

DORS
Paid Work-Based
Learning
Experiences
for Youth with
Disabilities

No. WBLE#19-1C



Request for Proposal

Maryland State Department of
Education
Division of Rehabilitation Services
(DORS)
2301 Argonne Drive
Baltimore, Maryland 21218

Release Date
Friday, March 15, 2019

Deadline for Application
No later than 11:59 p.m. EST
Wednesday, May 15, 2019

Notification Date
Monday, May 20, 2019

Grant Period:
Monday, May 27, 2019 to
Friday, December 31, 2021

This document is available in alternate formats

Proposal Application Guide

Name of Grant Program	DORS Paid Work-Based Learning Experiences for Youth with Disabilities
Authorization	Funding is made available through the U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services -Vocational Rehabilitation Grants to States #CFDA 84.126, Award #H126A180027. The total funds used will not exceed \$1,500,000.00
Dissemination	Friday, March 15, 2019
Deadline for Receipt of Application	Wednesday, May 15, 2019
Award Notification	Notification of awards will be sent by email no later than Monday, May 20, 2019
Background and Purpose	<p>In today’s changing economy, it is imperative that individuals with disabilities, including students with disabilities, obtain the skills necessary to participate in jobs available now and in the future. In keeping with its long-standing mission to prepare individuals with disabilities, especially students with disabilities, to achieve high-quality competitive and integrated employment, the vocational rehabilitation (VR) program is uniquely positioned to meet this challenge through the provision of transition services to students with disabilities and through its collaboration with external partners, such as educational agencies, institutions of higher education (IHE), Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRP) and employers.</p> <p>Consistent with the Workforce Investment and Opportunities Act (WIOA), which amended the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, effective July 1, 2015, the Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) seeks to specifically develop summer and school-year youth opportunities for students with disabilities, beginning as early as age 14 through the end of the student’s school year that the student turns 21; AND to offer and/or develop a program of services for each of the Pre-employment Transitioning Services (Pre-ETS) described below.</p> <p>Pre-ETS are similar to the regular ‘Transition Services’ but are geared towards younger students, beginning at age 14.</p> <p>There are five (5) distinct services that can be provided under Pre-ETS, as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Job exploration counseling; 2. Work-based learning experiences, which may include in-school or after school opportunities, or experience outside the traditional school setting (including internships), that is provided in an integrated environment in the community to the maximum extent possible; 3. Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or post-secondary educational programs at institutions of higher education;

	<p>4. Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living; and</p> <p>5. Instruction in self-advocacy (including instruction in person-centered planning), which may include peer mentoring (including peer mentoring from individuals with disabilities working in competitive integrated employment).</p> <p>Students will be ready for referral to DORS at various ages; so it is incumbent upon the proposer to have an array of services to meet the student’s needs. These services may be offered prior to summer employment, in concert with summer employment or year round. These services should be planned with the Local Education Agency to ensure coordination with the student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan.</p> <p>Appropriate referrals of students with disabilities are <u>in-school</u> students who:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Receive special education services defined in an IEP, including those who attend approved non-public schools, e.g. state operated programs, private or parochial schools, or enrolled in alternative placements; 2. Have a disability pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and who may be receiving services and/or accommodations. This includes eligible students with disabilities enrolled in any public or non-public school; or 3. Have serious health conditions episodic in nature and/or requiring continuous/periodic medical monitoring or hospitalization, e.g. sickle cell anemia, respiratory dysfunctions, kidney dialysis, multiple sclerosis, Crohn’s disease etc., and who may not be receiving special education or accommodations required by Section 504.
Eligible Applicants	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Proposer organization shall be one of the following: 1) organization that is certified by either DORS or the Maryland Department of Health as a Community Rehabilitation Provider (CRP); 2) youth employment provider currently contracted with a Maryland Workforce Investment Board (Montgomery or Prince George’s County); or 3) a DORS approved employment training provider that specializes in serving transitioning youth with disabilities. 2. Organizations must be in good standing with the Maryland Comptroller’s Office. <p>If the proposer is an out-of-state entity, they must submit a certificate of authority to do business in Maryland.</p>
Certification Statement	<p>Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion - Lower Tier Covered Transaction (form attached)</p>

