

# FAQs

DC Department on Disability Services Rehabilitation Services Administration (DDS RSA) is here to work with you one-on-one to choose support services and career options that match your interests, strengths, and abilities. Our goal is to help you successfully transition from secondary school to the world of employment and discover your career.

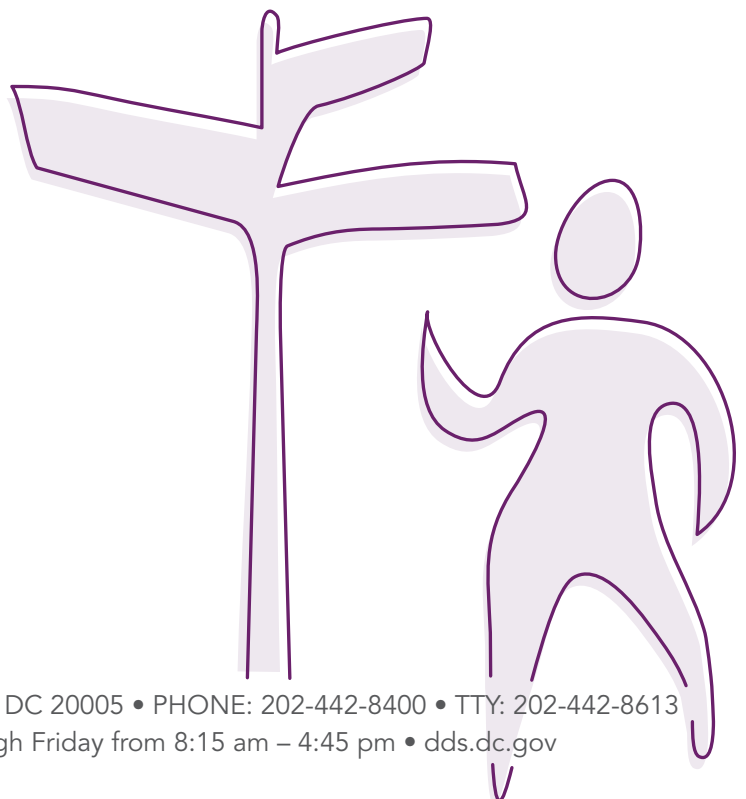
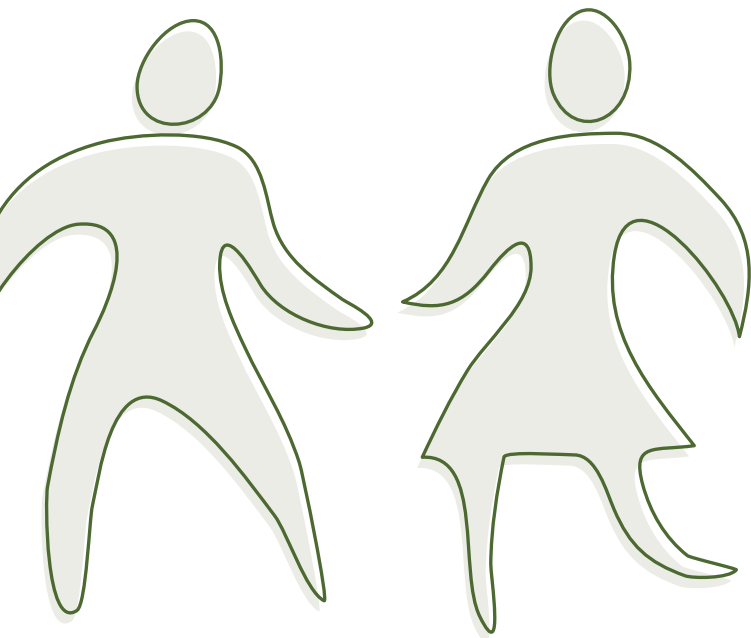
## 1 What are the eligibility requirements for RSA?

You must have a documented disability that is a substantial barrier to your employment and receiving RSA services will help you reach your employment goal.

- Most students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and 504 plans are eligible, but you are not required to have an IEP or 504 Plan to be eligible for RSA services.

## 2 When should students apply to RSA? Is there a specific age?

You should consider applying to RSA as soon as you begin to explore your options beyond high school. Most students apply when they are in their last two years of high school. RSA wants to be involved in helping to plan your transition from school to adult life and employment.



### 3 What do you need to do prior to graduating or exiting school?

RSA is required to develop an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) for all students who have applied and been found eligible for RSA services. An RSA Transition Specialist will be assigned to your school. This person will visit your school to provide information about our processes and services, and how to apply. Your school will help you prepare the documentation for your application, and complete a checklist to indicate where your documents are available so RSA can access them.

