



Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

In the Meantime for Students

There are many things you can do before your scheduled intake appointment with the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS). Review the list below and begin gathering the information you will need when you begin working with a BRS counselor.

- Review the information in the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) website** to help you understand the kinds of services and supports that are available from BRS. These are available at: <http://www.brs.state.ct.us/SchoolToWork/index.htm> .
- Get medical records.**
Medical records will be used to help determine eligibility for BRS services.
- Get school records.**
School records will be used not only to help determine eligibility for BRS services, but to also help develop employment goals. Include copies of general education and special education records, including a Summary of Performance if applicable.
- If you are receiving benefits from Social Security (SSI or SSDI) or the State of Connecticut (Medicaid, food stamps, etc.), **attend session(s) with a BRS benefit specialist**, called a Community Work Incentive Coordinator, to understand how work impacts your benefits. You can find the one in your area at: http://connect-ability.com/career_center/benefitsSpecialistList.php .
- Check to see if you might be eligible for services through any other agency** that may work in collaboration with BRS to pursue your employment goals. *CT School to Work Transition* <http://ctschooltowork.com/> is a searchable database of state agencies who provide services to transition-age youth. Eligibility information for the Department of Developmental Services can be found at: <http://www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?a=2050&q=382310> .
- Go to the Connect-Ability website and explore the information available in the "For Youth" section.** Pay particular attention to the sections called, "Why Work?", "What Do I Want to Do?", "What Can I Do?" and "Getting Experience." You can find this information at: http://connect-ability.com/for_youth/why_work.php .
- Make an appointment with your school guidance or career office and make arrangements to **take a career interest inventory.**
- List any work or volunteer experiences** you may have had with information about what you did during those experiences.
- If you haven't had any work or volunteer experiences, start now.** You can find information about places to volunteer at Infoline: <http://www.infoline.org/Search/givehelp.asp> and the Connect-Ability website.



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- Talk with your doctor or therapist about your interest in going to work.** Find out if there are any medical issues that you need to consider.
- Look in newspapers and online career websites for jobs** you think you might like and bring these to your intake appointment. Some examples of online career websites are: CT Job Central <http://www.jobcentral.org/ct/> , Career Builder <https://www.careerbuilder.com/> and Monster <http://www.monster.com/> .
- Pay attention to the work you see others doing** as you go about your daily activities. Do any of these jobs look interesting to you? Jot them down and bring the list to your intake appointment.
- Network: Tell everyone you know that you are interested in going to work.** That includes family, friends, neighbors, clergy and just about anyone you meet. They may be able to tell you about interesting careers, help with interview practice, informational interviews, job shadowing or internships. You never know where you will strike gold.
 - Ask what they do for work, how they got started and what kind of training they needed.
 - Even if you are planning to go to college, you need to know what kind of careers interest you to choose the right college and major.
- Register at the Department of Labor.** Take advantage of the free training, workshops and services about obtaining and preparing for employment available through the Career Centers at the CT Works Centers. To find a location near you, go to: <http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/ContactInfo/CTWorks/Directory.htm> .
- Consider the types of employers for whom you might like to work and do some research.** Look at their websites and see if they have career openings. Do searches for businesses in similar fields in your geographic area, then explore their websites.
- Identify at least two options for transportation** so that you can participate in services and work experiences.
 - Explore public transportation options, including paratransit at the Connect-Ability website transportation section: <http://connect-ability.com/transportation/transportation.php>.

Following through with these steps will help you as you begin meeting with your BRS counselor and can help with Planning and Placement Team meetings and transition planning at your school.