TRANSITION SERVICES

I. LEGAL AUTHORITY:

Workforce Investment Act (P.L. 105-200), Title IV, Section 7 (37), Section 101 (10) (D) (i), (ii), (iii), (iv), 29USC Section 721 (a)(11)(D)(i), (ii),(iii),(iv) and 34CFR Section 361.22.

II. DEFINITION:

The term "transition services" means a coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within an outcome-oriented process, that promotes movement from school to post school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation. The coordinated set of activities shall be based upon the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests, and shall include instruction, community experiences, the development of employment and other post school adult living objectives, and, when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

III. POLICY STATEMENT AND PURPOSE:

The Office of Rehabilitation Services (ORS) provides transition planning and services for students with disabilities who have been determined eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation services. Students are provided opportunities for career exploration to enhance their ability to choose appropriate careers.

ORS actively collaborates with RI Department of Education and with Local Education Agencies responsible for the education of students with disabilities, coordinating transition planning and services. A formal interagency agreement and Memorandum of Understanding between DHS/ORS and the RI Department of Education defines the roles and responsibilities of each agency.

ORS has designated VR Counselors as liaisons to each school district to provide consultation and technical assistance to assist educators in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to employment. ORS counselors are also available to consult with private schools and middle schools. Best practice suggests students begin working with the ORS counselor two years prior to graduation or earlier if student is at risk for dropping out of school. ORS counselors are available to provide consultation regarding VR services to school personnel, students and families. Counselors are available to participate on IEP planning teams and work with the teams to coordinate the goals and objectives of the IEP and the IPE. Every effort will be made to assist the student to develop an IPE early in the transition process and prior to the student's graduation. (See ORS Policy Section 115.3 for detailed information on IPE development). Through

collaboration with the school districts, the Regional Transition Centers and community rehabilitation programs, opportunities are developed for career exploration, job shadowing, and work-based learning experiences to assist students in transition planning and career development. ORS can also provide consultation and technical assistance regarding vocational guidance and counseling, information about related services, employment pathways, labor market information, and consideration of accommodations or Assistive Technology to maximize rehabilitation potential. (See ORS Policy sections 115.6, 115.11, and 115.14 for a description of VR services).

ORS works with officials at the RI Department of Education to identify students with disabilities, using the student special education census.

ORS and RIDE work collaboratively in developing new patterns of services, focusing on career development and assessment utilizing work-based learning experiences, and providing job placement services for students about to graduate.

ORS and the State university and colleges have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in order to ensure that students with disabilities transitioning into higher education, or are already matriculated in a course of study, will have the accommodations necessary to enable them to fully participate in an academic curriculum, and other college-related activities.

The MOU with the Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) describes the collaboration between the IHE's and the ORS regarding the provision and purchase of such services as, but not limited to, reader services, note takers, assistive technology, other auxiliary aids, relocation of classrooms, and accessible residential facilities. (See Memorandum of Understanding for detailed information.)

IV. REFERRAL TO ORS:

In addition to the referral process described in ORS Policy Section 110.1, students may be referred to ORS by school district personnel, with the written permission of the student if he/she is at least eighteen years of age, or parent or guardian. ORS forms (Referral Guidelines and School Referral Form) are utilized to ensure that all individuals receive accurate and consistent information about the VR process, and that ORS counselors receive documentation necessary to ensure prompt determination of eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services.

V. TRANSITION ACADEMY:

ORS counselors may authorize specific transition services for students determined eligible for VR to be provided through Transition Academies that are associated with each of the Regional Transition Centers within the Regional Educational Collaboratives. Services may include Work Prep (#6096), job development, job placement, or job retention (See ORS Fee Schedule).

If it is determined that the student will require long-term job supports, the process for Supported Employment shall be followed. (See ORS Policy Section 115.14).