

2017 - 2021

Career Consultant Implementation Guide

Linking Learning to Careers

*Linking Learning
to Careers* 



VocRehab Vermont

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SECTION 1

Introduction to Linking Learning to Careers (LLC)

Linking Learning to Careers (LLC) is an exciting new opportunity to improve career and college readiness outcomes for Vermont high school students with disabilities. This 5-year statewide initiative will build on effective career exploration and employment services already provided to students, and engage them in additional experiences, called **enhanced services**, that will help them to successfully transition from high school into adulthood. These services include college and career exploration opportunities, work-based learning experiences, and assistive technology supports in addition to the high-quality transition assistance already available through VocRehab. Each student will also develop an LCC Plan that reflects their aspirations and experiences, and guides informed choices regarding their future.

LLC creates a powerful partnership between VocRehab VT and Community College of VT, VABIR, the Agency of Education, and high schools and career and technical educational centers throughout the state, and others. It will also operate as part of a 5-year rigorous evaluation study supported by Mathematica Policy Research. The results of the evaluation will provide qualitative and quantitative evidence of the impacts of LLC services on students' early career outcomes including paid competitive employment, postsecondary school enrollment, and improved confidence to achieve career goals. The results of the study will drive evidence-based practice and systems change for VocRehab, its Vermont partners, and others across the country.

Purpose of the Guide

Career Consultants are those individuals in VocRehab Vermont district offices across the state that have primary responsibility for implementing LLC. As part of that responsibility they plan, arrange for, and assess the delivery of enhanced services for high school students with disabilities. The Career Consultants are the face of LLC at the district level with students and families, with special educators and other school personnel, with Community College of Vermont and other post-secondary faculty and administrators, and with others in the community.

This guide is intended to provide all of the information needed to support Career Consultants to successfully implement LLC in Vermont. It describes all elements of the LLC project and the steps and processes that lead to high quality practice in the field.

SECTION 2

Career Consultant Job Description

Roles & Responsibilities

As noted in the opening section of this guide, Career Consultants are those individuals that have primary responsibility for implementing LLC at the local or district level. As part of that responsibility they plan, arrange for, and assess the delivery of enhanced services for high school students with disabilities. The Career Consultants are the face of LLC at the district level with students and families, with special educators and other school personnel, with Community College of Vermont and other post-secondary faculty and administrators, and with others in the community.

Career Consultants are employees of the Vermont Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VocRehab) in the Agency of Human Services. Work is performed under the supervision of VocRehab regional managers or senior counselors at the respective district offices where Career Consultants are stationed. These positions also operate in close partnership with Community College of Vermont.

More specifically, Career Consultants:

- ✓ Plan outreach efforts to communicate with schools about LLC in collaboration with the district Transition Counselor and Youth Employment Specialist (youth team).
- ✓ Conduct outreach to students and families to introduce them to the exciting opportunity that is the LLC project in collaboration with the youth team. Such outreach includes an explanation of LLC and the importance of the core and enhanced services groups as well as the randomization process.
- ✓ Obtain signed informed consent forms from parents/guardians of students and the students who wish to participate in LLC, complete a baseline survey with them, enter the student's information into RAPTER for random assignment, and inform students which group that they have been assigned to and explain next steps.
- ✓ Serve as the primary support persons for all students assigned to the LLC enhanced services group, in collaboration with their youth teams.
- ✓ Assist each student to develop an individualized LLC Plan* that guides on-going planning and assessment of progress related to postsecondary education and careers.
- ✓ Help students use their LLC Plans to identify which enhanced services will most effectively assist them towards achievement of their goals. Once identified, the Career Consultant guides access to, and supports the use of enhanced services.

* The LLC Plan is an interactive, living document that will help students to assess, understand and articulate their values, hopes and dreams, as well as to inventory their current skills and interests. Once articulated, these pieces will assist the student to identify goals and the steps necessary to reach those goals.

Partnership with Other Youth Staff – Shared Case Management

LLC's successful implementation requires that an effective **youth team** operates in each district office. The youth team consists of the Transition Counselor and Youth Employment Specialist working in close collaboration with the Career Consultant in each office. This partnership is necessary because the Career Consultant will be supporting a group of students that are already enrolled as part of the Transition Counselor's caseload, and who may already have met and been engaged by these other members of the youth team. Furthermore, there is an overlap in some of the types of services that may be provided to students in each of these roles. Areas of potential overlap include providing career exploration and career counseling assistance, arranging and supporting work-based learning and employment opportunities, and assisting

students with longer term career planning. The Career Consultant can work much more intensively with a smaller group of students (approximately 35 enrolled over two years), as well as to support students with college exploration, dual enrollment courses, and brokering considerable assistive technology help.