Technical Assistance	<p>For technical assistance, please contact: Ms. Jill Pierce, Staff Specialist for Transitioning, Email: jill.pierce@maryland.gov</p> <p><i>Special Note:</i> All questions must be submitted via email on or before May 3, 2019. All responses to questions received by this date will be posted upon receipt at dors.maryland.gov and no later than Wednesday, May 8, 2019.</p>
Total Number of Awards	One (1) 3- year MOU with two (2) one-year options for summer Work-Based Learning Experience for a total of 260 students to be served.
Total Funding Available	\$1,500,000.00 (Year 1 - \$412,000.00; Year 2 - \$488,000.00; & Year 3 - \$600,000.00)
Number of Students Served	<p>The summer program should serve;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75 students Year 1; and Options • Up to 85 students Year 2, and • Up to 100 students Year 3. •
Grant Period	Monday, May 27, 2019 to Friday, December 31, 2021
Renewable	At sole discretion of MSDE/DORS
Geographic Area	Prince George's County, Maryland
Program Requirements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop Pre-ETS curricula and provide for each new referral, at a minimum, job orientation for basic work skills. This service will be required by all new participants. 2. Provide a variety of paid work experiences in integrated settings for DORS consumers/clients who have been identified as transitioning students, for a total of 5-6 weeks of summer employment per student employed at 20-30 hours per week. To the extent possible, these opportunities should be in positions which are consistent with the student's skills, abilities, and interests. 3. Ensure that DORS transitioning students are paid at least the current locality minimum wage. 4. Provide an array of Pre-ETS services, as appropriate, to individuals or groups of students. 5. Provide on and off-site workplace readiness training to support the development of competitive work skills and maintenance of the internship/work experience. 6. Identify at least one individual of the Proposer who will be responsible for the oversight of the proposed program. 7. Ensure reasonable levels of supervision for the students in the jobs. 8. Employ students through their payroll process to insure that the students are compensated in accordance with state and federal labor laws, including workers' compensation. 9. Submit the necessary tax information for the individuals and pay the required withholding taxes, submitting both employee and employer share as required by law.

	<p>10. Submit required student progress reports in a timely manner to the DORS grant manager that outlines the number of hours per week the individual works, work related issues, training outcomes, if applicable, work tolerance, and overall work performance. All progress reports on each student must be saved in electronic format. The timing of receipt of the reports will be determined in the Memorandum of Understanding.</p>
<p>Memorandum of Understanding</p>	<p>The recipient is required to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding which delineates the roles and responsibilities of partner agencies, including invoicing and reporting procedures (sample attached). Failure to comply fully with the Memorandum of Understanding and MSDE/DORS Assurances may subject the grantee to penalties allowed by 34 CFR 76 and 80.43.</p>
<p>Limitations on the Use of Funds</p>	<p>Funds must be used to implement employment opportunities in integrated settings for students who will receive compensation at competitive wages and offer current and/or development of Pre-ETS program of services as identified under Background and Purpose. Funds may be used to provide supervision by a new hire or by a current staff member.</p> <p>Costs incurred prior to the approval of the MOU may not be funded through this award. No funds will be allowed for staff meals or food. Funds may not be used for construction or renovation or to pay for indirect or subsequent time beyond the grant period.</p>

Paid Work-Based Learning Experiences for Youth with Disabilities

Proposal Evaluation and Selection Criteria

1. Proposal Cover **5 points**
Every proposal must use the fillable application form with information completely filled out

2. The Project Narrative **50 points**
The project narrative is an opportunity to convince readers that the proposed participation in this project is sound and deserves to receive funding. The Project narrative should demonstrate the proposed grantee's needs and capacity to meet the project's goals and activities.
 - a. Need for the project in the local area and how the project will meet the needs and the benefits to be gained, and in relation to overall statewide needs of students with disabilities and employers;
 - b. History of work with organizations or groups in support of employment of youth with disabilities (including numbers of successful placements and/or related transition services to youth with disabilities);
 - c. Evidence of competitive employment placements of youth with disabilities who are most significantly impaired (this includes youth who require supported employment placements);
 - d. Evidence of strategic planning and acquisition of competitive job opportunities with perspective employers, including roles of key staff;
 - e. How the employer ensures placement of students in jobs that are commensurate with their skills, abilities, and interests;
 - f. Evidence and/or description of any formal follow-up assessment regarding student or employer feedback (e.g. surveys, face-to-face interviews, on-site), including use of progress reports; and how will the grantee share evaluation records with DORS, schools and students for future planning?

