



# COOPERATIVE WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAM (COOP)

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Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Offices  
of Special Education and Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services  
(Vocational Rehabilitation)

# Off-Campus Programs

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- Types of Off-Campus Programs Requiring State Approval
  1. Academic Programs
  2. Career Exploration Programs
  3. Cooperative Career Education Programs
  4. Work Experience for Students with Disabilities



**Cooperative Work Experience Program  
(COOP)**

# Off-Campus Programs

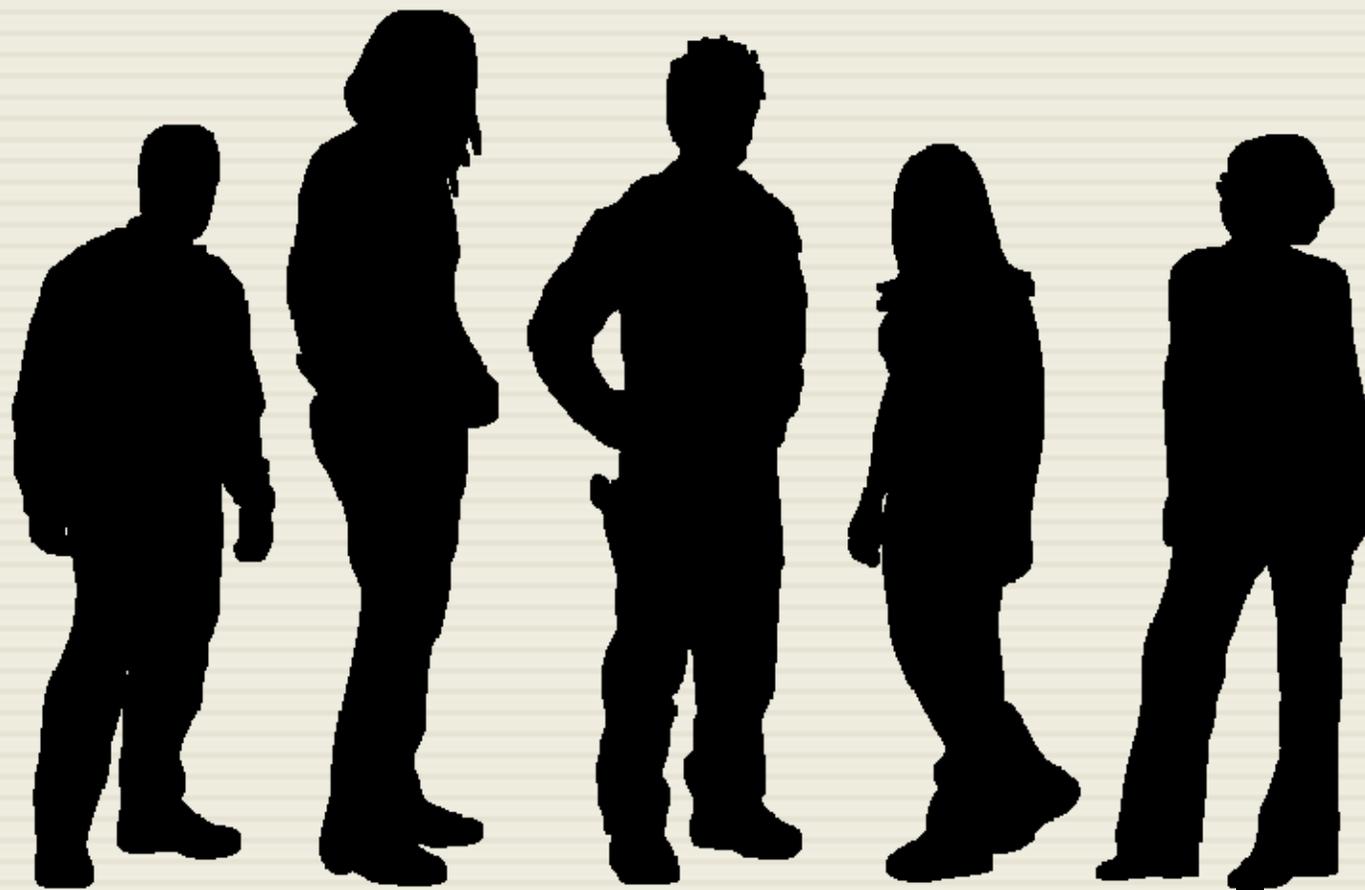
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## □ Types of Off-Campus Programs

### Not Requiring State Approval

1. The School Flex Program
2. Academic/Curriculum-Based Service-Learning

*Refer to “Graduation Handbook for Missouri High Schools”*



## Cooperative Work Experience Program (COOP)

### Program Guidelines

# The Program

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- COOP is a partnership with local businesses to provide eligible students learning opportunities and hands-on experience as they transition into the workforce.
- COOP is competitive, integrated employment.
- COOP links high school Missouri Learning Standards (MLS) with student career interests, and labor market needs.
- COOP is provided under the supervision of a certified special education teacher who has been designated and approved as the Work Experience Coordinator (WEC).

