Helping Students Understand the Workforce Innovations and Opportunities Act (WIOA)

The Workforce Innovations and Opportunities Act (WIOA)

Students with disabilities now have greater services and supports in finding work under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act, also known as WIOA. Your disability should not keep you from working in the community. Your school and the Vocational Rehabilitation program will work together with you to create a plan for you when you leave school.

Vocational Rehabilitation

Vocational Rehabilitation, also known as VR, is a program that helps people with disabilities prepare for and keep a job. The goal is to help you become independent. VR will work with you and your school to provide you with services that include:

- Job exploration
- Work learning experiences in the community
- Counseling and guidance about education after high school
- Workplace training
- Self-advocacy assistance
- Applying for VR services

(34 CFR 361.48)

Once you have applied for and been found eligible for VR services, you will work with your VR counselor to create an employment plan. You will want to think about what kind of work you want to do before creating a plan with your counselor. Your employment plan will be based on your strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice.

(34 CFR 361.1)

Employment Priorities

The Disability Law Center is excited to see students with disabilities being supported in their determination to work. It is important to note that students with disabilities can no longer seek jobs below minimum wage without first applying for services from the VR program. For more information or help understanding student's rights under WIOA, contact the Disability Law Center. Utah students have the right to receive appropriate services designed to meet their unique needs.

(34 CFR 397.20 and 30)
The Disability Law Center (DLC) is a private, non-profit organization, designated by the governor as Utah's Protection and Advocacy agency. The DLC believes in a society where abilities, rather than disabilities, are recognized; all people have an equal opportunity to participate; and where all people are treated with equity, dignity, and respect. We work toward our vision by enforcing and advancing the legal rights, choices, and opportunities of Utahns with disabilities. DLC services are available free of charge statewide, regardless of income, legal status, language, or place of residence.

If you have further questions, please contact us. Even though our focus is on cases that can help as many people as possible - because time and resources are limited - we at least offer information and/or referral options to everyone who contacts us. Materials are also available in alternative formats such as audio, large-print, Braille and Spanish. Call (800) 662-9080 or apply for help online, and our staff will contact you within 1-3 business days.

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