Collaboration among youth team members can take many forms. It's recommended that the following practices be pursued to support collaborative efforts resulting in better coordinated and more effective service to participating youth:

- ✓ Plan initial student outreach and recruitment together – this will assure team agreement on which students and families are appropriate to contact.
- ✓ Whenever practical, plan informational meetings about LLC for students and families together.
- ✓ Schedule joint visits to schools to explain LLC and make sure all team members and their roles are articulated.
- ✓ Schedule regular meetings of the team to share information and plans for student services (once a week if possible).
- ✓ Work together on entering student data and case notes with the Transition Counselor holding primary responsibility for the cases in AWARE.
- ✓ Periodically review data and evaluation results to inform best practice.

It's also important to note that the LLC Assistive Technology Specialists need to be incorporated into the work of the district teams as much as possible (as "adjunct" members), as they share responsibility for youth enrolled in LLC. Sharing information (as well as student referrals) with them and scheduling joint meetings as much as possible will support the success of students and the project overall.

CC Role on Core Transition Team – Present Information & Connect with Schools

Purpose: Core Transition Teams increase capacity at the local level to develop, provide, and manage an effective transition process for students. It has been shown that this coordination of services from multiple agencies provides effective case management and enhancement of post school outcomes for students. Recognizing that communities will have their own individual approach, it is important that all high school special education staff, Agency of Human Services (AHS) staff, and community partners have access to the support of a Local Core Transition Team.

Membership: VR Transition Counselors or other agreed upon community partners will convene the Team. Core Transition Teams should include key members from the school, adult agencies and the community who are involved/concerned with the transition of students from school to adult life.

Format: Depending on the needs of the school and community, teams typically meet either monthly or quarterly throughout the school year. It is suggested that these Teams meet before or after other regularly scheduled meetings if they have similar partners involved. When discussing individual student issues, the focus is student centered and the planning should revolve around that student's individualized desired outcomes. Teams often work best when the roles of facilitator, timekeeper, minute taker, and observer are shared.

Staff Roles Matrix (CC, ATS, TC, YES)

As noted above, there is some crossover of roles among key staff involved in implementing LLC. In addition to the Career Consultants, Transition Counselors and Youth Employment Specialists, the LLC Assistive Technology Specialists (two sharing statewide responsibility) and Business Account Managers (in each district office) also play important roles in the project. In order to understand and differentiate these roles, the following LLC Staff Roles & Responsibilities Matrix was developed.

LINKING LEARNING TO CAREERS ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES MATRIX

A description of specific roles for key positions related to successfully implementing the goals and objectives of Linking Learning to Careers

	Transition Counselors	Youth Employment Specialists	Career Consultants	Assistive Technology Specialists	Business Account Managers
Initial Referral process	Fields all potential participants which come from the current Transition Caseloads		Conducts outreach to students and families to explain the grant and randomization process		
VR case management	Manages the VR case; serves as the hub for this information for CC and YES		Develops the Career Pathways Plan and completes documentation around work with VR case as needed		
Connection with High Schools	Serves as the primary point of contact for all communication with schools to ensure clarity around roles	Provides a supporting role for communication with schools	Collaborates with TC and YES for communicating with schools	Connects with CC for communicating with schools; provides outreach to guidance counselors for post-secondary planning	May work with HS staff on CWS teams and for developing connections with the business community
Connection with Employers		Provides outreach, individual planning, and arrangements for students for work-based learning and employment (e.g., job shadows; unpaid internships; employer-paid, competitive, integrated employment including at least one employer-paid job during HS)	Collaborates with TC and YES regarding appropriate job shadow, internships, and paid competitive job place opportunities for students related to their Career Pathways Plan	May provide consultation for on-the-job evaluation of AT needs	Provides primary and focused outreach to employers to secure work-based learning and employment opportunities
	Transition Counselors	Youth Employment Specialists	Career Consultants	Assistive Technology Specialists	Business Account Managers
Connection with other post-secondary programs	Continues to provide core services as outlined in Pre-ETS manual		Partners with colleges and universities to support development of career pathways to postsecondary education, including arranging targeted dual-enrollment opportunities		
AT Process	Arranges limited assistive technology that does not include extensive on-site consultation, delivery, and follow-up	Identifies AT employment related needs in collaboration with TC and CC	Completes referral to ATS and communicates with TC and YES about plan	Provides consultation, assessment, on-the-job evaluation, delivery of assistive technology equipment, and follow-up for revision and to ensure appropriate equipment and use	
General student focused activities	Continues to provide core services as outlined in Pre-ETS manual	Continues to provide core services as outlined in Pre-ETS manual; may provide group or individual activities in collaboration with CC	Works directly with students on career exploration and development resulting in a completed Career Pathways Plan		Identifies employers willing to offer presentations to students related to hiring practices, what they look for in candidates, opportunities for career advancement, etc.
Assessments	Uses assessment measures to help students establish vocational objectives as outlined in Pre-ETS manual	Uses assessment measures to help students establish vocational objectives as outlined in Pre-ETS manual; may assist CC with additional assessments related to employment as needed	Uses specific CCV career and college assessment tools as supplements in collaboration with TC and YES		

