



Level Up Overview

Pre-Employment Transition Services

2023





Department of Aging and Disability Services

- **Bureau of Rehabilitation Services**
- **Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind**
- **Disability Determination Services**
- **State Unit on Aging**
- **Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program**



Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

- The Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) is Connecticut's vocational rehabilitation program. We help individuals with disability to prepare for, enter and maintain employment through a wide range of services that best fit your need and will lead to your success.
- To be eligible for the VR program, “an individual must have a significant physical or mental condition which poses a substantial barrier to employment and must require VR services in order to prepare for, find and succeed in employment.”



[Welcome to Bureau of Rehabilitation Services \(ct.gov\)](#)



Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind

- [Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind](#) - The Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB) is the state's lead Bureau for the coordination and provision of services to all Connecticut residents who are legally blind or have significant visual impairments. These services include training and devices that help people who are blind function in the home and in the community independently; teaching children how to adapt to and learn in an environment - in and outside of school - that is designed for those with sight and; **providing services that help people who are blind find work or keep their job after blindness has developed.**



Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind

Legal Blindness is defined as:

- Legal blindness occurs when a person has central visual acuity (vision that allows a person to see straight ahead of them) of 20/200 or less in his or her better eye with correction. With 20/200 visual acuity, a person can see at 20 feet, what a person with 20/20 vision sees at 200 feet.
- In determining legal blindness, visual field (the part of a person's vision that enables them to see what is happening to the side of them) is also considered. A visual field of 20 degrees or less is considered to be legally blind.



Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind- Pre-Ets Eligibility

- Students attending secondary or post-secondary school
- Referred by Teachers for the Visually Impaired (TVIs)
- must have either an IEP or 504 Plan
- must be legally blind or visually impaired



Background of Pre-Employment Transition Services

- WIOA- Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act passed in 2014
 - Changes how public VR provides services to students with disabilities
 - Increased focus on collaboration across agencies, including schools
 - Regulations impacted AJC, Community Colleges, Adult Education who are Core Partners
 - Minimum 15% set aside for Pre-Employment Transition Services
 - “Potentially eligible” students with a disability between the ages of 16 – 22.
 - Receiving Special Education or related services under an IEP or 504 Plan



BRS Implementation of Pre-ETS

- 2015 – Created Level Up
 - Designated 10 counselors statewide to provide just Pre-Employment Transition Services
 - BRS will collaborate with Local Education Authorities (LEAs) to provide or arrange for the provision of pre-employment transition services for all students with a disability. Services are available statewide for potentially eligible students regardless of whether the student has applied for VR Services.
 - Contracted with CRPs for Youth Employment Services

