

Transition Services

What Are Transition Services?

Transition Services are results oriented services that help students with disabilities prepare for life after high school. Services should be tailored to the individual student's needs based on strengths, interests and preferences. Examples of these services are:

- Career exploration, guidance and counseling
- Vocational evaluation and assessments
- Job Development and Job Placement
- Post secondary education and training
- On-the-job training
- Supported employment

When Are Transition Services Required?

By age 14, a student's IEP must begin to focus on preparing the student for his or her future beyond high school. By 16, a student's IEP must have a Transition Plan.

What Is a Transition Plan?

Transition Services need to be written into the Individualized Education Program (IEP). This is called a Transition Plan. A Transition Plan must include goals and what the student needs to meet the goals. It must also include the agencies that will provide the services. When developing a Transition Plan, the IEP Team must think about the student's education, work, and living needs.

However, transition is much more than that. The IEP Team should ask and answer questions about everyday life. For example:

- Will the student be going to college or entering the workforce?
- Will the student be able to travel to and from work or school independently?
- Will the student travel by public transportation or does the student need driving lessons?
- Can the student state his likes and dislikes (advocate) for himself?
- Does the student know how to use a telephone independently?
- Can the student use a telephone to call the doctor?

How Is a Transition Plan Created?

To create an effective Transition Plan, the IEP Team considers what the student needs to be able to know and do when he/she leaves school. They also think about the student's likes and interests.

Students must be invited to attend their IEP meetings if the meeting is related to their transition needs. If a student does not go to the meeting, the school must take other steps to make sure that his/her likes and interests are talked about and made part of the Transition Plan.

Who Ensures That Transition Services Are Provided?

The school and the agencies identified in the IEP have the responsibility to ensure that Transition Services in the IEP are provided. These agencies can include:

- Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS);
- Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI);
- Community Services Board (CSB); and
- Centers for Independent Living (CIL).

Where Are Transition Services Provided?

Transition Services do not have to be provided on school grounds. For some students, Transition Services at a community college might be proper. For others, a job site might be work best. For students who have multiple or severe disabilities, a Transition Plan might include an adult day program funded by the school system.

This often comes up for 18-21 year-old students. While they are entitled to services, their peers without disabilities are no longer in school. Understandably, these students do not want to receive services in a high school setting with younger students.

What If the Student and the School Disagree About Transition Services?

There are several options if a student disagrees with the school about Transition Services. They may seek mediation, request due process or file a complaint with the Virginia Department of Education. Additionally, dLCV's Client Assistance Program may be able to help.

This information provides general guidance only. For specific legal advice, you should speak to an attorney.

dLCV publications are available in alternate format, upon request.