



## Getting Experience

Getting experience through job sampling/job shadowing, work-based learning, and internships, or volunteering is important to gain skills, and gain a better understanding if you enjoy certain jobs.

### Volunteering

- Not paid, way to get experience, try different jobs, meet new people, get references, temporary

### Internships/Co-op/Apprenticeships

- Paid or unpaid, learn job skills, get experience, build network and meet people

### Job Shadowing/Job Sampling/Work-based Learning

- Paid or unpaid
- Job Shadow/Sampling: observe someone in a job, ask questions, and learn more about the job itself
- Work-based learning: work for a period of time, usually with a job coach, to get experience

### Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) and Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP)

- No cost-they decide if you are eligible for services
- Can get work experiences and training: job shadowing, job readiness, job coaches, self-advocacy, communication skills, and more
- Services start at 14 years with pre-employment transition services (pre-ETS) and have an IEP, 504 Plan, medical diagnosis and vocational rehabilitation for people who no longer have IEP
- MRS is in regions throughout Michigan: [MRS Locator](#)
- BSBP specializes in people with blindness or visual impairments and are in regions throughout Michigan: [BSBP Local Offices](#)

If you have not reached out to [MRS](#) or [BSBP](#) in your area contact them by locating their office number or submitting their information form online. They can assist in your getting needed experience and training. You can then find out the following:

- ☐ How you apply for services
- ☐ Become familiar with their websites ([MRS](#) or [BSBP](#)) to see what services may be available and you may be interested in discussing with them
- ☐ Apply and they will determine your eligibility
- ☐ Think about the services you may need for soft skills (such as self-advocacy, social communication, self-regulation, self-awareness, time management, organization, self-confidence, and other interpersonal and self-determination skills). Think about the job(s) you may want to do, or you found through self-assessments to see if you can get experiences in work-based learning or job shadowing at businesses that may offer learning opportunities in your area of interest
- ☐ They will also conduct assessments and may go or get feedback on your IEP to assist with services that may help you become more employment-ready.
- ☐ Learn your assigned counselor's name and work with and develop a positive relationship with that person

### **Other Options**

- Applying for jobs on job boards, company websites, or social media platforms
- Find jobs through networking with neighbors, friends, family members, teachers, business owners, where you volunteer, and other places