



Illinois Department of Human Services

JB Pritzker, Governor 333 Potomac Blvd, Suite F. Mt. Vernon, IL 62864 Ph: (618) 244-0331 **Grace B. Hou, Secretary**

Dear Parents/ Student,

My name is Josh Conklin, and I am the Rehabilitation Counselor that oversees the Secondary Transition Experience Program. The Division of Rehabilitation Services is the state's lead agency serving individuals with disabilities. DRS works in partnership with people with disabilities and their families to assist them in making informed choices to achieve full community participation through employment, education, and independent living opportunities.

There are many programs that the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) offers. Some of those services are: Counseling and Guidance, Information and Referral, Job Placement, and the Community College Initiative. Your child's Rehabilitation Counselor will be in contact with you and your child after they graduate to find the best services for your child's need.

For individuals wanting to pursue college, DRS can assist you. For DRS to assist in funding for college, there is required documentation that must be provided prior to enrollment. Documentation such as FAFSA (Federal Student Aid) completion information and award amounts, tax returns for all individuals in the household, college acceptance letter, and the tuition and fee bill from the college will be the first things needed. Closer to graduation, a document will be either sent home with your student or be mailed to the address we have on file.

For individuals not wanting to attend college after high school, DRS offers job placement services. DRS assists your child with finding competitive integrated employment that will best suit their needs. Your child will either work with the Rehabilitation Counselor or with a Job Placement Specialist for assistance in finding, securing, and retaining employment.

If you or your child feel that they are not suited for college or employment in the community due to their disability, you may feel it would be beneficial to sign them up for the PUNS list. Being on this list allows them to work within a sheltered workshop and also aids in placing them in a center for independent living (CILA). There is a waiting period for those placed on this list and may take time for services to be offered.

If college or employment services are not of interest after graduation, please reach out to the counselor to have your case closed. It is always possible to open a new case if services are wanted later.

I look forward to working with you and your child throughout the school year and after graduation. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or my coordinator at the information below.

Josh Conklin, M. Ed, M. Psych
Rehabilitation Counselor (STEP)
IDHS- Division of Rehabilitation Services
333 Potomac Blvd, Suite F
Mt. Vernon, IL 62864
Main Office: (618) 244-0331
Office Direct Line: (618) 241-6846
joshua.conklin@illinois.gov

Beth Lewis
Rehabilitation Case Coordinator
Division of Rehabilitation Services
333 Potomac Blvd, Ste F
Mt. Vernon IL 62864
618-241-6904 (Phone)
Elizabeth.lewis@illinois.gov