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# PREPARING STUDENTS FOR LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

MASSACHUSETTS REHABILITATION COMMISSION

**Boston Sped PAC**  
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# MRC OVERVIEW

- MRC is a state agency that provides services to persons with disabilities.
- There are three divisions of MRC:
  - Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)
    - Employment Supports for persons with disabilities, ages 14 and up
  - Disability Determination Services (DDS)
    - Determines eligibility for federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits
  - Community Living (CL)
    - Community Based Services (Statewide Head Injury Program, Acquired Brain Injury, Money Follows the Person Community Based Programs)
    - Protective Services
    - Independent Living & Assistive Technology Programs
    - Home Care Assistance Program

# WHO MRC SERVES

- MRC works with students and adults that have many different types of disabilities. Our clients may have:
  - Physical Disabilities
  - Emotional Difficulties
  - Learning Difficulties
  - Substance Use Disorder

... or a combination of the above.
- Our job is to help students:
  - Understand their disability and some of the difficulties they may face
  - Identify their strengths and things they are good at doing, or would like to become good at
  - Identify supports they might need to reach their goals



# WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Pre-Employment Transition Services
- Chapter 688
- Transition Pathway Services Grant

# SERVICES OFFERED BY MRC FOR TRANSITION-AGED YOUTH

Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)

Transitional to Adulthood (TAP)

Transitional Internship Program (TIP)

Young Adult Supported Living (T22)

Youth Leader Forum (YLF) and Youth Leadership Network (YLN)

Benefits Planning

# PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES (PRE-ETS)

- **Focus:** Pre-ETS focuses on preparing, exploring, and increasing awareness to post-secondary employment and education options.
- **Age:** 14 – 22
- **Eligibility:** Documented disability, enrolled in high school or post-secondary institution, between 14 – 22 years old.
  - Students do not need to be enrolled in vocational rehabilitation services to participate.
- **Service Provision:** Services are provided by approved local providers; students can directly contact local providers or ask their schools MRC Liaison, school personnel, or MRC Area Office for a list of available programs.



# PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES (PRE-ETS)

## Job Exploration

- Introduction to careers and required skills, career ladders, and interest inventory

## Work Readiness Training

- Development of transferrable work skills which may include resume writing, interview skills, and professionalism

## Work-based Learning Experience

- Opportunities to complete job shadowing, informational interviews, volunteering and/or internships

## Post-secondary Education and Vocational Counseling

- Discussion of options upon exiting high school which may include vocational/technical programs, community college, and four-year institutions

## Self-advocacy and Mentoring

- Opportunities for mentoring and development of individual advocacy skills

# CONNECTING TO A PRE-ETS PROGRAM

- To connect with a Pre-ETS program students can...
  - Directly contact a provider
  - Ask the school MRC Liaison what providers are available in their area
  - Call their local MRC area office and ask what providers are available in their area
- Students can receive 1 or more of the 5 pre-ETS services
  - No consecutive order
  - Based on interests and goals for skill development
  - Groups and peer support-youth development model



## MRC AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

After High School, a student may or may not need MRC services. It is important that discussions of what supports may be needed for the student to be successful begin at least 2 years prior to the student's exit from high school.

- If a student does not need MRC services, they should work with their service team to identify community resources that will be available to them including local career centers, education and job training programs, and other community organizations.
- If a student will need ongoing MRC services, they can apply for VR services and go through MRC's eligibility process.

# HOW TO CONNECT TO ADULT V.R. SERVICES- MRC

- How...
  - Via Chapter 688 Referral submitted by the school LEA
  - Direct referral to the identified human service agency
  - If the student is at least 18 years old, they can refer themselves directly or through a parent/guardian can refer
- When...
  - A Chapter 688 referral can be made by a school LEA two years prior to graduation or two years before ones 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday, whichever comes first
  - When a student needs significant support to participate vocational rehabilitation services
- Why...
  - An individual has a vocational goal
  - A student requires significant support to achieve vocational goal

# TRANSITION PATHWAY SERVICES (TPS) GRANT PROGRAM

Transition Pathway Services uses a Career Discovery Support Team to coordinate transition services that...



