Available Services for Teens & Young Adults with Developmental Disabilities

You have many changes coming your way during the transition from school services to adult services.

This guide will help you know who to contact and what to expect.

NEBRASKA
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DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Your school, Nebraska VR (Vocational Rehabilitation), and DHHS - Division of Disability and Aging (DDA) work together to help you gain employment, increase independence, and access your community.

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Your high school teachers, Nebraska VR, and the Division of Disability and Aging (DDA) work together to help you gain employment, increase independence, and access your community. With your parent's permission, your school can invite Nebraska VR and/or DDA to your meetings to help develop your transition plan.

As an 14 to 21 year old student, you should be using resources from your school and Nebraska VR. After high school, Nebraska VR can continue to work with you.

Once you are eligible for waiver services, DDA will offer you funding based on your needs. Waiver services for employment, and other daytime activities, are available at 21 years of age, after the school year has ended.

This guide explains services you receive from your school. It then compares services available from Nebraska VR and DDA.

School

You are entitled to special educational services and accommodations as long as you have a disability and need for special education. This is available until you graduate, or until the end of the school year when you turn 21.

Nebraska VR (Vocational Rehabilitation)

Nebraska VR provides pre-employment transition services for students with disabilities to explore the world of work. Nebraska VR also helps people with disabilities prepare for, find, and keep a job while working with businesses to recruit, train, and retain employees with disabilities.

DHHS - Division of Disability and Aging (DHHS-DDA)

DHHS – Division of Disability and Aging (DDA) provides funding and oversight for Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) waiver services. These are available when you meet eligibility and level of care requirements. The focus is to help you live independently and access your community. At the age of 21, employment becomes an additional focus.

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DO I NEED A GUARDIAN?

School: Your parent(s) or legal guardian must participate in developing your IEP until you are 21 years old, even if you have reached the 19 years of age (the age of majority).

Nebraska VR	DDA
If you are under 19 years old and/or have an IEP, a parent or authorized representative must sign all forms including the Pre-Employment Transition Services Consent and Release Form.	You do not need a guardian to receive services.

You may consider less restrictive support, such as supported decision making or a power of attorney (POA) for medical and/or financial decisions.

If you, or your parent, have questions about supported decision making, POA, or guardianship, the following agencies may be able to help:

- **Arc of Nebraska** 402-475-4407
- **Disability Rights of Nebraska** 800-422-6691
- **League of Human Dignity** 402-441-7871
- **Office of Public Guardian** 402-471-2862
- **PTI (Parent Training & Instruction)** 800-284-8520

Learning the Lingo:

There are different words for your written plan depending on who provides your services. Teams of people who support and serve you develop each plan with you. Plans are written during meetings.

Individual Educational Program (IEP): *School plan for education goals and special services. Includes yearly education goals and goals for after your graduate. Goals may include where you want to work, what you will need to learn, and where you want to live. Your IEP includes special education, accommodations, and activities to help reach your goals.*

Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE): *Nebraska VR's plan for employment. Includes services to help you meet your goals.*

Person-Centered Plan (PCP): *DDA plan for personal goals. May include community participation, daily living skills, employment, and leisure activities.*

WHAT SERVICES CAN I GET?

School: Your special education services, activities, and accommodations are based on your yearly IEP goals and goals for after high school. This includes where you want to work, what you need to learn, and where you want to live. While you are in school, services may include specialized instruction, related services (like therapies), assistive technology, accommodations, transition planning, work-based learning opportunities, and independent living skills training. As interests and skills change, your goals and services may also change.

Nebraska VR	DDA
Services are available to all students with disabilities aged 14 to 21.	Services are based on your identified needs and written plan. Waiver services are paid for by Medicaid, so you must have Medicaid.
Pre-Employment Transition Services include: ◆ job exploration ◆ workplace readiness training ◆ training and post secondary education counseling ◆ work-based learning ◆ self-advocacy instruction. Nebraska VR can attend your IEP meetings.	Once determined eligible: ◆ You will have a Service Coordinator (SC) to help you access and plan waiver services. ◆ Residential services can be provided in your home to help with daily living skills and can help you access your community. ◆ Assistive technology, home and vehicle modifications, and personal emergency response systems (PERS) are available as needed.
If more individualized services are required, you may apply for adult VR services to receive services after you are 21 and no longer in school.	Once you are 21 years old and the school year ends, day services are available to help you maintain employment, volunteer, or increase skills needed to work.
Adult VR services may include: ◆ You and your counselor identify your strengths, abilities, interests, existing skills, and needs. ◆ Your job goal is identified. ◆ The goods and services needed to meet your goal are identified. ◆ Nebraska VR can attend your IEP meetings.	◆ Your SC will help determine the services you need, write your plan, and monitor your services. ◆ Services will be provided by agency or independent providers. Your SC will help you find an agency or help someone you know enroll as an independent provider.

