

Education

Rehabilitative Services Administration

The first stop on your journey, whether planning on continuing school or looking for a job, should be Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). RSA provides a variety of services to individuals who have physical, mental, or emotional impairments that create barriers to employment and/or independent living. **RSA may be able to provide financial support, including paying for your college tuition or vocational training.** RSA offers the following programs and services:

- Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VR)—provides employment opportunities for people who have disabilities so that they may become or remain economically independent through work.
- Independent Living Rehabilitation Services (ILRS) Program—promotes independence through advocacy, information and referral, counseling, independent living skills training, and other services.
- Employment Support Services (ESS) Program—provides on-going employment support for people with the most severe disabilities so that they may maintain employment (after having successfully completed VR services).
- Rehabilitation Instructional Services—provides evaluation and instruction in areas of independent living such as orientation and mobility, communication skills, personal home management, and social-recreational activities for individuals who are blind or visually impaired.
- Sight Conservation Services—provides eye examinations, glasses, and other services to individuals 21 or more years of age who are receiving AFDC, GA or SSI, and/or are AHCCCS eligible.
- Arizona Industries for the Blind—is a state-operated business that provides training and employment opportunities for individuals who are blind or who have other severe disabilities.
- Business Enterprise Program—provides opportunities for individuals from the VR program who are blind and/or visually impaired to operate merchandising businesses, including food service facilities in public and private buildings under state agency management.

Please contact the Program Administrator's Office, 1789 W. Jefferson, 2nd floor, Phoenix, AZ 85007, 602-542-3332 or 1-800-563-1221, for more information regarding RSA and to be referred to the nearest RSA office. The RSA Handbook is contained in Resources, Section 8, of your manual.

This information was taken from RSA's Handbook for All Applicants and Individuals Who Are Eligible for RSA Services.



General Information

First, apply for admittance to the school or schools of your choice. School admissions are handled directly through the admission's office.

Your Responsibilities

After being admitted, contact Disability Resources for Students (DRS) to request accommodations. Be prepared to provide documentation specifying the nature of your disability. Schedule a meeting with a counselor to complete all the paperwork. Be aware that there are many differences between college disability resources and high school programs.

The following pertain to the college program:

- Students must register themselves for special services and accommodations.
- Parents have limited involvement in planning education and accommodations.
- Students need to disclose needs to the DRS office.
- Students are expected to do college level work without changes to the curriculum.

Schools' Responsibilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires institutions of higher education to provide reasonable accommodations to individuals with a documented disability.

Services and accommodations may vary from school to school, but generally include the following:

- In-Class Testing Accommodations—may include scribes, alternative print formats, extended time, adaptive equipment, and rooms with reduced distractions.
- Note Taking—School will pay an independent contractor to take notes.
- Alternative Format Services—may include taped text, Braille, large print, etc.).
- American Sign Language and Oral Interpreting—ensures equal access for enrolled students who are deaf/hard-of-hearing.
- On-Campus Transportation—is available to students, faculty, staff, and guests with permanent or temporary physical disabilities.
- Equipment Check-Out—Equipment, such as, electric/manual wheelchairs, Assistant Listening Devices (ALD), etc. may be available for use.
- Lab Accommodations—may include lab assistants and specialized adaptive equipment.
- Software—may include software for a student's home computer.
- Tutoring—The school would provide needed tutoring services.

Don't wait to ask for help. Plan in advance because the time needed to obtain approval for these services varies depending on the services.

- Books on tape may take up to eight weeks to receive.
- Software and interpreters can take four to eight weeks.
- Scribes and note takers two weeks.
- Extended time for tests may only take a few days.

It pays to stay in close contact with your Disability Resource Office.

University, Arizona State

Arizona State University has several different programs for students with special needs. The following information was obtained from ASU's website, www.asu.edu/drs.

Disability Resources for Students (DRS)

After you are admitted to the university, immediately contact DRS to request accommodations. Contact DRS at

Disability Resources for Students
 P.O. Box 873202
 Arizona State University
 Tempe, AZ 85287
 Phone: 480-965-1234
 TDD: 480-965-9000
 E-mail: Disability-Q
www.asu.edu/drs
 First floor of the Matthew's Center Building

TRiO Student Support Services

TRiO Student Support Services (SSS) is a federally funded program designed to increase the college retention and graduation rates of students with disabilities and facilitate their process of transition from one level of higher education to the next.

TRiO is limited to 270 participants. One-third of TRiO students must meet low-income guidelines. Students eligible for the program must have a documented disability, be a citizen or permanent residence of the United States, be currently enrolled or accepted for enrollment for the upcoming semester in an undergraduate program, and have an academic need for support services.