... help students achieve employment or education opportunities after high school.

# OVERVIEW OF MRC AND TPS



## **TPS Model:**

- **Provide Customized & Coordinated Transition Services (10)**
- **2 Work-Based Learning Experiences (1 Paid)**
- **Initiate 2 Years Before Completing School**
- **Students & Families Asked for 1 Year Commitment**

# OVERVIEW OF MRC AND TPS



## **Multi-Agency Team of Community Partners:**

- ❖ **Independent Living Centers**
- ❖ **Federation for Children with Special Needs**
- ❖ **Career Centers**
- ❖ **Pre-ETS Vendors**
- ❖ **Schools....**

# CAREER DISCOVERY SUPPORT TEAM



## Career Discovery Support Team (CDT):

- **Student-Specific Group of Community Partners**
- **Team Meets With Student & Family (3 Times)**
- **Timing = Before and After WBLEs**
- **Provides Customized, Student-Centered Approach to Job Placements**
- **Coordinates Services**

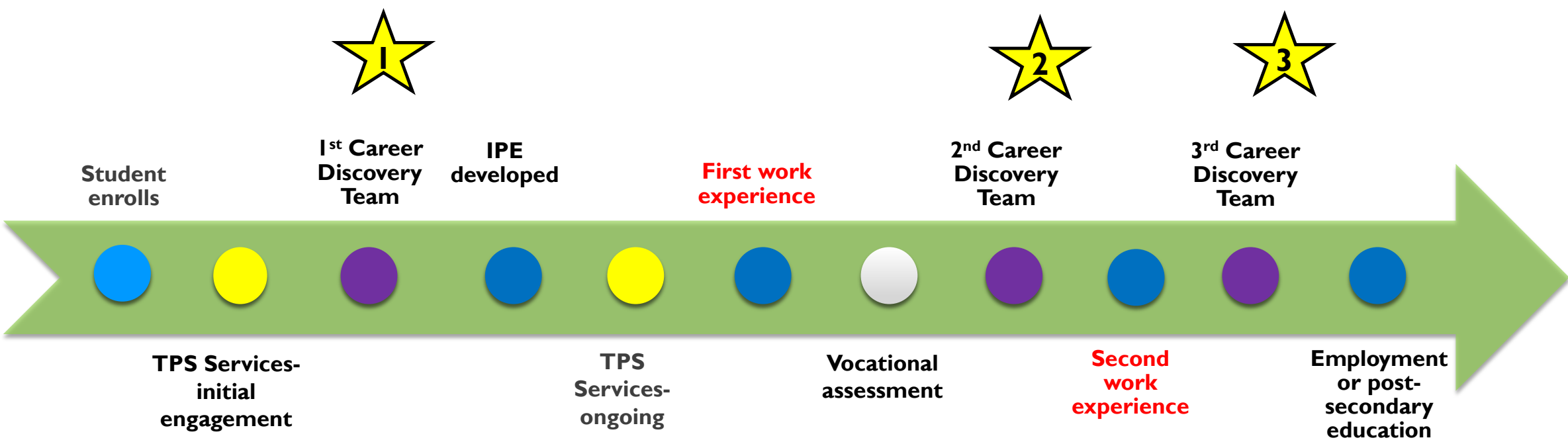


# TPS Circle of Support For Samuel Jackson





PANEL TOPIC- CAREER DISCOVERY  
SUPPORT TEAM





THANK YOU!!

For more information/questions:

**Jennifer Stewart, Statewide Transition Director**

Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission

600 Washington Street

Boston, MA 02111

(617) 204-3715

[jennifer.stewart@massmail.state.ma.us](mailto:jennifer.stewart@massmail.state.ma.us)

<https://www.mass.gov/mrc-transition-services-for-students-and-youth>

**Local VR Area Office listings:**

<https://www.mass.gov/vocational-rehabilitation/locations>