Staff Supervision

Staff responsible for implementing LLC and paid for by the Disability Innovations Fund grant from the Rehabilitative Services Administration (RSA) of the US Department of Education include the following:

Statewide Administration:

Rich Tulikangas, Director 1 FTE

Brian Guy, Assistant Director 1 FTE

Overall project oversight for Vermont VocRehab - Diane Dalmasse, Division Director (.05 FTE) and James Smith, Budget & Policy Manager (.1 FTE)

Career Consultants:

Eleven positions – Ten .5 FTE positions and one full FTE serving two district offices

Assistive Technology Specialists:

Two positions – 1 FTE each

The LLC Director is responsible for supervising the Assistant Director, who together are accountable for the goals and objectives of the project. They share a degree of 'supervisory responsibility' for the Career Consultants and Assistive Technology Specialists who are also funded by the grant. This includes providing overall direction, guidance, and resources for LLC, managing budget information and oversight, conducting data collection and reporting outcomes, and providing on-going planning and project monitoring.

And because the Career Consultants operate directly out of district VocRehab offices, their direct supervision and monitoring of daily activities is the responsibility of the Regional Managers and/or Senior Counselors (as assigned locally).

In addition to these grant funded positions, the successful operation of LLC relies on several others playing key roles at both the state and district levels. Some of these – Transition Counselors, Youth Employment Specialists and Business Account Managers - were identified above and included in the LLC Roles & Responsibilities Matrix. Project success also relies on building strong collaborative relationships with families, schools, employers, and other community partners.

SECTION 3

Timeline & Benchmarks

The following timeline outlines significant milestones for rolling out LLC over the 5-year duration of the grant.

September 2016

- Rehabilitative Services Administration of the US Department of Education awards VocRehab VT 1 of 5 Disability Innovation Fund grants for almost \$9 million

October 2016 – January 2017

- Administrative steps taken to receive and approve the grant, assign LLC positions to manage and implement the project

January to June 2017

- Convene project Implementation Team
- Hire new Career Consultants

February 2017

- Hire Project Director
- Begin meetings with key constituent groups – Transition Counselors, Youth Employment Specialists, Regional Mgrs., Business Account Managers, Schools and other State Agencies

March 2017

- Conduct kick off meeting to orient core groups with the project, gather information and discuss implementation, training, next steps
- Begin orientation and training for Career Consultants
- Develop subcontract agreements with Community College of VT, Mathematica and TransCen
- Develop evaluation and randomization plan with Mathematica
- Identify pilot sites ready to initiate enrollment and provide necessary TA
- Hire and orient new Assistive Technology Specialists

April 2017

- Convene initial meeting of project Leadership Team
- Conduct initial training and roll out TA plan for local teams

April to May 2017

- Implement pilot in participating sites

June 2017

- Hire two Assistive Technology Specialists (ATS)

July 2017

- Collect data from pilot sites; adjust processes and procedures based on pilot results
- Begin enrollment of eligible implementation participants in all twelve sites
- Develop data use agreements with Mathematica

August 2017 to December 2017

- Deliver TransCen training and technical assistance to each site (annual training and on-going TA provided each year of the project to each site)

September 2017

- Develop tools to measure program fidelity across sites – Mathematica and TransCen

October 2017

- Design monthly and quarterly collection of administrative and process data - VocRehab with Mathematica and TransCen

May to August 2018

- Enroll Year 2 participants in all sites

August 2017 through September 2021

- Conduct formative evaluations to assess implementation – Mathematica
- Implement adjustments to LLC interventions based on formative evaluation reports

June 2019 to March 2021

- Conduct 24-month follow-up survey – Mathematica

September 2020 to October 2021

- Complete formative evaluation – Mathematica
- Complete summative evaluation – Mathematica

SECTION 4

Student Recruitment

A thoughtful, systematic, student recruitment plan is essential to Linking Learning to Careers (LLC) success. To assist in that process, this section provides guidance and outlines the responsibilities of VocRehab for recruiting approximately 800 students into LLC, half of whom will be randomly assigned to receive LLC enhanced services while the rest receive VocRehab transition services as they normally might have. Approximately 400 students will be enrolled in Year 1 and another 400 in Year 2.

Eligible students are high school students who already have an open case with a VocRehab transition counselor. Targeted enrollment is for 10th and 11th graders (Sophomores and Juniors) who can benefit significantly from enhanced services prior to leaving high school. Students who are considered 12th graders/Seniors by the school, but who will be in high school for at least another year after enrollment are also included in the target enrollment population.

Recruitment for securing student participation in LLC has two key components – broad outreach to inform students, parents & guardians, and school personnel about this new opportunity, and targeted recruitment activities.

