

South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department

Supports during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Frequently Asked Questions



WHAT SERVICES ARE VR COUNSELORS PROVIDING DURING THIS TIME?

VR offices are closed to in-person visits; however VR Counselors are teleworking from home or are in the office and reaching out via phone or zoom to individuals to provide counseling and follow up. SCVRD was featured as one of the agencies providing updates on the Transition Alliance of SC's website:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DhZHe90AsXU&feature=youtu.be>

HOW CAN A VR COUNSELOR PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO TEACHERS AND OTHER SCHOOL STAFF?

VR Counselors have been given a variety of resources to use with their students. Counselors are using Zoom, emails and telephone calls to communicate with students. If a teacher is using a particular online platform and can link a VR counselor in, we would be willing to collaborate and provide activities to students with disabilities virtually.

WHAT AREAS OF INSTRUCTION CAN A VR COUNSELOR PROVIDE?

VR counselors can provide instruction in the five required areas of Pre-Employment Transition Services:

- Job Exploration Counseling
- Workplace Readiness Training (mainly soft-skills)
- Self-Advocacy
- Counseling on Post-Secondary Training Opportunities-this is critical during this time of the year for students completing school and seeking post-secondary training opportunities after graduation
- Work Based Learning Experiences – While VR has **suspended all community based paid work experiences for students at this time**, including students coming to our Training Centers, VR Counselors can share virtual job shadows with students.

HOW DO I COORDINATE ASSISTANCE WITH A VR COUNSELOR?

Simply reach out to the VR Counselor who serves your school. A list of VR Offices can be found on our website: <https://scvrd.net/offices>. You may also contact **Laura Spears, Transition Services Coordinator**, and she will connect you with your local VR office: lspears@scvrd.net

VR is here to support you and your students with disabilities during this time. VR counselors can coordinate instruction based on your needs and the needs of your students. A list of ideas and resources shared with VR Counselors is included.

VIRTUAL AND REMOTE SERVICE PROVISION IDEAS THAT A VR COUNSELOR MAY BE OF ASSISTANCE

Job Exploration Counseling

- Do a phone interest inventory with the student and discuss career paths
 - <https://www.careeronestop.org/toolkit/careers/interest-assessment.aspx>
 - <https://www.mynextmove.org/explore/ip>
 - <https://careerwise.minnstate.edu/careers/clusterAssessment>
- Review labor market results and training requirements for each career interest
 - <https://jobs.scworks.org/vosnet/Default.aspx>
- Have students complete a "Scavenger Hunt Worksheet" regarding a job of interest and discuss
 - <https://explore-work.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/scavenger-hunt.pdf>

Work Based Learning Experiences

- Have students interview their parents, family or friends to learn more about what they do. What do they like about their jobs, what training did it take for them to get hired, what past jobs did they have?
- Have them explore virtual job shadows and report on what they learned
 - <https://www.myplan.com/careers/video/library.php?sid=95a37f750f7e1436e3f50801a64b7e4c>
 - <https://www.careeronestop.org/Videos/video-library.aspx>

Counseling on Opportunities for Post-Secondary Education

- Send a list of universities, colleges and technical schools to students with programs related to their vocational objective. Have them do a "virtual tour" if available. Phone or email to follow up on the pros and cons of each school
 - <https://www.careeronestop.org/FindTraining/find-training.aspx>
- Have students research each college/tech websites regarding Disability Services
 - Ex: <https://www.cctech.edu/resources/disability-services/checklist-for-requesting-accommodations/>
- Have students research and discuss other training opportunities to include trade schools and other inclusive higher educational programs such as LIFE, REACH and Winthrop Think College and what these programs offer
- Review the IEP with the student and discuss what accommodations have been most helpful while they were in high school. Discuss which services they will want or need in college and how to self-advocate once they enter college
- Discuss financial aid options with students. Review GPA requirements for lottery scholarships. Ask seniors if they have completed the FAFSA and/or created their FSA ID
 - <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa/>
 - <https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/account-info>

Workplace Readiness Training

- Have students practice interviews skills on the phone especially since employers often use phone interviews to screen applicants
- Email copies of applications for students to practice filling out. Discuss the importance of spelling and grammar and provide examples.
- Review student's social media pages. Are they posting things they shouldn't? How are they representing themselves? Provide feedback and review social media dos and don'ts.
- Email etiquette practice information and work with students to develop strong email writing skills. Appropriate formatting, grammar, etc.

Self-Advocacy

- Review the IEP and accommodations pages via phone or email. What accommodations do they need to be successful, how can they put strategies in place to work on focus/time management to get school work done
 - <https://www.imdetermined.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/itsallaboutme-understandingmyiep.pdf>
 - https://www.understood.org/en/community-events/blogs/the-inside-track/2017/01/31/how-self-advocacy-helped-me-fight-for-my-rights-in-college?_u=1*tflgrp*domain_userid*YW1wLUxSWkttakIMWC00bmRPMUhHeWRIVIE
- Discuss appropriate ways to disclose one's disability to an employer when a student will need accommodations
 - Visible disabilities – dispel myths any employers may have from “first looks”
 - Invisible disabilities – address accommodations needed such as written vs. verbal instructions
- Help students understand which questions employers are barred from asking potential employees

Additional Resources

Explore Work-great online tool for Pre-ETS: <https://explore-work.com/>



Toolkit for Supporting Students with Autism: <https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/supporting-individuals-autism-through-uncertain-times>

Transition Alliance of SC: <https://transitionalliancesc.org/virtual-transition-learning-resources/>