

**TO:** OVR Staff  
Schools  
Community Providers of Pre-Employment Transition Services for OVR Potentially Eligible & Eligible Students

**FROM:** Shannon Austin, Executive Director  
Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

**RE:** Guidance to OVR staff, providers and schools about the provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services during a period of state-mandated mitigation strategies for slowing the spread of Coronavirus Disease - 2019 (COVID-19)

**ISSUED:** April 3, 2020

**REVISED:** **April 9, 2020**

**EFFECTIVE:** **Immediately**

**DISCUSSION:** The Pennsylvania Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) is committed to providing quality services to Pennsylvanians with disabilities. During this unprecedented time, the health and safety of our customers, staff and community partners remains our top priority. All Commonwealth businesses are encouraged to follow the most recent guidance issued by the Governor's Office. Please reference the guide for [Responding to COVID-19 in Pennsylvania](#) for updated information. Please visit [the Department of Community & Economic Development's \(DCED's\) website](#) for resources for businesses affected by COVID-19, along with a current list of businesses allowed to operate and the waiver/exemption form (if applicable).

Pre-Employment Transition Service activities and rates that are billable under the 2019 Agreement remain the same. During this time, specific Pre-Employment Transition Services will be handled as follows in accordance with the Governor's current directives (as of this document's publication date):

1. OVR Staff may continue to provide all 5 of the required Pre-Employment Transition Services (Job Exploration Counseling, Counseling on Postsecondary Options, Workplace Readiness Training, Instruction in Self-Advocacy or Work Based Learning) virtually either individually or in groups using available online platforms.
2. OVR staff will continue to be the preferred method of service delivery. Only OVR staff may determine a student's needs and authorize the purchase of services.

3. Because Job/Group Shadowing, Paid Work Experiences, Community Work Instruction and Group Travel Training are exploratory, community-based experiences, these provider services are currently on hold and providers should not attempt to develop new experiences or attempt to provide these individual services in homes, in personal vehicles or other public locations.
4. For students who are housed in BJJS residential PACTT Affiliates that are approved for Pre-Employment Transition Services, these services (including Paid Work Experiences within the facility) can continue inside of the facility following DHS's guidance on Visitor, Meeting and Travel Guidance During Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) issued 03/26/2020. Community-based BJJS PACTT Affiliates should reference guidance in (5) below. These services must be approved by the District Office (DO) prior to implementation.
5. Provider group instruction services (Job Exploration, Workplace Readiness Training, Instruction in Self-Advocacy or Independent Living Skills) may be offered virtually at the request of OVR staff.
  - a. If a DO wishes to purchase virtual group services from a provider based upon needs identified in the school profile:
    - i. The following should be uploaded to the provider's CWDS business folder by the DO.
      - Any revisions or additions to the provider's previously approved curriculum must be reviewed by the Regional Transition Specialist and uploaded by the DO to the provider's business folder in CWDS. Please contact your specialist if you need ideas or resources for curriculum.
      - Documentation indicating the availability of an appropriate non-public facing, remote communication product to instruct students (Zoom, Skype, an LEA specific online learning platform, etc.). This documentation can be in the form of a copy of the purchase receipt of a software license from the provider or an email from the school district and should be uploaded to the provider's business folder in CWDS. This documentation should be reviewed by the DO. Any questions about the appropriateness of the platform should be directed to your Regional Transition Specialist.
    - ii. Prior to changing to or beginning virtual services, the provider must have written documentation from the DO agreeing to virtual services. This may be documented in a Service Assignment Form or purchase order for new services, or email from OVR confirming their agreement to the change in modality that is uploaded with the service authorization in CWDS.
  - b. DOs should continue to follow current guidance by working with their local providers. If a DO would like to seek services from a provider outside their local area, please reach out to your Regional Transition Specialist for approval.

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OVR's Mission: To assist Pennsylvanians with disabilities to secure and maintain employment and independence.

Department of Labor & Industry | Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

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- c. As stated in the 2019 Agreement, virtual groups must be between 2 and 25 participants at a time.
  - d. The OVR-244 Pre-Employment Transition Services Releases must be signed and uploaded in CWDS for each student receiving services from a provider. See Alternate Signature Protocol During COVID-19 Pandemic OVR Guidance Document 20-400.06 for more information.
  - e. OVR will continue to utilize the Service Assignment form to request new services from a provider.
  - f. Instructor must be present during virtual sessions (see provider agreement). Pre-recorded sessions, concurrent sessions and/or stand-alone online curriculum are not allowable provider services.
  - g. Once instruction is scheduled, the provider must forward an invitation or login instructions to the DO transition point of contact so that OVR staff may monitor services remotely on an as-needed basis. Providers are also encouraged, but not required, to take attendance and save recorded sessions on their own devices to verify the receipt of services.
  - h. Providers must continue to provide Student Progress Reports with billing, as well as a report of participant usage which includes attendance statistics. Report should include student names, date(s), time(s) logged in and the amount of time active.
6. All materials must be accessible, and accommodations must be provided to students who need them. No person with a disability shall, based on the disability, be excluded from participation in virtual service(s) when provided.
  7. Payments will only be made for time spent rendering direct services to students.
  8. OVR may discontinue the allowance of virtual services at any time at the discretion of our Executive Director. A 30-days' notice will be issued to all parties if these services are discontinued.
  9. Providers should complete reporting and bill for any services already rendered, including those that have been partially completed, using the online CWDS system.

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