Accommodations in Work-Based Learning Experiences (WBLE)

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Today’s Topics

• What are WBLEs?
• Eligible Participants
• What are accommodations?
• How VR can help student and employers have a meaningful experience.
Work-Based Learning Experiences

Hands-on learning conducted in a real work environment.
Work-Based Learning Experiences...

- Are a Pre-Employment Transition Service
- Are conducted in a real work environment in the community
- Are driven by hands-on learning
- Can be paid or unpaid
- Require direct employer or community involvement to be successful
Recipe for a Good Work-Based Learning Experience
Work-Based Learning Experiences

WBLEs are an opportunity for students with disabilities to engage in work-experiences while receiving various degrees of services and supports by a VR provider.

They require students to actively participate and include an evaluation of relevant acquired skills.

Services provided by the Employment Specialist (ES) include:

- Career/Interest Assessments
- Worksite Analysis
- Worksite Development
- Employer Assistance
- Learning & Preparation Activities
- Worksite Selection
- Hands-on Learning
- Ongoing Supports
- Accommodations
What is a Work-Based Learning Experience?

- A Pre-Employment Transition Service
- Hands-on Learning
- Conducted in a real work environment in the community
- Work behavior and skill development
- Self esteem and confidence builders
- Resume and relationship builders.
Any student with a disability may be referred for Work-Based Learning Experiences

A student with a disability means the youth:

- Is between the ages of 14-21
- Is in school
- Has a documented disability

**Potentially Eligible**
- Referred through the STAR portal
- Can only receive Pre-ETS
- No eligibility determination required

**VR Customer**
- Can receive Pre-ETS at application
- Additional services provided at IPE
Question Break
The Employment Specialist can be instrumental in determining reasonable accommodations that will be necessary for a student to be successful at a worksite. It is important to discuss these prior to placement and throughout the WBLE if it becomes apparent that accommodations are needed.
Title I of the **Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990** (the "ADA") requires an employer to provide reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with disabilities who are employees or applicants for employment, unless to do so would cause undue hardship. "In general, an accommodation is any change in the work environment or in the way things are customarily done that enables an individual with a disability to enjoy equal employment opportunities."

There are three categories of "reasonable accommodations":

1. Modifications or adjustments to a **job application process** that enable a qualified applicant with a disability to be considered for the position such qualified applicant desires; or

2. Modifications or adjustments to the **work environment**, or to the manner or circumstances under which the position held or desired is customarily performed, that enable a qualified individual with a disability to perform the essential functions of that position; or

3. Modifications or adjustments that enable a covered entity's employee with a disability to enjoy **equal benefits and privileges of employment** as are enjoyed by its other similarly situated employees without disabilities.

*For more information, please visit the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission [here](#)*
How VR can help with WBLE Accommodations

As WBLE are learning experiences intended to assist students explore career options and develop soft skills, VR assists with identifying, providing, and implementing many of these accommodations such as:

• Worksite Analysis
• Employer Assistance
• Hands-on Learning
• Ongoing Supports
• Rehabilitation Technology
• Interpreters for the Deaf
Worksite Analysis

Includes:

• A systematic investigation of the discrete tasks, working conditions, and requisite knowledge, skills, and aptitudes needed to perform a job.
• Identifying the essential functions of a job.
• Using job analysis to match individuals to positions that best meet their needs and the needs of an employer.
Employer Assistance

• Meeting prior to the start of the WBLE to review the goals and expected outcome of the experience, as well as to discuss any needs the student may have (accommodations.)

• Regular communication throughout WBLE to discuss the student’s progress toward the expected outcome(s)

• Being available for questions and responsive to employer needs.
Hands-on Learning

Hands-on learning can be:

• One-on-one job duty instruction

• Assisting an employer with understanding all factors impacting the student’s work experience.

• Using structured intervention techniques to ensure the student is well matched to a particular job of interest.
Ongoing job support services are supports needed to promote retention in the workplace. This requires the ES to communicate regularly with the WBLE site supervisor, student, and VR counselor to ensure a successful experience.
Question Break
Helpful Accommodation Resources

- **EARN** (Employer Assistance and Resource Network on Disability Inclusion)  [https://askearn.org](https://askearn.org)

- **CareerOnestop**
  [https://www.careeronestop.org/ResourcesFor/WorkersWithDisabilities/job-accommodations.aspx](https://www.careeronestop.org/ResourcesFor/WorkersWithDisabilities/job-accommodations.aspx)

- **U.S. Department of Labor, Disability Resources**
  [https://www.dol.gov/general/topic/disability](https://www.dol.gov/general/topic/disability)
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Visit [Rehabworks.org](http://Rehabworks.org) for printable resources for this and other Transition Youth Programs