# Participation in COOP

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Students must be:

- Currently enrolled in high school, and
- Receiving services through an Individualized Education Program (IEP), and
- At least 16 years of age (work permits may be considered for students under age 16), and
- Determined eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) through the Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services, and
- In the process of developing an employment goal as specified through an Individual Plan for Employment (IPE)

# Participation in COOP

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## Student will:

- ❑ Demonstrate the skills and abilities to be able to work independently, in an integrated, competitive employment setting, and
- ❑ Receive high school credit based on the number of hours they work, and
- ❑ Be released from school in accordance with goals and objectives listed in their IEP at least one hour per day as part of their class schedule or before school, after school or during the summer months, and
- ❑ Earn at least minimum wage



## Related Instruction

Requirements

# Requirements before Awarding Credit

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## □ Before credit can be awarded:

- Student must have signed an IPE through VR that identifies COOP as a service to be provided
- Student must be in and receiving related instruction in the regular public agency program. [includes high school and State Board operated programs]
- Student must be enrolled in “**related vocational and academic instruction in the classroom**”. [Exception: the IEP indicates full-time work experience]

# Related Instruction to COOP Work Experience

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- Related Instruction can be instruction provided by a special educator or a general educator.
- Most special education classes are related instruction because, annual measurable goals are written according to each special education service.
- Work-Experience Coordinator (WEC) provides or coordinates the related instruction in the regular school program.
- Work-Experience Coordinator (WEC), the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) and the IEP team consider the student's Course of Study.

# Examples of Related Instruction

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## Math

- A student taking a Math class can use the course as instruction related to the work experience in a grocery store where the student is taking inventory and operating the cash register.

## Communication Arts

- A student taking a Communication Arts class can use the course as instruction related to the work experience when learning how to communicate with the employer or customers in a professional manner.

# Examples of Related Instruction

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## Building Trades & Child Development

- A student taking a class in Building Trades to learn carpentry can apply the instruction in a work experience as a builder.
- A student taking a Child Development class can apply instruction about the developmental stages of childhood to work experience in a day care center.

## Family and Consumer Sciences

- A student taking a class in Family and Consumer Sciences can apply instruction in food preparation and service to work experience in a restaurant.



## Off Campus Program Credit

### Requirements

# Off-Campus Program Credit Requirements

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**During the school year, students must be released from school for a minimum of one hour per school day.**

*“Hour” = The number of minutes for a class period*

- One Unit of Elective Credit per semester may be awarded for 10-19 hours weekly for experience, **OR**
- Two Units of Credit for 20+ hours weekly for experience or twice the number of units of credit granted for related instruction whichever is less.
- Up to four units of credit during a school year may be awarded for a student with a disability if they need additional work experience as per their IEP.

*Unit of Credit = 7830 Minutes*

# Off-Campus Program Summer Credit Requirements

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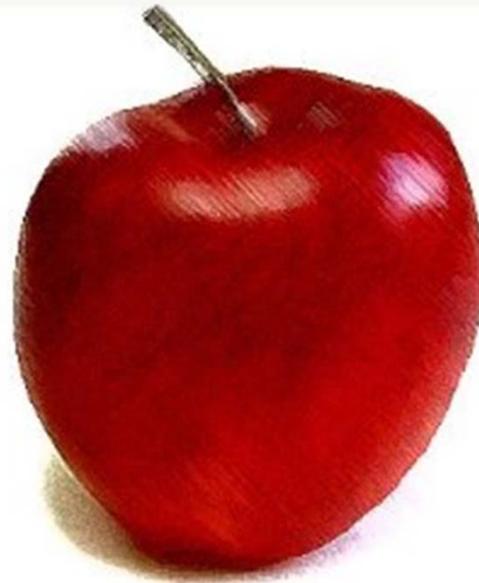
***During the summer, students may be awarded credit based upon the goals and objectives in their IEP if they have also signed an IPE reflecting COOP services with VR.***

# Determining Credit

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- COOP work hours =  
Elective Credits
  
- Related Instruction =  
Elective **or** Core  
Credits  
(depending on  
requirements for earning  
core credits)





Teachers do more than  
just teach...

# Teacher Qualifications

## Requirements

# Work-Experience Coordinator (WEC)

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- Supervises the COOP program and work experience
- Holds certificate in special education
- Is designated and approved by local school district as the WEC
- Provides or coordinates the related classroom instruction in the regular school program
- Designates the required amount of supervision time based upon the individual needs of the student



# Written Plans

Requirements

# Coordinated Individual Plans

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## □ **Personal Plans of Study (PPOS):**

The PPOS is based upon chosen career path or career cluster, built from school-approved Programs of Study. The coursework map includes graduation requirements and appropriate work-based learning experiences. The PPOS is developed cooperatively with student, counselor, teachers and parents, and reviewed at least annually and revised as needed.

## □ **Individualized Education Program (IEP):**

Individualized education program or IEP means a written statement for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with 34 CFR 300.320 through 300.324 (Federal Register). The IEP describes how the student is currently functioning, sets annual goals to be attained by the student, establishes the services needed for the student and any necessary accommodations or modifications.