An RSA Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Specialist will be assigned to your school and will conduct intake interviews at your school. If you can not attend the interview at your school, you can schedule a time to meet the VR Specialist at RSA's office. The purpose of this interview is to talk to you about your interests and review your documents to determine if you are eligible for RSA.

#### 3a. Where do I get the application?

The RSA Transition Specialist assigned to your school will provide your school with applications. You can also access the application online by going to [www.dds.dc.gov](http://www.dds.dc.gov).

#### 3b. Will RSA accept older evaluations and assessments?

Yes; however, the usefulness of existing documentation to making an eligibility determination will depend on the document's relevance to a student's current level of functioning.

#### 3c. Does my psychological assessment need to be recent?

RSA needs information that identifies a student's current level of functioning. The VR Specialist will work with the student and their family to determine whether existing evaluations are adequate to determine eligibility.

### 4 When should your school invite RSA to your IEP meeting?

The IDEA requires IEP Teams to invite a representative from RSA whenever RSA is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for any of the transition services included in a student's IEP (34 CFR §300.321(b)(3) ). Additionally, RSA recommends that you invite a VR Specialist once you have been determined eligible and are receiving services to ensure that the goals of the IEP transition plan are consistent with the goals of the IPE. The VR Specialist will attend the IEP meeting if you provide signed consent.

### 5 What if your school invites RSA to attend your IEP meeting and they are unable to attend?

Your VR Specialist will make the best effort to attend your IEP meeting. If the VR Specialist is unable to attend, s/he will follow up with you to discuss the outcome and next steps from the meeting.

### 6 How often will the RSA Transition Specialists and RSA Vocational Rehabilitation Specialists work with you and your school?

An RSA Transition Specialist will visit your school and provide an overview, outreach, and technical assistance on RSA processes and services to the school staff.

An RSA Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist will conduct your intake meeting. If you are determined eligible, your VR Specialist will provide guidance and counseling throughout the process and will work with you to develop and implement your Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

RSA will work with your school to ensure there is a continuous feedback loop so that your school and RSA are interacting and collaborating throughout the development of your IPE.

### 7 Where will I receive the services?

A VR Specialist will come to your school to conduct your intake meeting. If you are determined eligible, you will begin to work with your VR Specialist to develop your Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). You will work with your VR Specialist to schedule meetings at your school or at RSA's office in DC. (1125 15th St. NW 9th floor, Washington, DC 20005)

### 8 What are examples of services that I may receive?

The specific services you may receive from RSA are individualized and based upon what you need to achieve your career goals. Examples of services include career counseling and guidance, work-related training and education, assistive technology devices, job coaching, job development, and job placement.

#### 8a. Are services available if I am still in school?

If you are still in school, RSA can still begin to work with you and may begin to match you with employment opportunities or internships based upon your transition plan and based upon what is provided by your school.

### 9 How much will services cost?

You are not required to contribute to the cost of any assessments needed by RSA to determine eligibility. When you complete your IPE, you will also need to complete a Financial Needs Assessment. Depending on your ability to pay, you may have to participate in the cost of some services or equipment. You are required to access comparable benefits, i.e., services that are publicly available or available through your health insurance first. After your individual contribution and comparable benefits, RSA will assist with the remaining costs of services if they are necessary to help you reach the employment goal outlined in your IPE.

### 10 What will happen if I am incarcerated while I am receiving services?

An RSA Rehabilitation Specialist can provide information to you, conduct intake, determine eligibility and develop your IPE, but we are unable to implement your IPE until you are released.

If you are incarcerated while you are already receiving RSA services, we consider this an interruption of your services. Depending upon how long your services are interrupted, you may have to reapply for services. A VR Specialist will be in contact with your place of incarceration.



## 11 What is RSA's timeline?

RSA's timeline for services depends upon your individual needs and goals.

RSA will:

- Determine your eligibility within 60 days of receipt of your signed application
- Develop an IPE within 90 days of the date of your eligibility
- Provide services and help you prepare for employment
- Refer you to providers and help you with job placement
- Continue to provide you with services for at least 90 days once you have been placed in a job
- Close your case if you have been successfully employed for at least 90 days
- May provide you with post-employment services depending upon your individual and specific needs

## 12 When will I age out of RSA?

You will not age out of RSA. The length of your services depends upon your specific needs. RSA will only close your case and end your services if:

- You have achieved an employment outcome that matches your goal and IPE and have been successfully employed for at least 90 days

Or

- You are non-responsive, do not cooperate, do not actively work towards achieving your employment goal
- Your disability worsens and prevents you from working

You can reapply any time.

You have the right to appeal if you believe your case should not have been closed.

