



Local Chambers of Commerce

A chamber of commerce is a network made up of local businesses whose goal is to further the interests of their businesses through economic prosperity. Chambers of Commerce are comprised of local business owners who advocate on behalf of the business community. Often times, they will host community events to spread awareness about local businesses and to give community members the chance to become more involved in the local business scene.

What services or resources does this agency provide?

Though Chambers of Commerce do not provide explicit services, there are many resources that can be accessed by community members. Some of these resources include job and internship listings and employment resources which includes information and resources on finding a job locally. Chambers also often hold different types of events to engage different members of the community. One example of an event they might hold is a “My Future, My Way” career exploration fair, which provides an opportunity for high school freshman to explore different careers as opposed to individual jobs with individual companies like in a job fair. Check with your local Chamber of Commerce to see what events and resources they provide.



What areas of Tennessee do they serve?

There are 121 local chambers of commerce located throughout Tennessee.

Is there a cost and, if so, who pays?

Many resources such as job boards are available at no cost to community members. Some events hosted by your local Chamber of Commerce might have a required and nonrefundable registration fee.

For which students might this agency be appropriate?

Students who wish to seek gainful employment in the future should see if their local chamber of commerce has events to offer for youth. Though there are many events the chambers host, the events that focus on youth employment would be most helpful for the student.

What is the referral process?**What documents are needed?**

There is no referral process as the resources and events offered by your local Chamber of Commerce are open to all community members.

What is the student's and/or family's responsibility?

Together with their family, a student can approach the Chamber of Commerce about services and events that may be available and applicable to their needs.

What is the responsibility of an educator?

The educator's responsibility is to research their local Chamber of Commerce to see what types of resources and programming they offer to youth in high school. The teacher can coordinate having students attend a programming from their local Chamber of Commerce.

How (and when) do you involve them in the transition planning process?

Though a chamber of commerce is not explicitly involved with the transition planning process, there are some ways that the parents and teachers could effectively involve them regarding career awareness

- Have the student reach out to the local chamber of commerce to inquire about programs for youth (such as career fairs, job fairs, etc.).
- The teacher can gather the different online resources the chamber offers and can provide it to families.
- Invite a member of the local chamber of commerce to come speak to the student and family about different opportunities that

Where can I learn more?

Visit this website to learn about your local Chamber of Commerce at:

<http://www.officialusa.com/stateguides/chambers/tennessee.html>

businesses specifically have for youth with disabilities.

What questions should I ask of my local Chamber of Commerce?

- Do you offer programming for youth in high school?
- Are there any resources that are specifically geared towards helping individuals with disabilities find gainful employment?
- Are local businesses incentivized to hire individuals with disabilities?