



### **What is WBL?**

Work-Based Learning (WBL) is a structured educational program which provides students with instruction at both the school and at an employer work-site. WBL experiences help students see the connection between the classroom and potential future careers, and they assist students in becoming career and college ready.

### **What is Work Release?**

Work release is not WBL. With work release, a school administrator releases a student from school to go out and work. The work experience is exclusive of any school involvement. No school credits are earned by the student and no general education revenue is earned for the time the student is released to work. Because work release is not a WBL program and not part of a state-approved program, careful consideration must be given to any liability for the time a student spends out of the school.

### **What are the requirements for an approved WBL program?**

In order for each of these programs to be approved and appropriate, the following requirements must be met:

- Career Seminar(s) with career exploration, work-readiness skills, safety, law, etc. (see Frameworks)
- Coordinator must approve student placement sites with employers using a Worksite Selection form.
- Individual training agreements between the school, students, parents/guardians and employers that clearly explains the responsibilities of each involved party. This must be completed and signed by all parties before a student is allowed to work during school hours or for school credit.
- Individual training plans that outline the specific learning to occur for each student and the intended goals
- Performance evaluation documenting progress towards goals and the development of employment skills.
- Verification of the school's liability insurance and the employer's liability insurance and work comp policies.
- Adequate supervision from appropriately licensed educators and worksite personnel to ensure adherence to the agreement, training plan, goals, child labor laws, and safety of the student.
- Documentation of safety instruction both general and specific to the job.
- The formation of a WBL advisory committee with at least 50% of membership from industry.

### **What are the licensure requirements for WBL programs?**

The Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) requires an individual coordinating one or more hours, paid or unpaid, of work-based learning experience to hold either a teacher-coordinator license issued under the vocational (legacy) teaching licensure rules of the state or a combination of a WBL endorsement plus a secondary classroom teaching license ([Rule 3505.4300](#)). It is inaccurate that teachers coordinating WBL experiences less than 40 hours are not required to hold the licensure endorsement. There are additional requirements for teachers coordinating WBL programs specifically designed for students with disabilities (000750). To teach the Diversified Work-Based Learning-ACTE-SPED program, the instructor must be licensed both with the WBL endorsement (or any teacher-coordinator license) and one of several secondary special education classroom teaching licenses. See Table C on the Minnesota Department of Education website for more detailed information on specific programs and their licensure requirements.

### **What is a Work-based Learning- Access to Career and Technical Education for Students with a Disability (ACTE-SPED) 000750 program?**

The WBL ACTE-SPED program (000750) is an approved WBL program which provides students with disabilities the opportunity to develop work readiness skills and participate in competitive, integrated employment. Work-based Learning ACTE-SPED is intended for students who require a special education teacher to supervise their work experiences due to the unique needs associated with their disability.



**Are skill development modules or the completion of piecework projects or activities within a classroom or other school setting considered a competitive integrated employment opportunity?**

No, these activities may be part of a career seminar course to help students develop employability skills, but they are not considered competitive, integrated employment. Competitive integrated employment occurs when the student is working full or part-time at minimum wage or higher, with wages and benefits similar to those without disabilities performing the same work, and fully integrated with coworkers without disabilities.

**Can an outside agency place students who are enrolled in a Work-based Learning-ACTE-SPED program in a WBL experience?**

Yes, with agreement of the school. However, these agencies serve as a placement vehicle and do not function as the employer or the WBL coordinator. The actual employer at the worksite and the work-based learning coordinator at the school or nonprofit under contract with the school are responsible for the training agreement, training plan, the supervision and safety of the student and the necessary documentation.

**Who decides if a WBL experience should be structured as a course versus a transition activity?**

Based on the needs of the student, the IEP team determines if the student should take WBL for credit or gain work experience through a community-based transition activity.

**Where is WBL documented in a student's IEP?**

If a student is taking WBL for credit, it should be documented in the course of study section of the student's transition plan. If the student is participating in a transition activity separate or in addition to work-based learning for credit, it should be documented in the transition services section (below the line) as a community experience. The student's present level of performance, needs, goals and objectives should all be included in her/his IEP as should the process for evaluating progress toward goals and objectives.

**How can Work-based Learning ACTE-SPED (000750) programs and VRS/PreETS work together?**

VRS can support school ACTE-SPED programs by assisting with student placement into work experiences, likely only for Category 1 students as of spring 2025 (see below). Note that the school WBL coordinator must always be the individual to supervise the school supported work experience, but VRS or VRS' contracted providers can also assist in that follow-up as well.

\*\*\*As of April 7th, 2025, VRS has closed priority categories 2, 3, and 4. Eligible individuals who apply for full general VR services and are placed in categories 2, 3, or 4, will be put on a statewide VRS waiting list. Eligible applicants in category 1 (83% as of now) will not go on a waiting list.

As resources are available, eligible participants on the waitlist will be considered for services in order of their application date and within the priority category open.

For more information, see the March 27th [VR+CP Updates bulletin](#).

For information about authorizing waiver Employment Development - Find Services for people on waivers who are on a waitlist for VRS services, see the March 25th [Employment Services Authorization Guidance](#).