HOW DO I APPLY?

School: Being eligible for Special Education Services does not guarantee you will be eligible for services with either Nebraska VR or DDD.

Nebraska VR	DDA
Complete the Pre-Employment Transition Services Consent and Release Form available through your school or the Pre-Employment Transition Services Coordinator assigned to your school.	**You can apply online at:** iServe.nebraska.gov **or you can request a paper application:** ◆ At any DHHS-DDA office in Nebraska. ◆ By calling (877) 667-6266.
You may also contact a Nebraska VR Service Office for assistance: **www.vr.nebraska.gov/offices**	If you need assistance to fill out an application, you may visit your local DHHS office.

When applying for services from DDA, DDA will request your last three Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) reports from your school.

MDT reports are most helpful when they include information on Intellectual Assessment, Adaptive Assessment, Impressions and Autism Spectrum. A qualified professional must complete and sign the report.

Resources from DDA:

Anyone can request an application for DDA eligibility determination.

The DDA Eligibility page has information on the most helpful way to document assessment results in the MDT. You may want to refer your school to Information for School Psychologists.

"Ready, Set, Go!" brochure explains services available through DDA.

"Transitioning from Educational to Adult Services" brochure includes process flowcharts for moving to adult waiver services.

"Tips for Teachers" has information for your teacher to understand waiver services, including a list of assessments the school can complete to assist with waiver eligibility, and a recommendation to invite your SC to your IEP meetings.

WHEN CAN I GET SERVICES?

School: You have an IEP and receive special education services as long as your disability greatly affects your learning in school. When you graduate or reach age 22 years of age before the next school year, you no longer receive special education services.

Nebraska VR	DDA
Services are available to all students with disabilities aged 14 to 21.	Eligibility can be determined at any age.
Once a Pre-Employment Transition Consent and Release Form is signed by a parent or authorized representative, students with disabilities begin working with Nebraska VR.	You should apply for waiver services when you need them. An assessment will determine how services can meet your needs by assisting you in your home and community.
When more individualized services are required, you may apply for VR services. **www.vr.nebraska.gov/offices**	Once 21 and a high school graduate, day services are available to help you maintain a job, volunteer, or increase skills needed to join the workforce.

Resources from Nebraska VR:

Nebraska VR for Students: Services for students seeking employment.

Transition Services Partnership Planner: Guide for educators arranging VR services for students

Pathway to Employment: Pre-employment transition services.

Nebraska VR for Adults: Services for adults seeking employment.

WHAT ARE THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA?

School: To receive special education you must have a disability, which greatly affects your learning, skills, and abilities. Your IEP team (teachers, parents, and other who work with you) review your goals and the progress you are making and decide if you continue to need special education.

Nebraska VR	DDA
Services are available to all students with disabilities aged 14 to 21 in an educational program with a signed Pre-Employment Transition Services Consent and Release Form.	You must meet the definition of developmental disability found in Neb. Rev. Stat. 83-1205.
Blindness or low vision cannot be the primary disability.	Mental illness cannot be the sole cause of your disability.
Nebraska VR works with your school and parents to collect information. This may include special education or medical records.	Your disability must have started before you are 22 years old and be likely to continue for life.
	Your disability must result in a substantial limitation in these areas: ◆ Conceptual skills: language, literacy, money, time, numbers, self-direction. ◆ Social skills: interpersonal skills, social responsibility, self-esteem, gullibility, wariness, social problem solving, ability to follow rules, avoid being victimized. ◆ Practical skills: activities of daily living, personal care, occupational skills, healthcare, mobility, capacity for independent living.
	DDA works with you and your parents to collect information. ◆ This includes special education and medical records. ◆ There must be documentation of your diagnosis.
	You must meet the Level of Care criteria for an Intermediate Care Facility for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ICF/IID) initially and annually.

HOW IS ELIGIBILITY DETERMINED?

School: **Every three years**, your teachers and other school staff gather information about how your disability is affecting your learning. Your IEP team—which includes you, your parents, your teachers, and other professionals who work with you—reviews this information to decide if you still meet the requirements to receive special education services.