Broad Outreach Strategies

Student & Family Mailings

A primary way to make initial outreach to eligible students and their families within the district is through an informational mailing which includes:

- a. Description of the LLC project
- b. Letter inviting students and families to speak with their transition counselor* or career consultant to learn more about the LLC project and the services offered

* The transition counselor could provide initial information on the LLC project to families if they already have a relationship with them. For families interested in enrolling the career consultant could arrange a meeting with them to begin the process.

The letter can be found in the “LLC FULL ENROLLMENT docs” folder here:

I:\VR\All_VR\LLC Shared Docs\LLC FULL ENROLLMENT docs

Mailings can be used to kick-off enrollment for Years 1 & 2 of the project. The 2nd year mailing enables the recruitment of students who became eligible to participate in LLC after the initial mailing, and those who did not enroll in Year 1.

School Outreach

Another key strategy for informing and engaging students is assuring that key individuals in their schools are knowledgeable and supportive partners. Similar to informing students and families, initial informational letters can be sent to special educators, principals, superintendents, and other school faculty.

This letter can be found in the “LLC FULL ENROLLMENT docs” folder.

Informational Meetings

Informational meetings provide another opportunity for students and families to learn more about and enroll in the LLC project.

- a. Career consultants can host informational meetings in the community (i.e., schools, churches, libraries) or at VocRehab in collaboration with the other members of the local youth team (transition counselors and youth employment specialists).
- b. Career consultants and their youth team can identify eligible students and invite them to informational meetings.
- c. An informational session includes:
 - Overview of LLC services
 - Steps on how to enroll
 - Explanation of random assignment
 - Questions and answers

This letter can be found in the “LLC FULL ENROLLMENT docs” folder.

Targeted Recruitment Efforts

To meet the 800 student enrollment target it is anticipated that additional targeted recruitment will be needed after the initial mailings and meetings. To assist Career Consultants in this more targeted and systematic recruitment, Mathematica, LLC’s evaluation partner, will do the following:

1. Mathematica will obtain case identification numbers, grade levels and whether student is receiving pre-ETS or has an open case for students in the target population from VocRehab.
2. Mathematica will then randomly sort these students in batches of 12 by office and send to Career Consultants.
3. Career Consultants should focus their targeted recruitment within this batch of 12 students until one of the following has been met:
 - a. The student enrolls in the project/study
 - b. Parental consent or student assent has been denied
 - c. Outreach has been attempted six times without success
4. Career Consultants will receive information on the next group of students only after verifying that they have exhausted the previous list.
5. If a family or student approaches a Career Consultant about LLC, during the targeted recruitment efforts, these students will still be permitted to enroll in the demonstration if eligible.

Career Consultants and their local youth team may also identify other eligible youth to recruit that are newly enrolling in VocRehab services with a Transition Counselor or are moved into an active status.

Recruitment Targets

Each of the Career Consultants has the same initial recruitment target:

Year 1 – 34 students

Year 2 – 33 students

In addition to the tools mentioned above, additional outreach resources are also listed in the “Resources” section at the end of this Guide, and include:

- LLC Script for meeting with Parents & Students
- LLC Outreach & Enrollment Process info
- LLC Brochure

If early recruitment efforts suggest that overall target might not be obtained, Mathematica will work with the LLC implementation team to consider expanding the study population to ensure adequate sample size for the evaluation.

Tracking Recruitment Efforts

Career Consultants are required to track and document their recruitment efforts. The following information should be captured to track recruitment efforts using Case Notes in AWARE (discussed further in the Data Collection & Management section of the Guide).

- Date of outreach
- Type of contact
 - in-person (in school)
 - in-person (not in school)
 - Email
 - Telephone
 - Text
- Brief description of the outcome of your contact – initial outreach, provided information, declined to participate/not interested, enrolled, etc.
- Date of enrollment event and random assignment group – Core or Enhanced

SECTION 5

Student Enrollment

In order to enroll students in LLC for the full project and research study, the following steps are required.

Step 1: Parent or guardian and student provide written consent

After hearing about the LLC program through an informational mailing, an initial information meeting, or through personal outreach from a member of the VocRehab district youth team, a student's parent or guardian, as well as the student, will need to provide written consent for the student to participate in the LLC program. If the student is 18 years old or older, enrollment in the LLC program follows VocRehab's usual procedures regarding consent for services. (See "LLC FULL ENROLLMENT" folder.)

If a student or his or her family does not consent to participate the student:

- Will not be eligible to receive LLC services.
- Will be able to access VocRehab core transition services as usual.
- Will still be eligible to enroll at a later date, if the student and their family change their mind and want to participate.

Step 2: Career Consultant enters demographic data into RAPTER

Career Consultants will review the consent form for completeness and obtain any missing information. Requested information then will be entered into RAPTER by the Career Consultant.

Step 3: Automatic validation of RAPTER data

Once all data is entered, RAPTER will automatically check and validate it prior to random assignment. This step will ensure that the data in the system are clean, that the youth has not previously enrolled or has a sibling in the program, and subsequent evaluation tasks can use the data with confidence.

