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
Good Life. Great Mission.
DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Your high school, Nebraska VR (Vocational Rehabilitation), and DHHS - Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) 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 Developmental Disabilities (DDD) 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 DDD to your meetings to help develop your transition plan.

As an 18 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 graduate and are 21 years old, services from DDD become available if you are eligible.

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

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 helps people with disabilities prepare for, find, and keep a job. It helps businesses recruit, train, and retain employees with disabilities. Pre-employment transition services include job exploration, work-based learning, training opportunity counseling, workplace readiness training, and self-advocacy instruction. Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation, or VocRehab,

DHHS - Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)

DHHS – Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) provides funding and oversight for community-based services. These are available if you have a developmental disability (DD). The focus is to help you obtain employment, live independently, and access your community.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Do I need a guardian? 2

What services can I get? 3

How do I apply? 4

When can I get services? 5

What are the eligibility criteria? 6

How is eligibility determined? 7

Do I have to wait for services? 7

What if I am not eligible? 8

What if I choose not to participate? 8

What happens during high school? 9

What happens when I exit school? 10

How are goals decided? 11

How do I plan my services? 12

For what else should I apply? 13

Agency Contacts 14

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	DHHS - DDD
If you are under 19 years old, a parent or guardian needs to sign your application, release of information, and IPE.	You do not need a guardian to receive services.

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

If you, or your parent, have questions about the need for a guardian or POA, 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

Tip:

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 plan for employment goals. Includes services to help you meet your goals.*

Individual Services Plan (ISP): *DDD 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 goals, and goals for after you leave high school. This includes where you want to work (employment), what you need to learn (college or training), and where you want to live. As your interests and skills change your IEP goals, special education services, and activities may change.

Nebraska VR	DHHS - DDD
Services are based on your written plan.	Services are based on your written plan and available funding.
Once determined eligible: ◆ 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.	Once determined eligible: ◆ You get a Developmental Disabilities Service Coordinator (DDSC) to help you access services. ◆ Assistive technology, home and vehicle modifications, and personal emergency response systems (PERS) are available as needed.
Services are based on the job you want and what you need to succeed.	Once you are 21 years old and a high school graduate: ◆ Day services are available to help you find employment, volunteer, or increase skills needed to work.
	Funding is available on a priority basis for: ◆ Residential services to help with daily living skills and community access ◆ Risk services when assessed as a need Services are either specialized (by a provider agency) or non-specialized (by an individual).

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	DHHS - DDD
You can request an application: ◆ At your school ◆ At any Nebraska VR office. **To locate an office:** **www.vr.nebraska.gov/offices** ◆ **Online:** **www.vr.nebraska.gov/connect** Your teacher should talk with you, and your parent or guardian, before sending a referral to Nebraska VR.	**You can request an application:** ◆ At any DDD office in Nebraska. ◆ By calling (402) 471-3121 or toll free (877) 667-6266 ◆ Through ACCESSNebraska **ACCESSNebraska.ne.gov**

Tips:

Anyone can request an application for DDD eligibility determination. It usually helps to apply after first grade and before age 21.

"Ready, Set, Go!" *website (www.readysetgo.site.esu9.org) explains services available through DDD. Your school may also have a paper version of "Ready, Set, Go!"*

When applying for services from DDD, you should include Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) reports from your school. If you do not have these records, DDD will obtain them.

MDTs 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.

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 21 years of age before the next school year, you no longer receive special education services.

Nebraska VR	DHHS - DDD
There are programs for people beginning at 14 years old.	Eligibility can be determined at any age.
You must be determined eligible before you can receive services. Once eligible, a plan will outline your services. Prior to application and determination, there are limited group services that may be available for students who are awaiting eligibility.	By age 15-16, you should apply for Developmental Disabilities (DD). **See previous page (page 4) for information about applying for DD services.**
Eligibility is based on a physical or mental impairment that makes it hard to have a job.	Once 21 and a high school graduate: Day services are available to help you find a job, volunteer, or increase skills needed to join the workforce. **See page 2 for information about timeframes for other services offered by DDD.**
Services are available until employment is stable.	Services may continue as long as you are eligible.
	If you have Medicaid, it pays for a Developmental Disabilities Service Coordinator (DDSC). *If you do not have Medicaid,* a DDSC is available, but you may be assessed an Ability to Pay (ATP). **See page 13 for information about applying for Medicaid.**

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	DHHS - DDD
You must have a physical or mental impairment.	You must meet the federal and state definition of developmental disability.
Your impairment must cause a substantial limitation to employment.	Mental illness cannot be the sole cause of your disability.
You must be able to benefit from an employment goal.	Your disability must have started before you are 22 years old and be likely to continue for life.
You must need help in order to prepare for, get, keep, or regain a job.	Your disability must result in a substantial limitation in these areas: ◆ Conceptual skills: language, litereacy, 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
Nebraska VR works with your school and parents to collect information. This may include special education or medical records.	DDD works with you and your parents to collect information. This includes special education and medical records.

