

What are Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)?

The Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) is a state agency* that helps people with disabilities prepare for, apply for, and keep a job. MRC funds Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) for students with disabilities aged 14-21 to help them gain employment skills and prepare for work or further education.** MRC offers Pre-ETS through a statewide system of contracted Pre-ETS providers that have created programs based on five core services:

- Job exploration and counseling
- Work readiness training
- Work-based learning experiences
- Counseling in postsecondary education
- Self-advocacy and mentoring services

Pre-ETS programming can take place at the school or in the community, may occur during or after school hours, and is free for the student and school. Most Pre-ETS programming happens in groups with activities designed to meet the needs and interests of each student.

*Students with legal blindness or visual impairment age 14-22 receiving services through an IEP or 504 Plan may be eligible to receive similar Pre-ETS through the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB).

**Due to limited funding, MRC may not be able to serve every student who applies for Pre-ETS.

Who is Eligible to Receive Pre-ETS?

To be eligible for Pre-ETS students must:

- Be between the ages of 14 and 21 (up to their 22nd birthday)
- Be enrolled in high school or in postsecondary education or training (college, trade school, etc.)
- Have an IEP, 504 Plan, or a documented disability

Why are Pre-ETS Important?

Students who learn work skills during high school are more likely to have and keep a job after high school. Pre-ETS help students understand what work is all about. Students learn what kinds of work they like and are good at, and what they need to be successful in a job. Pre-ETS help students to be ready for work and education when they are adults.

Resources

The LINK Center, a transition project of the Federation for Children with Special Needs
www.fcsn.org/linkcenter

Technical Assistance Advisory SPED 2020-1
Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission
Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)
<http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/advisories/2020-1ta.html>

Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission
Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)
<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/pre-employment-transition-services-pre-ets-0>

Massachusetts Commission for the Blind
Pre-Employment Transition Services
<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/pre-employment-transition-services-pre-ets>

MA DESE Special Education Secondary
Transition Website
<http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/secondary-transition/>



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FEDERATION FOR CHILDREN
WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

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TIPS: Transition Information for Parents and Students with IEPs

(Ages 14-22)



**Pre-Employment Transition Services
(Pre-ETS) through the Massachusetts
Rehabilitation Commission (MRC)**

A series of brochures produced by
The LINK Center - a project of the
Federation for Children with Special Needs,
and the Massachusetts Department of
Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)

Pre-Employment Transition Services: What you need to know....

TIP 1: Find out how to apply to get Pre-ETS:

- Contact the Pre-ETS provider assigned to your high school to get more information about their program: www.mass.gov/service-details/pre-employment-transition-services-pre-ets-0
- Complete the MRC Pre-ETS referral form (parent consent is needed if the student is under age 18).
- Collect disability documentation for the Pre-ETS provider (IEP, medical documents, or 504 Plan).
- Participate in initial intake or workshop by the Pre-ETS provider. Pre-ETS providers will then develop a service plan for the student.

Schools, families, and/or students can apply for Pre-ETS by contacting their MRC VR Counselor, local MRC office, or a Pre-ETS provider.

TIP 2: Learn about the 5 Pre-ETS services and what a student might receive under those services:

- **Job exploration counseling** – Take classes on careers and job skills. Explore career paths.
- **Work readiness training** – Develop work skills like putting together a resume, practice for an interview, and learn how to dress for a job.
- **Work-based learning experiences** – Get hands-on experience through job shadowing, participating in informational interviews, volunteering in the community, or completing a work experience.
- **Counseling in postsecondary education** – Explore college or vocational program options and the kind of education you need for the job you want.
- **Self-advocacy and mentoring services** – Gain advocacy skills, experience peer-to-peer mentoring, and take classes on rights and responsibilities.

To find out more about Pre-ETS, go to:
<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/pre-employment-transition-services-pre-ets-0>

TIP 3: Find out what students can learn through Pre-ETS:

- Understand the social norms of the workplace and how to talk with co-workers.
- Recognize the value of work to make informed decisions when applying for jobs and accepting job offers.
- Learn key skills such as time management, problem solving, teamwork, and effective communication.
- Develop self-advocacy skills and understand what accommodations you may need in a work setting.

TIP 4: Students who will need MRC services when they are adults should know:

- MRC recommends that students who need more individualized services apply to determine eligibility for vocational rehabilitation (VR) services at least one year before they leave high school.
- If the IEP team determines MRC to be the best adult agency to provide services:
 - Students (or parent) can submit an application to the MRC counselor assigned to their school through a process called "Direct Referral," or
 - The school can refer a student through a [Chapter 688](#) referral, if they meet the criteria.
- VR services are not an entitlement but are eligibility-based services that depend on availability of funding.



Mateo (age 14) has an IEP and is a freshman in high school. He wants to get a job after high school but he doesn't have a good understanding of work or what he might like to do. Mateo was referred by school staff to the Pre-ETS provider assigned to his school and was approved for Pre-ETS services. Pre-ETS programming for Mateo will take place at the school, and he will be in a group with his peers. During the intake interview with Mateo and his family, it was determined that he would benefit from the following Pre-ETS:

- Group instruction on how to search for and apply for jobs
- Job exploration: interest inventories, online research, and talking to employers
- Soft skills training: interview practice, contacting employers, and getting along with co-workers
- Developing advocacy skills and learning about disability disclosure

Sarah (age 17) is a student with an IEP who plans to attend college after high school. Sarah found out about Pre-ETS from the MRC counselor at her school and was determined eligible for services. She has been working with the MRC counselor for a few months and has received job exploration counseling. Sarah has also been working in the schools front office and babysits for a neighbor, so she has some understanding of work. During the intake interview with the Pre-ETS provider it was determined that she would benefit from the following Pre-ETS that will take place both in the school and out in the community:

- College exploration and help with registering for campus tours
- Researching and contacting the disability service offices of colleges
- Developing a list of when applications are due and what each school requires for application
- Informational interviews with professionals who have jobs she's interested in
- Developing advocacy skills and learning about disability disclosure