Services include the following: academic tutoring by trained peer tutors, peer academic coaching program, cultural events and motivational speakers, academic enhancements and study skills workshops, ACCESS employment program career development, internships, and employment skills training from business and community members, Hewlett Packard Adaptive Technology Lab and Computer Lab



Assistants, and Software instruction in adaptive and professional applications. Contact a DRS Disability Specialist or TRiO staff to obtain an application. Complete the application and return it to TRiO.

DRS Scholarship Fund

ASU's DRS has one of the largest endowment and Regent Scholarship programs for students with disabilities, with awards ranging from \$200 to \$1,250. To qualify, undergraduate applicants must meet ALL of the following criteria, listed below in order of importance:

- Have 2.5 cumulative GPA or higher
- Establish financial need
- Be pursuing a full-time degree program at ASU
- Be registered with Disability Resources for Students as a qualified student with a disability
- Submit a two-page, double-spaced personal statement about financial need, academic and career goals
- Provide a letter of reference from an academic professional

Please go to www.asu.edu/drs/scholarships.html for a listing of scholarships available and additional requirements.

Community College, Chandler-Gilbert

DRS Office

Once accepted, the student must present him/herself to the DRS Office to request services and accommodations. This includes documentation specifying the nature of the disability. The student should contact Jodi Richardson at 480-732-7050.

Chandler-Gilbert Community College, Disability Resources & Services, Student Handbook is available on the web at www.cgc.maricopa.edu/drs. This is a great resource guide to obtain more information about the policies, procedures, and resources for students with disabilities.

Vocational Schools, University of Phoenix

Programs and Degrees

- Accounting
- Administration
- Business
- Counseling
- Criminal Justice
- Education
- Human Services

- Management
- Marketing
- Nursing
- Technology

www.universityofphoenix.campus.com

East Valley Institute of Technology (EVIT)

EVIT is a joint technical district that provides free educational opportunities to students still in high school. Students attend high school for a half-day and then go to EVIT for a half-day. EVIT provides hands-on classroom training for a career in anything from computer networking to welding or law enforcement. Transportation is available from many of the local district schools.

EVIT

1601 W. Main St., Mesa, AZ 85201

www.evit.com

Junior High and High School Students with Disabilities Should Be Encouraged To Pursue Post-Secondary Education Opportunities, Presentation by Leona Gordon, Participant in SWI Leadership Training Institute

Leona is a junior at the University of Arizona pursuing a degree in Family Studies and Human Development. As a disabled student attending college, she has learned a great deal about how to advocate effectively for herself. She prepared the following presentation for Junior High and High school students with disabilities.

What information should Junior High and High School students with disabilities be given about Post-Secondary Education?

- A multitude of resources are available to assist with planning post-secondary education.
- Schools are required to provide accommodations to students with disabilities.
- Funding is available to help cover the costs of education.
- Resources are available to assist with issues that occur outside of the classroom.

Resources for planning

- Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)—DDD assists developmentally disabled people to set goals as well as find and coordinate community resources that can be used to help achieve goals.
- Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)—VR assists people with disabilities in developing a plan for employment. VR also provides resources for clients to



receive the education that is necessary for them to pursue their employment goals.

Resources provided by the Postsecondary school

- All have some form of disability resource center in order to accommodate students with disabilities.
- All are required to provide reasonable accommodations so that students with disabilities can participate fully in classroom activities.
- All receive dedicated funds targeted to students with disabilities.
- Some institutions have enhanced services in some areas.

Resources for funding

- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Scholarships
- Grants

Resources for issues that occur outside of the classroom

- Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)—VR may cover expenses for adaptive equipment needed for students to complete homework outside of class.
- VR also may cover expensed related to adaptations for independent living.

Why should Junior High and High School students with a disability be encouraged to pursue a post-secondary education?

- Those individuals who possess post-secondary degrees from colleges, universities, or vocational institutions have higher incomes than those who don't.
- By preparing for a post-secondary education, the individual will become more independent and responsible for their future.

How can Junior High and High School students with disabilities be encouraged to pursue a post-secondary education?

- Select target colleges/universities programs.
- Complete required state standard credits.
- Prepare for admissions screening.
- Acquire needed study skills.
- Arrange for needed post-secondary accommodations.

Resources

- Children's Clinics for Rehabilitative Services, www.childrensclinics.org
- Direct Center for Independence, Inc., www.directilc.org
- Students with Disabilities Preparing for Post-Secondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities, www.ed.gov