HOW IS ELIGIBILITY DETERMINED?

School: Every 3 years, your teachers gather information about how your disability is affecting your learning in school. Your IEP team (your parents, teachers and others who work with you) decide if you continue to be eligible to receive special education.

Nebraska VR	DHHS - DDD
Nebraska VR receives your signed application and required documentation. Nebraska VR has 60 days to make a decision. Nebraska VR will notify you of the decision.	DDD receives application and reviews all records submitted. DDD has 90 days to make a decision. DDD may request further assessment. DDD 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	DHHS - DDD
There is no waiting list at this time.	Once eligible, Service Coordination is available.
	Once eligible, a high school graduate, and over 21 years old, there is no wait for day services.
	Once eligible, residential services are available at any age when given priority status or when funding is appropriated by the legislature.
	A Registry of Unmet Needs tracks people who are eligible, but for whom funding is not available.

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	DHHS - DDD
You may be determined ineligible or no longer eligible. This decision is based on the severity of your impairment or if you cannot benefit from an employment outcome. Prior to making this determination, Nebraska VR must show clear and convincing evidence of their decision. Evidence includes trial work experiences.	If you are determined not eligible for services, you can appeal the decision. Instructions on how to appeal are sent with the written decision. Instructions include how to request an informal dispute resolution and a fair hearing.

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	DHHS - DDD
Services are voluntary. You may leave services at any time.	You may reapply in the future.
You may reapply in the future.	If you reapply, DDD may look at eligibility and does not guarantee there will be available funding.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING HIGH SCHOOL?

School: When you are 16, 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	DHHS - DDD
Nebraska VR works with your school to provide Pre-employment Transition Services.	While you are in high school, services are limited because DD services cannot replace services available from the school system.
Pre-employment Transition Services available: ◆ Exploring job options ◆ Work-based learning experiences ◆ Discussing training certificates, trade school, or college ◆ Teaching skills you can use to get a job, such as social and independent living skills ◆ Learning to speak up for yourself	DD services available: ◆ Your DDSC can attend school meetings to get to know your interests and goals ◆ Your DDSC can meet with you and your family to provide information ◆ Your DDSC can assist you with finding and applying for other services ◆ DD services, such as residential or respite services, are based on available funding

Tip:
Apply for all services for which you may be eligible.

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	DHHS - DDD
Transition services start while you are in school and guide you during the change from school to work. Once you exit school, you can continue to work with Nebraska VR on employment goals.	Day habilitation funding is available *after you graduate from high school, are 21 years old, and are eligible for DD services.* Your DDSC: ◆ 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
Nebraska VR helps you prepare for employment. This may include filling out applications, making a resume, and learning how to interview.	Day services include vocational planning, supported employment, volunteer work, and accessing your community. All services occur in your community. You can choose which services you want to use and how.
It is important that you keep in touch with your Nebraska VR counselor. You should keep appointments and complete your tasks.	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 DDD share information about your goals with each other.

Nebraska VR	DHHS - DDD
Your plan is reviewed every year. Your team reviews your progress toward your goals. The plan can also be reviewed as needed.	When you are between 21 years old and retirement age, the main focus of DDD day services is employment.
You are important to planning your goals. You should attend your meetings. Your participation in meetings and activities helps you reach your goal. You will also develop self-determination and self-advocacy skills.	Your goals are based on what is important to you. Your hopes and dreams are the focus. You and your team meets with your DDSC to develop goals. Assessment of your skills identifies what you may need to reach goals.

Tip:

Nebraska VR services can help you make the most of all your skills. This is their goal for all individuals, including those with the most significant disabilities. Nebraska VR can help you find a job working along with co-workers who do not have disabilities. Nebraska VR can custom-make job opportunities, support you in your job, or provide other services to meet your needs.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Section 511, prohibits sub-minimum wages for people 24 years old and younger. There is an exception if there is substantial evidence, over time, that the goal of competitive integrated employment is unattainable.

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	DHHS - DDD
You and your team develop an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). The process helps you decide on your employment goals. Your written plan outlines specific services needed to reach your goals and who will provide those services. Your plan includes who pays for services.	You and your team develop an Individual Service Plan (ISP). Your written plan identifies the services you will receive and who will provide them.
Nebraska VR Counselors work with you to identify what is making it hard for you to find employment. They help you make the right job goal based on your skills and abilities. Nebraska VR staff work as a team, so you may work with several people as you develop your employment goal.	Your team develops your plan. This team includes you, your family, your guardian (if you have one), any provider(s) of DD services, and any other people you invite. Your DDSC documents your plan in your ISP.

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**.

Medicaid

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

Other Resources

You may be eligible for:

- Local housing assistance
- Food banks or food nets

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**.

AGENCY CONTACTS

Nebraska VR (Vocational Rehabilitation)

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P.O. Box 94987
Lincoln, NE 68509
402-471-3644
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DHHS - Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)

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