



SCHOOL TO WORK CHECKLIST

A Guide to Assist in Planning for Independent
Living, Employment and Education
After High School

“Any major transition can present problems and anxiety. It can be traumatic when young people with disabilities leave the structured environment of school and confront a maze of public and private agencies in the community. Planning for this transition before leaving school will help the student sort out the maze of resources, overcome the gaps in services, and start him or her on a productive path. Transition planning is a life-line to adulthood and should begin early, at least by age 14.” (School to Work Interagency Transition Partnership, California, 1995).

Age 14:

- ✓ Identify how you learn (learning style) and what accommodations you need to learn best. (Do you learn best by seeing or hearing information or by hands-on activities?)
- ✓ Identify your strengths and weaknesses in the area of learning.
- ✓ Explore career interests and skills and what classes you need to take for those interests.
- ✓ Complete a career interest inventory which will give you careers that match your interests and abilities (this is usually a computer program found in the guidance counselor's office).
- ✓ Attend your transition IEP (Individualized Educational Plan) meeting and be ready to answer these questions:
 - Would you like to go to college or tech school after high school?
 - What would you like to study if you go on to college or tech school?
 - If you don't want to go on to school, what do you plan to do after high school?
 - Where will you live after high school?
 - What do you like to do for fun when you are not in school?
- ✓ Be able to explain your disability or health condition and what accommodations you may need.

Four Years Before Leaving High School:

- ✓ Investigate assistive technology tools that can increase community involvement and employment opportunities.
- ✓ Begin to learn to use public transportation options.
- ✓ Work on money management skills.
- ✓ Gain the ability to communicate personal information on paper or verbally.
- ✓ Learn to manage your health care.
- ✓ Attend your transition IEP meeting and be ready to answer these questions:
 - What do you want to do when you leave high school?
 - What classes can help you with what you want to do?
 - Would you rather work than go on to further education?
 - Where do you want to work? Do you have the skills it will take?
 - Are there classes you can take now to help you with your future job choice?
 - What options are available to gain job experiences and build skills?
 - Where will you live after high school?
 - What do you like to do for fun when you are not in school?

Two or Three Years Before Leaving High School:

- ✓ Take classes that match your career interests.
- ✓ Continue to manage your health care.
- ✓ Locate your DRS (Division of Rehabilitation Services) counselor by talking to your guidance counselor at the school.

- ✓ Gather information about college programs or tech programs that interest you.
- ✓ Determine if there are financial programs available if needed to assist you in living independently.
- ✓ Explore and visit colleges or tech programs of your choice.
- ✓ Learn and practice interpersonal and social skills for different settings.
- ✓ Continue to use public transportation.
- ✓ If you need personal assistant services, learn to direct and manage these services independently, if appropriate.
- ✓ Gain work experiences through STEP (Secondary Transition Experience Program) and/or vocational educational programs at the school.
- ✓ Practice independent living skills, such as shopping, managing money, cooking.
- ✓ Identify community support services, such as One-Stop Centers or CILs (Centers for Independent Living).
- ✓ Attend your transition IEP meeting.

One Year Before Leaving High School:

- ✓ Decide if you are going to attend a college or tech program after high school.
- ✓ If you are going to attend a college or tech program, meet with your guidance counselor to learn how to get linked to the program of your choice.
- ✓ Apply for financial aid (DRS may be able to assist you with this).
- ✓ Meet with the college or tech program's recruiter to identify accommodations and financial support needed.
- ✓ If you are desiring employment, work with a DRS counselor to identify a job and obtain employment with supports, if needed.
- ✓ Identify independent living resources and begin budgeting.
- ✓ Develop interview skills by practicing effective communication.
- ✓ Begin a resume with work and/or volunteer experiences.
- ✓ Attend your final transition IEP meeting and make sure these questions have been addressed:
 - Are you planning to go to college or a tech program? If so, what will you be studying and do you need any supports? Who will be responsible for the supports?
 - What kind of career/job do you want? Are you desiring this right after high school? Do you need any supports? Who will be responsible for the supports?
 - Do you want to live independently after high school? Where do you want to live and how will it be paid for? Do you need any supports? Who will be responsible for the supports?
 - What do you like to do for fun? Do you need any supports? Who will be responsible for these supports?



The content for this resource was adapted from the Young Adult Services Program, Transition Checklist, South Bend, Indiana and the Best Practices for Transition Services, School to Work Interagency Transition Partnership.