



Rhode Island Department of Human Services  
**Office of Rehabilitation Services**  
**Career Planning for Students with Disabilities**

*“Helping individuals with disabilities to choose, find and keep employment”*

The **Office of Rehabilitation Services (ORS)** is the state agency that assists eligible individuals with disabilities to prepare for and obtain employment. An ORS Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counselor assists students, their families and school in planning the transition from school to employment. A VR Counselor has specialized knowledge of the impact of disability on employment, current employment trends, and community resources.

***VR Counselors assist students and their families in making informed choices by:***

- Providing career information
- Assisting in choosing an employment goal, services, and training that are necessary to obtain employment
- Assisting in developing an **Individualized Plan for Employment [IPE]**, and
- Providing information about other programs and services to help make a successful transition to adult life

***VR Counselors can help eligible individuals choose necessary services, including:***

- Guidance & Counseling
- Information about Careers and Resources
- Supported Employment Services
- Vocational Assessment & Community Job Trials
- Skills Training
- On-the-Job Training
- Work Preparation
- Financial Assistance for Post Secondary Education (based on family financial need and application for federal financial aid)
- Rehabilitation Technology
- Assistance in finding and keeping a job

***To benefit from ORS Employment Services:***

- Apply for ORS services early enough to make a good transition plan (two years before your graduation).
- Share information, preferences, ideas and questions with your ORS Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor.

***To learn more about ORS or to apply:***

- Contact ORS directly to set up a meeting with the ORS Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor who visits your school (see other side). **A parent or guardian will need to attend if the student is under 18 years old.**
- Visit the ORS website at <http://www.ors.ri.gov> for more information about ORS services and Orientations throughout the state.

***VR Funded Vocational Assessments***

Your Vocational Counselor will discuss with you the potential of a vocational evaluation. This will allow you to explore career options. Your Counselor can also help you decide where your evaluation will take place. The vocational evaluation may require you to leave school for up to 20 hours. Your parents and school will need to give permission for you to participate.

Following the evaluation a meeting will be scheduled with you, your parents/guardians, school personnel, the evaluation team, and the ORS Counselor to discuss the results. The evaluation will add to your transition plan in high school and provide information to help you develop your career goals as you move towards graduation.





**For more information, contact ORS today!**  
**ORS Counselors Covering Regional School Districts**  
 Call ORS (see numbers below)



**Assistant Administrator – JoAnn Nannig – 462-7850 – Email: joann.nannig@ors.ri.gov**

**East Bay**

**BARRINGTON:**  
 Kathleen McCabe, 462-7843  
 Kathy.mccabe@ors.ri.gov

**BRISTOL/WARREN:**  
 Amanda Marcaccio, 462-7853  
 Amanda.marcaccio@ors.ri.gov

**EAST PROVIDENCE:**  
 Sharon Morra, 462-7848  
 Sharon.morra@ors.ri.gov

**LITTLE COMPTON:**  
 Ann Marie Folcarelli, 462-7829  
 Annmarie.folcarelli@ors.ri.gov

**MIDDLETOWN:**  
 Amanda Marcaccio, 462-7853  
 Amanda.marcaccio@ors.ri.gov

**NEWPORT:**  
 Ann Marie Folcarelli, 462-7829  
 Annmarie.folcarelli@ors.ri.gov

**PORTSMOUTH:**  
 Ann Marie Folcarelli, 462-7829  
 Annmarie.folcarelli@ors.ri.gov

**TIVERTON:**  
 Amanda Marcaccio, 462-7853  
 Amanda.marcaccio@ors.ri.gov

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**PROVIDENCE:**  
 Valerie Williams, 462-7875  
 Valerie.williams@ors.ri.gov

Teresa DiMattia, 462-7900  
 Teresa.dimattia@ors.ri.gov

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**Students with Visual Impairments Statewide:**