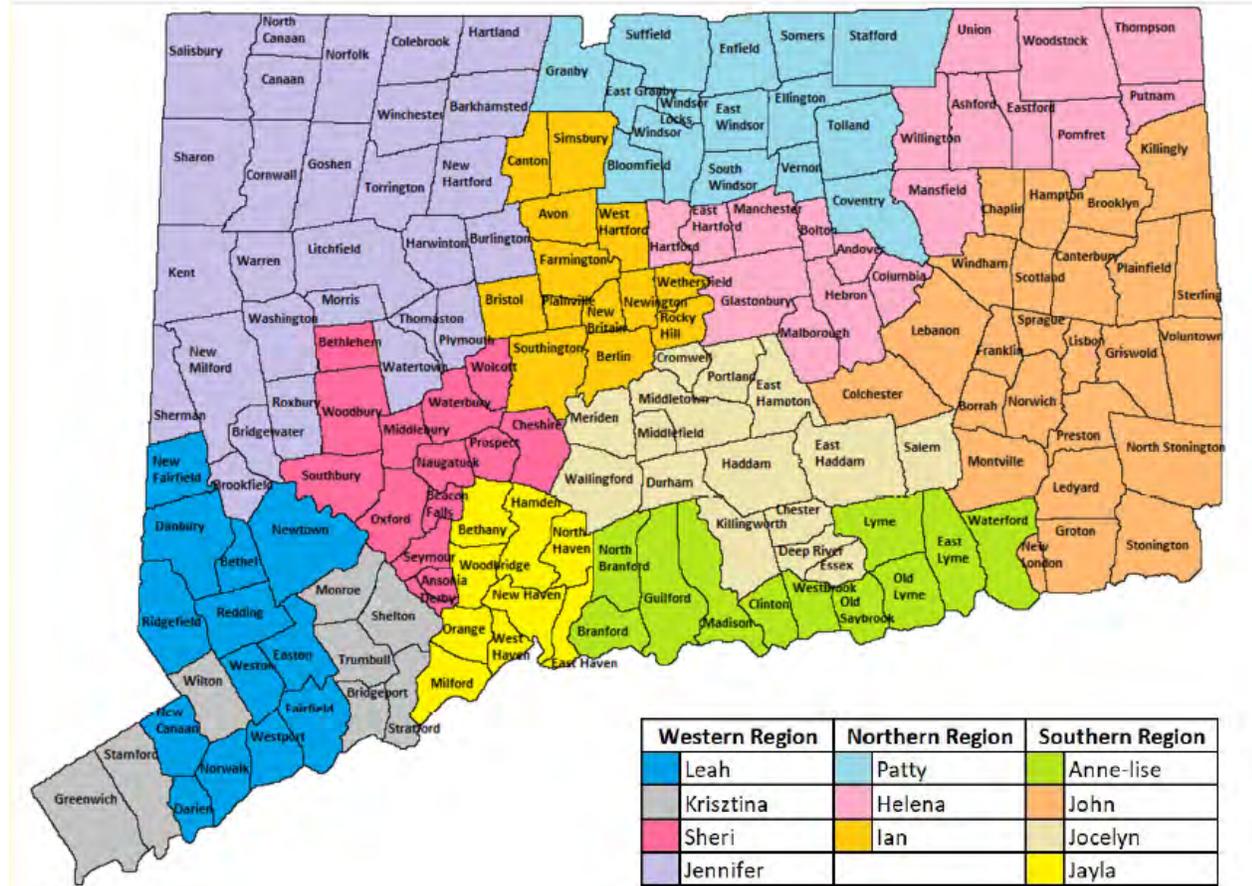


BRS Implementation of Pre-ETS

- 2017
 - Contracted with CRPs for Youth Life Planning Services
- 2021
 - Contracted with the Workforce Boards to provide WBLEs.
- 2022 – Youth Service Unit was created
 - 3 Regional Supervisors
 - 11 Level Up Counselors
 - 11 Transition Counselors
- 2023
 - Adoption of the NOI that allows us to use 7 approved VR Services to assist students in accessing Pre-Employment Transition Services.



Level Up Coverage Map





Pre-ETS Required Services- BRS & BESB

- Funds reserved and made available may be used for the required, authorized, and pre-employment transition coordination activities under § 361.4(a)(2), (3) and (4). The five required pre-employment transition services are:
 - Job Exploration Counseling
 - Work Based Learning
 - Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or post-secondary education program at institutions of higher education
 - Workplace readiness training to develop social skills
 - Self-Advocacy Skills



Job Exploration Counseling

- Provide information about careers
 - In demand industries
 - Career Pathway Programs
- Skill needs for different jobs
 - Non-traditional employment
 - Labor market composition
- Identify personal career interests
 - Vocational Interest Inventories (EPIC, WOWI, O*NET My Next Move)



Work-Based Learning Experiences

- May include in-school or after school opportunities, or experience outside the traditional school setting (including internships), that is provided in an *integrated setting* in the community to the maximum extent possible
- **Hours and length of work experience** may vary from year to year depending on job market, agency funding and are **determined on an individual basis.**
- Students who have **no previous work** experience will be **prioritized.**
- Can be paired with **on-boarding supports that promote independence** in the workplace.
- Can be contracted through a CRP or a Workforce Development Board



Counseling on Enrollment in Comprehensive Transition Programs or Post-Secondary Education Programs

- Students, families and providers are provided with access to 21st century jobs and the post-secondary education requirements or vocational training education requirements
 - Course offerings
 - Career options
 - Types of training for occupation
 - Career pathway information
 - Academic curricula, college admissions, access to individual support services (including disability support services)



Workplace Readiness

- Social Skills development focused on employer expectations
- Behavioral expectations
 - interacting with co-workers and supervisors
 - Requesting time off
 - Workplace expectations
- Employability Skills
- Job Preparation skills
- Communication Skills



Self-Advocacy Services

- Communicate, convey, negotiate needs
- Self-Determination focus
- Opportunities to learn about identity, rights and responsibilities, communication and leadership skills



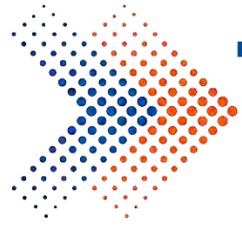
Additional BESB Pre-ETS Services

- Assistive Technology –BESB Vocational Rehabilitation and Children's Services work collaboratively to provide adaptive technology devices and training to enable students to have success
- Orientation and mobility training-Orientation and Mobility Specialists work directly with students to teach travel skills in the community, at a job site, or on a college campus

The logo consists of a stylized 'X' shape formed by a grid of dots. The dots are colored in a gradient from blue on the left to orange on the right, with a white-to-transparent gradient in the center.

Level Up Testimonial

<https://youtu.be/-7DEoLsKWhs>



Transition Service Testimonial

<https://youtu.be/Ru1721m7rAc>

Questions?





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