Nebraska VR	DDA
For Pre-Employment Transition Services, a parent or guardian's signature confirming a disability is sufficient.	DDA receives your application and reviews all records submitted.
For VR Services, a signed application and eligibility documentation are required.	DDA may request further assessment and records.
Nebraska VR has 60 days to determine eligibility.	DDA has 90 days to gather records and make a decision.
Nebraska VR will notify you of the decision.	DDA will notify you of the decision in writing.

DO I HAVE TO WAIT FOR SERVICES?

School: If you have a disability and need for special education, you receive special education, services, and accommodations according to your IEP.

Nebraska VR	DDA
Once a Pre-Employment Transition Services Consent and Release is signed, Pre-Employment Transition Services are available.	An eligible person will have an assessment completed to determine which waiver will meet their needs.
◆ For more individualized services, a person with a disability needs to apply, be determined eligible, and assigned priority. ◆ Eligibility does not guarantee there will be available funding.	◆ Most people 21 and younger will receive the Family Support Waiver. ◆ Most people 21 and older, having completed the school year, will receive the DD Adult Day Waiver. ◆ The Comprehensive DD Waiver is available when the assessment shows it is needed.

WHAT IF I AM NOT ELIGIBLE?

School: If you have a disability, and are no longer eligible for special education, you can request to be considered for a 504 plan. A 504 plan is for students who have a disability and may only need some accommodations. These accommodations may be the same as you were receiving with your IEP.

Nebraska VR	DDA
Pre-Employment Transition Services are available to all students with disabilities aged 14 to 21.	If you are determined not eligible for services, you can appeal the decision.
For more individualized VR services, if you are determined ineligible or no longer eligible, you may appeal the decision and you will be referred to community resources.	If you have new information supporting your diagnosis or limitations, you can reapply.
	Not everyone who qualifies for an IEP will be eligible for waiver services.

Tip:

Apply for all services for which you may be eligible.



WHAT IF I CHOOSE NOT TO PARTICIPATE?

School: If you drop out of school, decide to get a GED, or your parents refuse special education, you can change your mind. Your parent can contact your school to request special education.

Nebraska VR	DDA
Services are voluntary and may be discontinued at any time. A discussion with your Pre-Employment Transition Services Coordinator is recommended.	You may reapply in the future.
If you still meet the criteria, you may re-engage services in the future.	When you reapply, DDD will redetermine your eligibility.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING HIGH SCHOOL?

School: When you are 14, your teachers help you learn about your skills, abilities, and interests, including where you want to work (employment), what you need to learn (training/college), and where you want to live.

Your IEP also has goals for after high school. To help you prepare for these goals, your IEP lists classes you will take in high school. Your IEP also includes transition activities like: job shadows, work experiences, career visits, job exploration, career fairs, and career readiness. Your goals for after high school may change as you learn more about your skills, abilities, and interests.

With your parent's permission, other agencies who may help you after you graduate can be invited to your IEP meeting to help plan for after school.

Nebraska VR	DDA
Nebraska VR works with your school to provide Pre-Employment Transition Services.	While you are in high school, waiver services cannot replace services available from the school system.
Services meet the needs of students today by preparing them for the careers of tomorrow. For example, you may: ◆ Identify strengths, abilities, and capabilities for work and adult living. ◆ Set goals for work and adult living. ◆ Learn habits, attitudes, and behaviors for work and skills for adult living. ◆ Participate in job exploration activities and community work experiences. ◆ Explore post-secondary training options. ◆ Learn how to self advocate to receive the assistance you will need in the future.	Service Coordination: ◆ Your Service Coordinator (SC) can attend school meetings to get to know your interests and goals. ◆ Your SC can meet with you and your family to provide information. ◆ Your SC can assist you with finding and applying for other services. Waiver services available based on eligibility and need: ◆ Aged and Disabled (AD) Waiver. ◆ Family Support Waiver (FSW). ◆ Developmental Disabilities Adult Day (DDAD) Waiver for ages 21 and older. ◆ Comprehensive Developmental Disabilities (CDD) Waiver. ◆ Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Waiver for ages 19 and older.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I EXIT SCHOOL?

School: When you receive a diploma or reach 21 years of age, your teacher gives you a written Summary of Performance (SOP). This is a summary of your skills and abilities. It includes the accommodations, technology, and strategies that help you reach your goals for employment, college/training, and living.