Melanie Sbardella, Supervisor,  
 462-7917  
 Melanie.sbardella@ors.ri.gov

**Northern RI**

**BURRILLVILLE:**  
 Michael Lombardi, 462-7849  
 MichaelA.lombardi@ors.ri.gov

**CENTRAL FALLS:**  
 Dorian Havers, 462-7842  
 Dorian.havers@ors.ri.gov

**CUMBERLAND:**  
 Kayleigh McCarthy, 462-7834  
 Kayleigh.mccarthy@ors.ri.gov

**DAVIES CAREER TECH:**  
 Jeff Milete, Ext. 462-7922  
 Jeffrey.milete@ors.ri.gov

**JOHNSTON:**  
 Alicia DiMasi-Peters, 462-7840  
 Alicia.peters@ors.ri.gov

**LINCOLN:**  
 Dorian Havers, 462-7842  
 Dorian.havers@ors.ri.gov

**NORTH PROVIDENCE:**  
 Elizabeth Champagne, 462-7846  
 Elizabeth.champagne@ors.ri.gov

**NORTH SMITHFIELD:**  
 Elizabeth Champagne, 462-7846  
 Elizabeth.champagne@ors.ri.gov

**PAWTUCKET:**  
 Dorian Havers, 462-7842  
 Dorian.havers@ors.ri.gov

**SHEA**  
 Dorian Havers, 462-7842  
 Dorian.havers@ors.ri.gov

**TOLMAN**  
 Dorian Havers, 462-7842  
 Dorian.havers@ors.ri.gov

**SMITHFIELD:**  
 Kayleigh McCarthy, 462-7834  
 Kayleigh.mccarthy@ors.ri.gov

**WOONSOCKET:**  
 Elizabeth Champagne, 462-7846  
 Elizabeth.champagne@ors.ri.gov

**Southern RI**

**BLOCK ISLAND:**  
 Patty Ianiere, 462-7847  
 Patricia.ianiere@ors.ri.gov

**CHARIHO:**  
 Teresa O'Brien, 462-7835  
 Teresa.obrien@ors.ri.gov

**EAST GREENWICH:**  
 Kathleen Neun, 462-7878  
 Kathleen.neun@ors.ri.gov

**EXETER/W GREENWICH:**  
 Kathleen Neun, 462-7878  
 Kathleen.neun@ors.ri.gov

**JAMESTOWN:**  
 Patty Ianiere, 462-7847  
 Patricia.ianiere@ors.ri.gov

**NARRAGANSETT:**  
 Patty Ianiere, 462-7847  
 Patricia.ianiere@ors.ri.gov

**NORTH KINGSTOWN:**  
 Patty Ianiere, 462-7847  
 Patricia.ianiere@ors.ri.gov

**SOUTH KINGSTOWN:**  
 Patty Ianiere, 462-7847  
 Patricia.ianiere@ors.ri.gov

**WESTERLY:**  
 Teresa O'Brien, 462-7835  
 Teresa.obrien@ors.ri.gov

**Students with Hearing Loss Statewide:**  
 TDD: 401-421-7016

Karen Davis, Supervisor,  
 462-7867  
 Karen.davis@ors.ri.gov

Paula Berard, 462-7885  
 Paula.berard@ors.ri.gov

**West Bay**

**CRANSTON:**  
 Kristen Livesey, 462-7852  
 Kristen.livesey@ors.ri.gov

**COVENTRY:**  
 Carolyn Blessing, 462-7844  
 Carolyn.blessing@ors.ri.gov

**FOSTER/GLOCESTER:**  
 Alicia DiMasi-Peters, 462-7840  
 Alicia.peters@ors.ri.gov

**SCITUATE:**  
 Alicia DiMasi-Peters, 462-7840  
 Alicia.peters@ors.ri.gov

**WARWICK:**  
 Nicole Crossett, 462-7861  
 Nicole.crossett@ors.ri.gov

**WEST WARWICK:**  
 Carolyn Blessing, 462-7844  
 Carolyn.blessing@ors.ri.gov

**Transition Centers**

**East Bay Educational Collaborative**  
 401-245-2045  
 Coordinator, Jane Cotter

**Northern RI Collaborative**  
 401-721-0709  
 Coordinator, Cynthia Vanavery

**Southern RI Transition Center**  
 401-269-1107  
 Coordinator, Joe Walejko

**West Bay Collaborative**  
 401-941-8353  
 Coordinator, Therese Curran

**\*Ask your counselor about career exploration and career discovery services available through the Transition Resource Centers.**