

Transition Information: Arkansas

Timeline

- *By the age of 14:*
 - The transition planning should begin by the time the student turns 14 years old.
 - A transition team should be assembled and families should gather information regarding the strengths and preferences of the student and the possible paths that the student can take towards a specific long-term goal.
- *Before the age of 16:*
 - Transition goals must be placed in the child's IEP.
 - All IEPs should include a statement of needed transition services, which include the strategies and activities associated with the individual's post-secondary education and training
- *Before the age of 17:*
 - By age 17, the transfer of rights must be discussed at the age of majority, which is 18 years old in Arkansas.
 - A statement of consent must be placed into the IEP by age 17.
 - The vocational rehabilitation process should begin at least 2 years prior to high school graduation.
 - You should meet with a counselor and discuss the best employment and living options for the student.
- *Before the age of 18:*
 - Apply for Social Security benefits, Social Security Disability Insurance and Medicaid.
 - If ineligible for Medicaid, look into other health insurance options, as it is likely the individual will no longer be covered by the parents plan after age 19 if not enrolled in college or covered by Medicaid.
- *At age 18:*
 - Add your name to the waiting list for residential placements in the state. Regardless of future residential plans, it is good to be on the waitlist, as these lists can be extremely long, and it is far easier to remove your name than it is to add it.
 - Register to vote.
 - Male students should register for the draft, no matter the level of functioning.
 - If applicable, individuals should apply to adult agencies for vocational and day programs, as well as for supported living.
 - The guardianship process should be complete.

Starting the Transition Process:

All transition assessments should be done when the student begins the transition planning process, which is usually at 14 years old. The IEP should consist of ideas about post-secondary outcomes pertaining to employment, education and independent living. The plan should be as detailed as possible for the next few years of the student's life. Transition goals must be placed into a child's IEP by age 16, which will include the goals that the student has for high school through employment options and also the courses and activities that the child will use to pursue those goals. They are also required at 16 to be invited to the meeting. It is required that a summary of performance be included in the IEP.

Education:

The IEP must be in effect by age 16 when the students are now involved in what they want to pursue through the rest of their high school career and also in terms of employment. These objectives and the strategies to achieve them must also be included in the IEP before age 16.

In terms of graduation options, individuals with disabilities have the option of graduating with either an honors diploma, a regular high school diploma and also without a high school diploma. They are not required to complete an exit exam and there are alternate courses which can count towards school credit. Read Procedural Requirements and Program Standards from Arkansas Department of Education Special Education Unit here <https://arksped.k12.ar.us/PolicyAndRegulations>.

Guardianship/Conservatorship:

The transfer of rights should be explained by either a public agency or the family by the age of 17 and a statement of consent in the recognition of this transfer must be placed within the individual's IEP. The rights will be transferred unless the individual is viewed as incompetent or unable to make their own informed decisions at the age of majority in Arkansas which is 18.

If the student feels uncomfortable about making decisions about their welfare, or if the family feels that the individual's disability impedes their ability to properly take care of themselves, the proposed guardian can file a petition at the local circuit court.

Guardianships in Arkansas: A Guide for the Families, Advocates, and Friends of Individuals with Disabilities

www.ddcouncil.org/uploads/pages/docs/guardianbooklet2.pdf

Vocational Rehabilitation:

To achieve its mission of preparing Arkansans with disabilities to work and lead productive and independent lives, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) provides a variety of training and career preparation programs. Services include career and technical education and training, transition from school to work or postsecondary education, on-the-job training, and ancillary support services that clients may need for successful employment. Find your local ARS office at:

<http://ace.arkansas.gov/resources/Pages/default.aspx>

Social Security:

Benefits should be applied for before the student's 18th birthday and then be re-evaluated after the student's 18th birthday. It is also important that the office be contacted well in advance before the student's 18th birthday to understand that eligibility and application process.

Applicants may apply online or by contacting Social Security directly. Local Social Security offices can be found using SSA's office locator or by calling (voice) 800-772-1213 or (TTY) 800-325-0778.

Social Security Administration: www.socialsecurity.gov

Social Security Benefit Application: www.socialsecurity.gov/disabilityonline

Social Security Benefits for People with Disabilities: www.ssa.gov/disability

Social Security Office Locator: <https://secure.ssa.gov/ICON/main.jsp>

Arkansas.gov Disability Determination for Social Security Administration's (DDSSA) Frequently Asked Questions: www.state.ar.us/ddssa/fag.html

Housing Resources:

Arkansas Public Housing Agency Contact Information:
www.hud.gov/offices/pih/pha/contacts/states/ar.cfm

Disability.gov Guide to Housing:
www.disability.gov/resource/disability-govs-guide-housing

US Department of Housing and Urban Development: HUD in Arkansas
<http://portal.hud.gov/portal/page/portal/HUD/states/arkansas>

Arkansas Fair Housing Commission:
www.fairhousing.arkansas.gov

Arkansas Resources

State Department of Education: Special Education

Arkansas Department of Education

(501) 682-4221

arksped.k12.ar.us

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services

(800) 330-0632

<http://ace.arkansas.gov/arRehabServices/Pages/default.aspx>

Transition Services:

<http://ace.arkansas.gov/arRehabServices/programs/fieldServices/Pages/transitionServices.aspx>

Arkansas Department of Career Education

(501) 682-1500

<http://ace.arkansas.gov>

Arkansas Division of Developmental Disabilities Services

(501) 682-8665

(501) 682-1332 (TTY)

<http://humanservices.arkansas.gov/ddds>

Arkansas Transition Services

www.arkansastransition.com