Nebraska VR	DDA
When appropriate, either before you graduate or after high school, you may be referred for more individualized employment services.	Funding for day services is available *after you graduate from high school, are 21 years old, and are eligible.*
After application and eligibility you and Nebraska VR will develop an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) which will take into consideration your interests, values, preferences, work considerations, training, job skills, job history, support network, and labor market information.	Your SC: ◆ Meets with you and your team to decide what type of day services you want ◆ Helps you obtain services ◆ Monitors the quality of services ◆ Checks in with you at least monthly
	Day services include developing skills for a future job in the community, supported employment, and accessing your community.
	All services occur in your home or community. You choose which services you want to use and how.
	Any DD services you already have continue. Examples are respite or residential services.

HOW ARE GOALS DECIDED?

School: Your annual school goals are based on your present levels of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP) and how your disability affects your learning.

Your IEP also has goals for after you graduate from high school. These goals are: where you want to work, where you will learn, and where you will live. Goals are based on your interests, job exploration, career exploration activities, skills, and abilities.

It is important that you attend and talk at your IEP meeting. You and your IEP team decide your goals. It is important that you, your school, Nebraska VR, and DHHS-DD share information about your goals with each other.

Nebraska VR	DDA
Informed Choice is a partnership between Nebraska VR and the individual by which exploration of options occurs at each point in the person's planning and service implementation.	When you are between 21 years old and retirement age, the main focus of day services is employment.
	Your goals are based on what is important to you. ◆ Your hopes and dreams are the focus. ◆ You and your team meet with your Service Coordinator to develop goals. ◆ Assessment of your skills identifies what you may need to reach goals.

Tip:

It is recommended that all students with disabilities and young adults explore services with Nebraska VR.



HOW DO I PLAN MY SERVICES?

School: You and your IEP team (teachers, principal, parents, and others) decide what special education services, accommodations, assistive technology and activities will help you reach your goals. During the year, you work toward your goals and complete activities in your IEP.

Each year, you and your IEP team meet to talk about your progress toward your goals, your skills, your abilities, and what helps you learn. Each year, a new IEP is written. The special education services you receive are based on your IEP.

Nebraska VR	DDA
The Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) outlines specific services needed to reach your employment goals and who will provide those services.	You and your team develop a person-centered plan. Your written plan identifies the services you will receive and who will provide them.
Nebraska VR staff work as a team to provide services to meet your employment goals.	Your team develops your plan. This team includes you, your family, your guardian (if you have one), any waiver providers, and any other people you invite. Your Service Coordinator documents your plan.
	You will have a Service Coordinator assigned to lead your team and advocate for you.

Tip:

- DDA requires Medicaid in order to receive waiver services.
- Nebraska VR does not require a person apply for Medicaid or Social Security.



FOR WHAT ELSE SHOULD I APPLY?

Social Security

You should apply for Social Security. You may be qualified for Social Security (SSA), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and/or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). To find out more, visit your local Social Security office or **www.ssa.gov/disabilityssi**.

When SSA determines you have a disability, Nebraska Medicaid will use that same determination.

You should apply for Social Security at age 18.

Medicaid

DDA requires that you apply for Medicaid benefits and accept if qualified. Medicaid provides a federal match to state funding, so DDA can fund services for more people. You should apply for Medicaid at age 18. You can apply through iServe at: **iServe.nebraska.gov**

Financial Assistance

You may be eligible for financial assistance from DHHS - Children & Family Services (CFS) programs, such as:

- Assistance to Aged, Blind, or Disabled (AABD)
- Social Security Supplement
- Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Energy assistance
- You can apply through iServe at: **iServe.nebraska.gov**

Other Resources

You may be eligible for:

- Local housing assistance
- Food banks or food nets
- Enable Savings Plan **https://www.enablesavings.com/**
- Easter Seals Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) **https://www.easterseals.com/ne/our-programs/employment-training/wipa.html**
- Parent Training and Information Center (PTI Nebraska) **https://www.pti-nebraska.org/**

Information is available from Nebraska 2-1-1, by the United Way of the Midlands. To find the help you need, dial “211” on any telephone or go online to **www.unitedwaymidlands.org/call211**.

Hotline for Disability Services **https://cap.nebraska.gov/**

AGENCY CONTACTS

Nebraska VR (Vocational Rehabilitation)

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Department of Education
P.O. Box 94987
Lincoln, NE 68509
402-471-3644
877-637-3422 (toll free)
402-471-0788 (fax)
marketingteam.vr@nebraska.gov

DHHS - Division of Disability and Aging (DDA)

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