

Services for People Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Maryland State Department of Education

Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS)

DORS Programs and Services Help People with Disabilities Go to Work!

- Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Employment Services to help job seekers who are Deaf or hard of hearing prepare for and find Employment.
- Student Employment Services (SES) and Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) for students who are Deaf or hard of hearing.

DORS provides Deaf or hard of hearing job seekers VR Employment Services through a dedicated Deaf and Hard of Hearing Unit (DHHU), which also provides Student Employment Services (SES) and Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to students 14-21 who are Deaf or hard of hearing.

- If you are eligible for DORS services, you will work with a DHHU Rehabilitation Counselor for the Deaf (RCD). All DHHU staff are fluent in ASL, many RCDs are Deaf themselves, and all are competent in Deaf culture.
- The DHHU team coordinates interpreting services, including the use of Video Remote Interpreting (VRI).
- RCDs can provide information about assistive technology (AT) such as assisted listening devices, alerting devices connected to a doorbell, telephone, or alarm, and training on how to use the AT.
- DORS Workforce and Technology Services may be available to provide evaluation, training, and case management services to job seekers and students who are Deaf or hard of hearing.

Employment Services

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

DORS helps people with disabilities by providing programs and services to help them get ready for employment, go to work, and maintain employment. If you are eligible to receive VR Employment Services, you will work with a RCD to choose from programs and services such as:

- Assistive technology solutions for disability-related needs.
- Career counseling and decision making based on your interests, abilities, and goals.
- Job coaching and supported employment services.
- Job skills training leading to credentials that meet local labor market demands.
- Job search and job placement services.
- Training to prepare for employment.

Eligibility for VR Employment Services

- Federal law requires that DORS provide VR and Student Employment Services to people with the most significant disabilities first.
- Due to resource limitations, those who are eligible but have less severe disabilities may be placed on the waiting list for services.
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) recipients are presumed eligible for services.

Your Rehabilitation Counselor for the Deaf will provide more information.

Services for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

DORS provides Transition Services for Students with Disabilities.

Transition Services for Students with Disabilities are activities that prepare students with disabilities to move from school to post-school life.

A Student with a Disability is someone who:

- Is enrolled in secondary school (including home school or other alternative secondary education program), post-secondary education, or other recognized educational program, and has not graduated or withdrawn.
- Is at least 14 years old but less than age 22.
- And has a disability that is documented with an Individualized Education Program (IEP), 504 plan, or medical records.

DORS offers two sets of services for students with disabilities:

Pre-Employment Transition Services (Students ages 14 to 21):

Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) provide students with disabilities the opportunity to experience and explore the world of work. The five specific services offered are:

- Job Exploration Counseling
- Self-Advocacy Instruction
- Post-Secondary Education Opportunities Counseling
- Workplace Readiness Training
- Work-Based Learning Experiences

Student Employment Services (Students ages 14 to 21):

Student Employment Services are for students with disabilities who would like to receive Pre-ETS and also obtain or prepare for meaningful employment and a successful career. A broad range of VR employment services may be available to these students.

Unlike Pre-ETS, Student Employment Services are subject to eligibility requirements.

Your DORS counselor will provide more information.

Request DORS Services

Go to dors.maryland.gov and select Request DORS Services. You will be contacted to set up an intake meeting where a DORS counselor will gather and provide information regarding eligibility. This form can be completed by anyone – the job seeker or student themselves, a parent or family member, a medical provider, a teacher, etc.

Deaf & Hard of Hearing Unit (DHHU)

DHHU counselors for the Deaf and hard of hearing are located in DORS offices throughout Maryland. Services are also available virtually and via video phone.

DHHU Main Office

1890 North Market Street

Frederick, MD 21701

Phone: 410-554-9360

Videophone: 410-405-7054 (Deaf/Hard of Hearing only)

Email: DHHU.DORS@maryland.gov

dors.maryland.gov

Notice of Non-Discrimination

The Maryland State Department of Education Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) does not discriminate based on

age, ancestry, color, creed, gender identity or expression, genetic information, marital status, mental or physical disability, national origin, race, religious affiliation, belief or opinion, sex, or sexual orientation in matters affecting employment or in providing access to its programs and activities.

The Vocational Rehabilitation program receives 78.7% of its funding through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

For the Federal fiscal year 2024, the total amount of grant funds awarded was \$60,204,299. The remaining 21.3% of the costs (\$14,999,444) were funded by State appropriations.

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