Step 4: Parent or guardian and student complete baseline survey

After RAPTER validates the information provided in the consent form, students and their families will be asked to provide additional information through a computer-based, self-administered baseline survey. The survey will be brief (about 5 minutes on average for parents and 10 minutes for students) and will collect the following information:

- Student and parent demographic and background information
- Parent employment and education
- Parent expectations
- Student health and disability information
- Student employment and education
- Student expectations
- Student limitations

The youth's parent/guardian may assist their student in completing the survey as needed. The use of this assistance will be recorded by the student within the survey. Career Consultants may assist in troubleshooting technical issues with navigating the web survey, but should not provide assistance with question intent or interpretation. If they have a non-technical question related to the survey, they should contact the study help desk at (833) 440-9475 or LLCHelpDesk@mathematica-mpr.com.

Step 5: RAPTER randomly assigns students to LLC services or usual services group

The Career Consultant will start random assignment after confirming the student and parent or guardian have completed the baseline survey. RAPTER will instantly assign students to the LLC enhanced services or core transition services group.

Step 6: LLC staff notify student and family of random assignment status and eligible services

Immediately after random assignment, the Career Consultant will notify students and families verbally and in writing (through form letters) about what group they are assigned – LLC enhanced services group or core transition services group. If they are assigned to the LLC enhanced services group, the Career Consultant will share the next steps regarding the services they will receive. Those youth in the Core transition services group will be able to receive core transition services as usual and will be provided information about these.

Step 7: Mathematica and partners will monitor enrollment and random assignment

RAPTER will generate reports for the LLC implementation and evaluation teams so that all partners can track enrollment into the LLC project.

SECTION 6

Data Collection & Management

The collection and management of data pertaining to LLC is vital to the effectiveness of the overall project, the rigor of the research results, and the replicability of best practice in the future. This section details the tools, processes and resources developed for LLC data management.

Tracking Student Enrollment & Activity

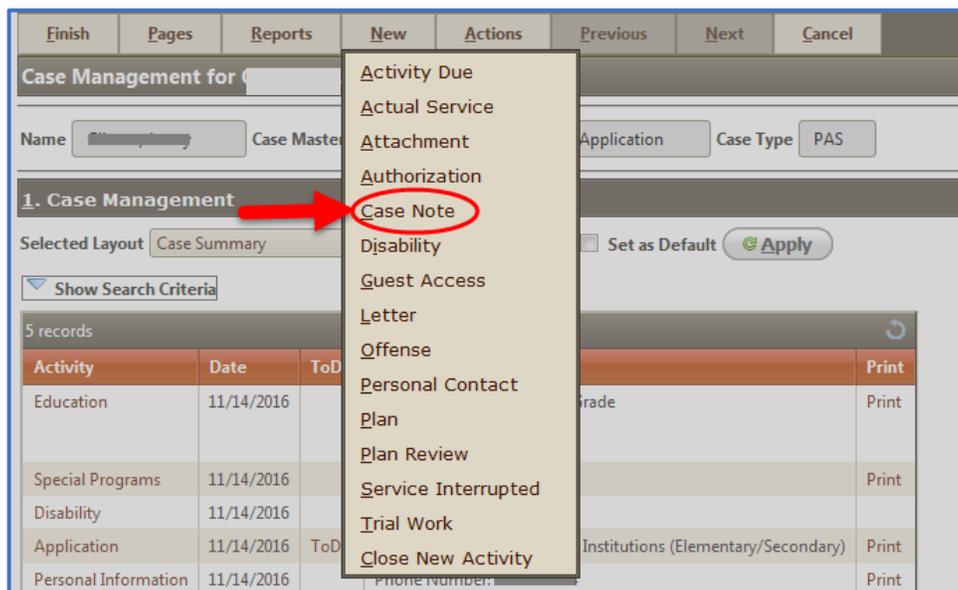
Overview

In the Fall 2017, VocRehab transitioned to a new case management system called AWARE. User training and data entry guidance is currently being developed and will be provided in this section of the Implementation Guide. The following categories and data elements should be recorded by Transition Counselors and Career Consultants in the Participant module of AWARE.

Outreach and Enrollment Tracking

Career Consultant activity needs to be carefully entered in a timely fashion during the LLC enrollment period. This will allow our evaluator to analyze the effectiveness of various outreach and enrollment approaches. The data collection process is detailed below:

- 1) If this is a new case, the Transition Counselor (TC) opens the case in AWARE and communicates to the LLC Career Consultant (CC) that a new candidate is available for outreach and enrollment.
- 2) TC grants the CC “guest access” to the case in AWARE.
- 3) CC tracks outreach and enrollment activity. “Outreach” is any communication or activity prior to completing the enrollment process; “Enrollment” is a one-time event, which includes the initial survey and random assignment (to either the core or enhanced group). Both are entered into AWARE using the Case Note function. Detailed instructions follow:
 - a. Navigate to and open the Participant record >>> click “New” >>> click “Case Note” from the dropdown menu.



