



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.

DHS/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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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 these services to students at local high schools through the Secondary Transitional Experience Program (STEP).

STEP is a training/placement 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. These services include:

- Guidance and career counseling
- Information and referral
- Opportunities for career exploration
- Participation in paid work experiences
- Job training and placement
- Supported Employment Services
- Independent living services
- Coordination of post-secondary education and training

■■■ ACCESSING STEP SERVICES

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

All information is confidential and will not be released without consent.

Individuals can be referred to STEP as early as age 14. A referral can be made by contacting the local high school or the local DHS/DRS office.

When students plan ahead for adult life, they are more successful in:

Completing School

Getting a Job

Living Independently