/OVRB counselors will discuss VR services with students and their parent/guardian and will assist interested students in applying for VR employment services by completing a new referral. The OVR/OVRB counselor must contact the student and their parent/guardian within 14 days to schedule an intake appointment. The application process must be completed within 30 days of the referral date.

Students who do not apply for VR services may continue to receive Pre-ETS under the Pre-ETS case type as long as they continue to satisfy the definition of a "student with a disability."

The PE case may remain open to allow the continuation of Pre-ETS until the IPE has been discussed and developed.

The assigned counselor is responsible for obtaining the necessary documentation from the school to assist in determining VR eligibility. These documents may be collected before or after the application appointment. Refer to the [MDRS-TY-03 Checklist for Making Referrals](https://mdrsmsgov.sharepoint.com/%3Ab%3A/r/sites/OVR/OVRForms/Transition%20and%20Youth%20Career%20Services/MDRS-TY-03%20Checklist%20for%20Making%20Referrals-TY%20Career%20Services%20Program.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=uJq8xR) for a complete list of required documents.

Students who apply and are determined eligible for VR services will be assigned to a Priority Category (see Section 4.2.5).

### **9.10.1 Assignment to a Priority Category**

Eligible students assigned to Priority Category shall have Pre-ETS included on the IPE and provided for as long as the individual continues to meet the definition of a "student with a disability" and they continue to need one or more Pre-ETS service.

### **9.10.2 Assignment to a Closed Priority Category while under an Order of Selection**

Eligible students who are assigned to a closed Priority Category under an Order of Selection and placed on a waiting list for VR services may continue to receive Pre-ETS if they began receiving Pre-ETS prior to their eligibility determination. Eligible students assigned to a closed Order of Selection category and placed on a waiting list for VR service before receiving Pre-ETS may not receive Pre-ETS. These students will be required to wait for Pre-ETS until they are removed from the waiting list and an IPE can be developed. It is essential to provide informed choice around this process to the student/family and to school partners/referral sources.

## **9.11 Educational Status**

Counselors must enter educational goal information for students with a disability on the Educational Goal Page in AACE. This documentation is essential for tracking and reporting student data in the RSA-911 report and confirms the student's designation as a "student with a disability."

### **9.11.1 Entering Educational Goals**

1. For PE students enrolled in secondary education, always open an educational goal titled "Secondary School."
2. Keep this goal active and updated as necessary until the student graduates, exits, or disenrolls from their secondary program.
3. Only students designated as "student with a disability" may receive Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) and utilize Pre-ETS funding.

### **9.11.2 Managing Educational Goals**

1. Create a new educational goal each time the student advances to a new grade level.
2. At the end of each school year, close the current grade-level goal by entering:
3. **Actual End Date**
4. Outcome: **"Completion, No Degree or Certificate"**
5. Immediately open a new goal for the upcoming grade level.

### **9.11.3 Handling Disenrollment**

1. If a student disenrolls from school, promptly close the current educational goal by entering:
2. **Actual End Date**
3. Outcome: **"Disenrollment"**
4. Close the overarching "Secondary School" goal.

*Note: Do* ***not*** *enter Measurable Skill Gains for PE student cases. Students must have a service status (VR case) to record Measurable Skill Gains.*

## **9.12 Discontinuation of Pre-ETS and/or Closure of Service Records**

### **9.12.1 Discontinuation of Services**

Pre-ETS shall be discontinued once an individual no longer satisfies the definition of a "student with a disability," regardless of whether those services were being provided consistent with an IPE.

1. **Potentially Eligible (PE) Case Type:**
2. At the time of service discontinuation, the OVR/OVRB counselor or manager should make every attempt to contact the individual to notify them.
3. The OVR/OVRB counselor shall make two attempts to reach the individual and/or their parent/guardian by phone. These attempts must be documented in a case note in AWARE™.
4. The OVR/OVRB counselor shall send two “[PE Call Counselor Letters](https://mdrsmsgov.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/r/sites/OVR/OVRLetters/PE%20Call%20Counselor%20Letter.docx?d=w527ecc84b4334b41a6f10a0d8d396df2&csf=1&web=1&e=t0dZED).” These attempts must be documented in a case note in AWARE™.
5. The OVR/OVRB counselor shall make two attempts to reach school personnel by phone or email. These attempts must be documented in a case note in AWARE™.
6. Documentation of discontinuation of services should be provided through the appropriate OVR/OVRB discontinuation letter.
7. The record of services shall be closed in AWARE™ when services have been discontinued.
8. **VR Case Type** – Pre-ETS shall cease to be provided under an IPE once the individual no longer meets the definition of a "student with a disability". All other VR services may continue as planned.

Pre-ETS shall not be provided to any student age 22 and beyond.

### **9.12.2 Closure of the Service Record**

1. **Potentially Eligible (PE) Case Type** - Records of services for a student receiving Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) under the Potentially Eligible (PE) case type shall be closed when one of the following conditions is met:
2. The individual no longer meets the definition of a "student with a disability."
3. The individual is determined eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services, is assigned to an open Order of Selection category, and has an approved Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).
4. The student with a disability declines to participate in Pre-ETS and explicitly requests case closure. In such cases, the case shall be closed, and an exception shall be reported on the RSA-911 submission. If no closure request is made, the case shall remain open as long as the student continues to meet the definition of a student with a disability, or until the student no longer meets the eligibility criteria or ages out.
5. **VR Case Type** – When closing the record of a student in an open Order of Selection category receiving Pre-ETS as part of an IPE, refer to Section XXXX: Record of Services Closure – Vocational Rehabilitation.

## **9.13 Procedure for Pre-ETS Time Allocation in the TimeClock System**

OVR/OVRB staff who arrange and/or provide any of the five (5) required or four (4) coordinated Pre-ETS activities must document their time spent in the TimeClock Plus system on a weekly basis. All time spent arranging, delivering, and coordinating Pre-ETS, including travel time, must be accurately and consistently recorded in TimeClock Plus.

*Note: Travel time starts from the moment departure is made to provide and/or coordinate Pre-ETS services. Travel time concludes upon returning from providing and/or coordinating Pre-ETS services.*

The name of the school and/or location where Pre-ETS activities are provided by the Transition Counselor must be documented consistently across the following: the Counselor’s weekly itinerary, the **Timesheet: School Visit Time Log** form ([MDRS-TY-TSHEET](https://mdrsmsgov.sharepoint.com/%3Ax%3A/r/sites/OVR/OVRForms/Transition%20and%20Youth%20Career%20Services/MDRS-TY-Tsheet%20SCHOOL%20VISIT%20TIME%20LOG%20eff%2011.4.24.xlsx?d=wce8a1fbc35b34e9d99a1ed377ffe36d1&csf=1&web=1&e=BLB5lH)), a case note in AACE with the appropriate Pre-ETS activity selected, and the Counselor’s Travel Voucher log. Accurate and consistent documentation ensures proper tracking and verification of Pre-ETS service delivery.

OVR/OVRB staff conducting casework and documenting the provision of Pre-ETS services may be recorded as Pre-ETS-related time. This allowance ensures accurate tracking of essential support functions that directly facilitate the delivery of Pre-ETS. OVR/OVRB should ensure that all recorded time is clearly documented and aligned with the purpose of supporting Pre-ETS service provision.

Administrative tasks are not considered required or coordinated Pre-ETS activities, but time spent drafting, issuing, and/or processing payments for Pre-ETS authorizations may be recorded in the TimeClock Plus system as Pre-ETS-related time.