- b. Select the appropriate outreach category and add a summary note each time contact is made.

The screenshot shows the 'Case Note for' form with the following details:

- Navigation: Finish, Pages, Reports, New, Actions, Previous, Next, Cancel
- Title: Case Note for [redacted]
- Fields: Name [redacted], Case Master ID [redacted], Case Status Application, Case Type PAS
- Section 1. General:
 - Entry Date*: 10/5/2017
 - Author: Guy, Brian
 - Category*: (Not Completed) [dropdown open]
 - Share Note:
- Section 2. Note:
 - Summary*: [redacted]
 - Enter Case Note: [redacted]

The dropdown menu for 'Category*' includes the following options:

- (Not Completed)
- AT: Note
- BC: Benefits & Work Incentives Counseling
- BC: Helpline
- BC: Note
- CC: Enrollment Event
- CC: Note
- CC: Outreach in-person (in school)
- CC: Outreach in-person (not in school)
- CC: Outreach via Email
- CC: Outreach via Phone
- CC: Outreach via Text
- EAP: Note
- EC: Note
- E-Mail
- Made Contact Attempt

A red arrow points to the 'CC: Outreach in-person (in school)' option. A red callout bubble contains the text: "Create a separate Case Note each time you contact them until they enroll or decline."

- c. Enrollment is complete when the student is randomly assigned to the Core or Enhanced group. Enter this only once in AWARE. In a new Case Note, select the "CC: Enrollment Event" category and enter either "Enhanced" or "Core" in the Summary field.

The screenshot shows the 'Case Note for' form with the following details:

- Navigation: Finish, Pages, Reports, New, Actions, Previous, Next, Cancel
- Title: Case Note for [redacted]
- Fields: Name [redacted], Case Master ID [redacted], Case Status Application, Case Type PAS
- Section 1. General:
 - Entry Date*: 10/5/2017
 - Author: Guy, Brian
 - Category*: CC: Enrollment Event
 - Share Note:
- Section 2. Note:
 - Summary*: Enhanced
 - Enter Case Note: [redacted]

A red arrow points to the 'Share Note' checkbox. A red callout bubble contains the text: "After RA, create a Case Note using 'CC: Enrollment Event' and then enter EITHER 'Enhanced' or 'Core'".

- d. If the student is assigned to the CORE group, CCs need to request that the TC remove their guest access from the case, as CCs will no longer be involved with the student.

Case Notes

As you work with students, capture normal case note information using the "CC: Note" category.

Casework Activity Tracking

[This section is still being developed]

Assistive Technology Activity Tracking

[This section is still being developed]

LLC Financial Transactions

[This section is still being developed]

Student & Parent/Guardian Consent

Enrollment in LLC requires the completion of three steps – consent, survey completion and random assignment. The form linked below provides the opportunity for students and parents to review and consent to participation in LLC and all that it entails. This form should be reviewed in person with the student and their parent/guardian, and signatures must be collected before any further action can be taken. The Career Consultant maintains a file of completed forms for the duration of the study and returns these to Central Office at its conclusion.

[Consent Form](#)

Baseline Survey

A second component of enrollment is the baseline survey. After completing the consent form, the Career Consultant signs into the baseline survey website where the parent/guardian and student each completes their respective surveys. The Career Consultant cannot advise or help complete the surveys, but may offer technical assistance.

[Administering the Baseline Survey](#)

[Baseline Survey](#)

Random Assignment – Use of RAPTER

To assess the implementation and impacts of LLC, VocRehab VT has partnered with Mathematica Policy Research to evaluate the demonstration. Mathematica uses a rigorous random assignment (RA) design that assigns the 800 students enrolled in LLC across the state to either the treatment or control group. RAPTER is the computer program used to randomly assign enrollees.

Random assignment is a process in which enrollment is equally distributed, ensuring that both the control and treatment groups contain a set of students who have been selected without bias. The random assignment memo (link below) details this effort, but in short Mathematica randomly selects applicants to see who gets to participate in Linking Learning to Careers. Selecting randomly is like a lottery or tossing a coin. It is a fair way to make sure that everyone who wants to, has a fair chance of participating.

[RAPTER Training Manual](#)

[RAPTER Website](#)

[Random Assignment Memo](#)

24-month Follow-up Survey

Roughly two years after enrollment, Mathematica will contact all participants to conduct a follow up survey. The 24-month follow-up survey will provide information on the potential impacts of LLC services. It will include measures of service receipt such as training and job-related services, work-based experiences, and CCV course enrollment and completion. It will also collect information on education attainment, paid and unpaid employment, earnings, goals and expectations, and self-efficacy and motivation.

Locating the students in the study—who might have dropped out of school or moved out of the district—and then persuading them to complete a follow-up survey two years after they applied to the program will require attention to obtaining this high-quality, comprehensive contact information and maintaining contact with students between rounds.