## □ **Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE):**

The IPE is developed after the individual has been determined eligible for VR services, and implemented in a manner that affords eligible individuals the opportunity to exercise informed choice in selecting an employment outcome, the specific vocational rehabilitation services to be provided under the plan, the entity that will provide the vocational rehabilitation services, and the methods used to procure the services. An IPE will need to be agreed to, and signed by, the eligible individual or, as appropriate, the individual's representative; and approved and signed by a qualified vocational rehabilitation counselor.

# Individualized Education Program (IEP)

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- 1. Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance**
- 2. Service Summary Page**
  - a) The Specific Special Education Services
  - b) The Amount of Time for the Services
  - c) The Frequency for the Services
  - d) The Location for the Services
  - e) The Duration of the Services
- 3. Measurable Annual Goals**
- 4. Transition to Postsecondary Experiences (Goals)**

# Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)

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1. A description of the specific employment outcome
2. A specific vocational rehabilitation service
3. A plan for evaluating student performance
4. An expected duration of each service
5. A method available for procuring the services

# IEP Example

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- Student released from school for Work Experience five class periods a week, five days a week.

<b>IEP Services Summary</b>			
<b><u>Special Education Services</u></b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Location</b>
Work Experience	50 minutes	Daily	Community

# IEP Example

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- Student on a block schedule who is released for work experience for one block every other day.

<b>IEP Services Summary</b>			
<b><u>Special Education Services</u></b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Location</b>
Work Experience	250 minutes	Every two weeks	Community

# IPE Example

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Signature/Start Date 11/19/2014

Date I Expect to Achieve My Employment Outcome (Numeric Month/Year)\* 5/2015

Supported Employment

Small Business Enterprise

Self Employment

**Employment Goal**

Goal Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food (35302100)

Custom



**Reason for Selecting this Employment Goal Checkbox List (At least one item or the narrative is required.)**

- A good choice given my abilities and disability.
- I am currently doing this type of work.
- I explored options and feel this is a good choice.
- I have a job offer to do this type of work.
- I have successfully completed related training.
- I have successfully done this type of work before.
- It agrees with my IEP plan through my high school.
- It matches my interests, abilities and strengths.
- The job outlook for this type of work is good.

**Employment Goal Reason Narrative**

COOP- SJSD  
WEC- [REDACTED]  
Lafayette HS- [REDACTED]  
Big Biscuit  
Address: [REDACTED]  
Phone: [REDACTED]  
Supervisor: [REDACTED]  
Hours worked per week: 15  
Wages: \$7.50/hour  
  
After high school client has interest in the areas of police officer, CNA, and Radiology.



# IPE Example

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## How will this choice of employment goal lead to a job?

Client wants to gain early work experience. This would allow him to build a list of past employment as well as references for future employment. He will also be able to earn school credit by having a job. This would allow him to earn credits and graduate high school.

## What steps are needed to reach the employment goal?

Client needs to maintain employment and attend work regularly to earn a grade and gain experience. He will attend school and earn all credits necessary for graduation. He will continue to explore employment options for the COOP program as well as career options for after graduation.

## 2. Planned Services (At least one required)

Assistive Technology Services Anticipated (If selected, see authorized services.)



2 records

Number▼	Service Category	Description	Estimated Start Date	Estimated End Date
1	Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling and Guidance		10/22/2014	5/29/2015
2	On-the-Job Training	COOP	11/19/2014	5/29/2015

## How were these services arranged or chosen?

Client was referred to VR through his high school special education program. He spoke to the school about options for graduation and to VR about services. The team reviewed his grades and progress towards graduation. They determined that it was appropriate for client to participate in the COOP program.

## Participant Responsibilities Narrative

Client will continue to attend school and earn the necessary credits for graduation. He will be responsible for attending work and following rules and policies at both school and work. He will report any changes in employment status to VR and the school. He will provide paycheck stubs to the school to verify employment as needed. He will discuss his progress and goals with VRC to work towards post-secondary employment.



## Insurance and Liability

# Insurance and Liability for Students in Off-Campus Programs/COOP

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## □ **Off-Campus Programs, to include COOP:**

- Student who are receiving pay for work performed are generally covered by the sponsors' workers' compensation insurance and general liability insurance.
- Liability insurance should be provided by the school district to protect the supervising teacher and any other school district employees who might be exposed to a liability risk due to the placement of students in off-campus programs.

# Core Data and AWARE

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- Special Ed: The Course Code to be entered into the Core Data system: **195800**
  
- VR: When providing COOP services:
  - mark the COOP box in the AWARE Special Programs
  - describe the COOP services to be provided on the IPE
  - select OJT as the service on the IPE in AWARE
  
- VR: Upon case closure, double check to make sure OJT was identified as the service that was provided.

# Eligible for State Financial Aid –

- **All off-campus programs in Appendix D of the Graduation Requirements Handbook must:**
  - Be Well-Planned
  - Adequately Supervised by district certificated teacher(s)
  - Count Students Participating for Average Daily Attendance
    - Only for:
      - Department-approved programs
      - School Flex programs
  - Under the age of 21
    - Under guidance of teachers less than the standard school day may be counted as part-time

# Cooperative Work Experience Program (COOP)

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