3. Key personnel **Total 15 points**
Key personnel should include all qualifications, roles and responsibilities of staff assigned to the project, including percentage of time spent working on the project
 - a. Demonstrate that the project has the appropriate staff capacity and partners to meet the requirements of the project;
 - b. Describe generally the current partnerships that would support the project;
 - c. Identify the individual who would take on the lead roles;
 - d. Identify key partners (with letters of commitment);
 - e. Identify the individual or agency/organization who would be responsible for employer outreach and job development and placement activities;
 - f. Identify which partner will provide work based learning experiences (e.g., community rehabilitation program, employer);
 - g. List an explanation of any other staff involvement; and
 - h. Ensure equal access and equitable participation in the project of people with disabilities

4. Letters of Commitment

Total 10 points

Letters of commitment are required from all project partners, the local school system's Superintendent's office, and local education agency participating in the project. A good letter should contain the following:

- a. A statement acknowledging and supporting the goal and objectives of the project;
- b. The participant's expected gains from the project;
- c. The expertise, resources and/or financial contributions the participants is making towards the project;
- d. Financial contributions (in-kind and cash) should be quantified;
- e. A clear statement detailing the responsibilities of the partners; and
- f. Letters of commitment should be addressed to the proposed grantee. All letters should be included in the proposal.

5. Budget

Total 20 points

The budget and budget narrative should demonstrate the extent to which the budget is reasonable, is cost-effective, and integrates other sources of direct or indirect funding. All costs described in the project narrative will appear in the budget narrative and must have a corresponding entry in the itemized budget.

The budget must show costs breakdown and justifications, e.g.

- a. Each staff costs – number of weeks/hours per day/hourly wage, plus fringe
- b. Cost to develop Pre-ETS curriculum, if not previously developed, with a limit of no more than 16 hours
- c. Student costs – number of students/number of weeks/hours per day/hourly wage, plus fringe
- d. Administrative/overhead costs/percentage, and
- e. In-kind support, if used

Proposal Submission Requirements

Proposer must submit application in the following order

1. Cover Sheet (must use fillable cover sheet)
2. Abstract (1 page maximum)
3. Narrative (**maximum 10 pages**)
 - a. Line spacing of 1.0 with one (1) inch margins
 - b. Type face of 12-point font
 - c. Numerical page numbers
4. Budget narrative and justifications – Year 1. Budgets for years 2 and 3 are estimated budgets and must be submitted at time of this RFP. Budgets may be subject to change. Budget narrative and justifications are not a part of the 10 page narrative.
5. Appendices (are not included as part of the 10 page narrative)
 - a. Pre-ETS Program of Services (detailed description)
 - b. Resumes and job descriptions of key staff. *Note: 2 page limit on resumes with only information relevant to the project should to be included.*
 - c. Letters of support must include Local Education Agency and others, as appropriate.
6. Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion – Lower Tier signed and dated by proposer.
7. MSDE Assurances signed and dated by proposer.

Transmittal

Email/scan electronically the entire proposal with **blue** ink signature on cover page; OR
Mail one (1) original w/**blue** ink signature on cover page and 2 copies of entire proposal to.

Mrs. Beth Lash, Regional Director
Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services
Eastpoint Metro Business Center
4451-Z Parliament Place
Lanham, Maryland 20706-1843

Electronic (email): laura.lash@maryland.gov

Mailed and/or electronic copies must be submitted no later than 11:59 p.m. on Wednesday, May 15, 2019

Non-Discrimination Statement

The Maryland State Department of Education does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry/national origin, color, disability, gender identity/expression, marital status, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation in matters affecting employment or in providing access to programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. For inquiries related to Department policy, please contact:

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