Project Evaluation

A rigorous, independent evaluation maximizes the information generated by this project. VocRehab VT partnered with Mathematica, an independent evaluator with a proven record of objective, policy-relevant research on projects for youth with disabilities, to ensure that the study's results withstand scrutiny and have the greatest utility for administrators, policymakers, researchers, and other stakeholders. A rigorous evaluation promotes confidence that the estimated impacts are due to the LLC and did not occur simply by chance or because of factors outside the project's control. The evaluation will involve both formative and summative components that draw on multiple sources, including administrative data and participant surveys, to track service receipt and outcomes up to 24 months after project enrollment. Several elements of the evaluation design have been described above.

An evaluation design report will detail the formative and summative evaluation approaches. Mathematica has developed an evaluation design report that defines the project's approaches to the formative and summative evaluation. The report specifies the MIS and administrative data sources on enrollment and service delivery, along with the protocols for obtaining survey data from treatment and control participants at baseline and 24 months after their enrollment.

Rehabilitative Services Administration (RSA) Progress Measures

RSA of the US Department of Education has established a set of performance measures that are intended to provide a consistent means of assessing project outcomes across all five state grantees. A copy of these measures is linked below, but it should be noted that these measures are being reviewed and revised in conjunction with the grantee leaders and project evaluators and should be finalized by 9/1/2017.

<I:\VR\CentralOffice\LLC Grant\RSA DoE\ RSA Perf Measures ATTACHMENT C 5-22-17.docx>

SECTION 7

Enhanced Services

At the center of LCC's innovative design is the opportunity for students to engage in a menu of enhanced services. These enhanced services are built on what is known from contemporary research as components which are associated with post-high school success for students and youth with disabilities. Career Consultants, in consultation with their youth team partners, will support students to meaningfully participate in enhanced services opportunities which in turn, will support students to achieve more successful career and post-secondary transitions. Some enhanced services related to exploring and pursuing post-secondary education options will be provided through a strong working partnership with Community College of Vermont.

Enhanced services include:

- Development of an individualized LLC Plan for each student
- College and career exploration guidance
- Work-Based Learning opportunities and focused employer outreach, which includes at least 1 job shadow, 1 unpaid internship and 1 employer, paid employment experience; other work-based learning activities may also be provided
- Access to Assistive Technology support, including consultation, assessment, on-the-job evaluation, delivery of equipment, and follow up
- Additional access to dual enrollment and targeted cohort college courses
- Mentoring with college students to model the potential to pursue postsecondary education
- Targeted funding for transportation for work-based learning and employment experiences

SECTION 8

Project Management

The specific roles and responsibilities of Career Consultants are articulated in Section 2 of this guide. But from a project management perspective, all the elements of the work of Career Consultants need to be combined in a way that results in efficient and effective practice. Two Career Consultants (Diane Torres and Marianne Langelo) were interviewed by our partners at TransCen (Kelli Crane and Ruth Allison) early in the project as a way to describe what this job looks like, as a *day in the life of ...*

A Day in the Life of a Career Consultant

What is your typical day like as a Career Consultant?

During the first two years of the LLC project, the Career Consultant assists in the recruitment and enrollment of students. This effort requires the Career Consultant to actively reach-out to students and parents so they have all the necessary information about LLC. Often the initial introduction to the student is made by the transition counselor who already has an established relationship with the student. Another part of this initial recruitment is getting to know school personnel so partnerships can be developed and strengthened as the Career Consultant will be working closely with school staff to provide LLC services to students.

At the first meeting with a new student, Career Consultants are responsible for interviewing them to assess their unique abilities and goals and enrolling them in the program. After enrollment in the program, the Career Consultants develop an *individualized LLC Plan* based on the students' strengths and goals, both short and long-term. Career Consultants provide services either in one-on-one or in group settings to assist students in building a plan for their future which may include career exploration, career training, postsecondary education or training and paid employment. Part of their job is to monitor the student's progress, adjust their LLC Plan as needed, and allocate resources to help them achieve their goals.

The Career Consultants' caseload will average 35 students of mostly sophomore and juniors but they may also serve some seniors and even freshmen.

What are your daily job responsibilities?

Career Consultants are responsible for helping enroll students in the LLC project and then to coordinate and manage the services so the student can meet their career goals as outlined in the LLC Plan. Specifically, the Career Consultant will:

- Conduct outreach to eligible students, their families and school personnel about the LLC project.
- Enroll eligible students into the LLC project.
- Administer career assessments and interpret results.
- Collaborate with the YES to set up work experiences and paid employment opportunities.
- Assess assistive technology (AT) needs and refer to and collaborate with the AT specialist.
- Determine student's transportation needs and develop a plan to address the need.
- Collaborate with Community College of VT and utilize their programs as appropriate.
- Attend meetings as required (e.g., transition pod meetings; local core team meetings with schools; IEPs/504 meetings).
- Participate in school functions such as Transition Fairs, Open Houses, Parent Teacher conferences.

What is the typical work environment?

As with any career, the work environment plays a prominent role in how Career Consultants spend their day. For the most part Career Consultants work out of their VocRehab office and spend about 4 hours a week at CCV. That being said, Career Consultants spend a lot of their day in the community meeting with students and families—where it is convenient for them. For example, Career Consultants meet with students and families in schools, local libraries, coffee shops or even the home of the student.

What are the necessary skills and attributes?

Career Consultants need to be skilled professionals with knowledge of working with persons with disabilities, vocational rehabilitation practices, and career counseling. As well these professionals need to be well organized but flexible enough to “roll with it.” Other skills and attributes that assist them in their daily work include:

- Strong communication skills
- Ability to collaborate with diverse partners
- Strength-based skills
- Being realistic
- Possessing a sense of humor
- Experience with Motivational Interviewing techniques

What are the rewards and challenges of being a LLC Career Consultant?

A Career Consultant’s job can be extremely rewarding and being a part of a new initiative brings with it an opportunity to influence project services and how they are delivered. Each day is different. Career Consultants have the awesome chance to impact the lives of young people by helping them chart their future. It is your job to help them tackle some of their barriers so they can achieve success in college and careers.

As a Career Consultant, you have the opportunity to also work with various professionals including educators, VocRehab counselors, and employment specialists. This team supports one another in delivering the LLC services with fidelity and Career Consultants have the support of the LLC leadership. The leadership team also provides the team with the necessary training so everyone can bring their best to the project.

Being part of a new project may bring some challenges too. Like any new project, details continue to be worked out. Change is inevitable. It could be described as “building the plane as we fly it.” The ability to adapt and roll with the punches is an important skill to have in this initial stage of the project.

RESOURCES

Project Resources

A number of LLC resources and tools have been created by project leadership to support implementation of the project statewide. The following list of resources can be accessed by Career Consultants and other VocRehab staff in a shared folder at: [I:\VR\All_VR\LLC Shared Docs](I:\VR\All_VR\LLC_Shared_Docs)

- LLC Project Description
- LLC Tree (visual diagram of project)
- LLC Management Roles
- LLC FAQ's
- Sample outreach letters to schools

Documents related specifically to LLC Full Enrollment can be found at: [I:\VR\All_VR\LLC Shared Docs\LLC FULL ENROLLMENT docs](I:\VR\All_VR\LLC_Shared_Docs\LLC_FULL_ENROLLMENT_docs) and include:

- LLC Consent Form
- LLC Outreach & Enrollment Process
- LLC Outreach Letter Template
- LLC Outreach Letter Addendum (meeting invitation)
- LLC Outreach Letter Response Postcard
- LLC Parent Student FAQ
- LLC Sample Script for Meeting with Parents-Students
- LLC Student Brochure

Other Resources

VocRehab Vermont: <http://vocrehab.vermont.gov/>

Working with youth/transition: <http://vocrehab.vermont.gov/programs/transition>

VT Agency of Education: <http://education.vermont.gov/>

Flexible pathways/work-based learning/ dual enrollment/personalized learning:
<http://education.vermont.gov/student-learning/flexible-pathways>

Special education information: <http://education.vermont.gov/student-support/special-education>

Vermont Family Network: <http://www.vermontfamilynetwork.org/>

Transition Toolkit for Youth with Disabilities:
<http://www.vermontfamilynetwork.org/services/transition/transition-to-adulthood-toolkit/>

VT Department of Labor: <http://labor.vermont.gov/>

WIOA and workforce development: <http://labor.vermont.gov/workforce-development/>

Federal and state child labor laws: <http://labor.vermont.gov/wordpress/wp-content/uploads//WH-30-Information-for-Employer-Child-Labor-Law.pdf>

Community College of VT: <http://ccv.edu/>

High school programs/dual enrollment/early college: <http://ccv.edu/apply/high-school/>

US Department of Labor: <https://www.dol.gov/>

Youth employment/Fair Labor Standards Act: <https://www.dol.gov/general/topic/youthlabor>

Office of Disability Employment Policy: <https://www.dol.gov/odep/>

US Dept. of Education: <https://www.ed.gov/>

Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services - Technical Assistance Centers and Demonstration Projects <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/rsa/ta-centers.html>

O-Net - Career exploration and job analysis: <https://www.onetonline.org/>

WINTAC (Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center) – Support for state VR agencies re: WIOA implementation: <http://www.wintac.org>

NTACT (National Technical Assistance Center on Transition) – Support for state and local education and VR agencies re: Improving post-secondary outcomes for students with disabilities: <http://www.transitionta.org/>

Center on Transition to Employment: <http://transitiontoemployment.org/>

Transition to Employment Toolkit: <http://transitiontoemployment.org/toolkit.html>