

Transition Information: Oregon

Timeline

- *By the age of 14:*
 - Transition planning should begin when the student is 14 years old or earlier.
 - At this age, the IEP should include information regarding future course work and possible transition ideas for the transition portion of the IEP, along with information about post-secondary goals.
 - A transition team should be assembled to create the transition portion of the IEP.
 - By the age of 14, individuals should be involved in the creation of their transition IEPs and should be invited to the annual IEP meetings to review goals and state their preferences and interests
- *By the age of 16:*
 - The transition plan goes into effect at age 16.
 - Detailed information regarding community participation, training and instruction for vocational experiences and instruction in daily living skills should be included in the IEP. Also, the post-secondary goals should be detailed and preparation for those goals should be included.
- *Before the age of 17:*
 - The guardianship/conservatorship process should begin. (The age of majority in Oregon is 18).
A form of informed and signed consent by both the student and their family stating that all parties understand the transfer of rights should be included in the IEP by the student's 17th birthday.
 - If families and students feel uncomfortable with the transfer of the decision-making abilities to the student, the prospective guardian needs to petition for guardianship at the local probate court.
 - The vocational rehabilitation process should begin at least 2 years prior to high school graduation.
- *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.
 - 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 easy to remove your name than it is to add it.
- *At age 18:*
 - Register to vote.
 - Upon an individual's 18th birthday, he or she changes from a system of being entitled to certain rights and privileges to a system of eligibility.
 - 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.

Starting the Transition Process:

Transition planning should begin when the student is 14 years old or earlier. At this age, the IEP should include information regarding future course work and possible transition ideas for the transition portion of the IEP. It should include information about post-secondary goals. A transition team should be assembled to create the transition portion of the IEP and the team should include parents, teachers, therapists, agency representatives and any other professionals who are close to the student and have observed their educational and vocational experiences. By the age of 14, the student should also be involved to their annual IEP meetings.

At these annual meetings, goals will be reviewed and altered depending on the student's often changing interests and preferences. Also, the student's progress will be assessed and discussion will take place to see if the predicted skill set and final goals are practical. The transition portion of the IEP will go into effect when the student turns 16 years old.

Detailed information regarding community participation, training and instruction for vocational experiences and instruction in daily living skills should be included in the IEP. Also, the post-secondary goals should be detailed and preparation for those goals should be included. For example, information regarding what will happen once the student graduates high school should be included in the IEP, such as directly going to work or attending some kind of higher education institution. It is important to determine the age of eligibility for different adult service providers and make decisions about the individual's future based on that as well. For the most part, the age of eligibility for adult services is 21 years old. If an individual signs up for the Division of Developmental Disabilities as early as possible, he or she will be much more likely to receive adult vocational services early on.

There is a Transition Advisory Committee who discusses the priorities for documents and transition issues that arise for most students during that period of their life. The committee helps to provide more services and outcomes for students and talks to different departments and organizations about how to improve the transition process for students from the age of 14 to the age of 21.

Education:

Special education students are entitled to FAPE until they turn 21 years old or graduate with a modified diploma with an IEP. IEPs should include information about prospective course work for each level of schooling the student progresses through. It should also include information about future training or instruction for any vocational or skill-specific experiences. It should include which diploma option an individual has selected, along with a prospective graduation date. A list of specific courses that the student will

be taking is important to the school and the school district because it provides them with a map of the curriculum that will be most beneficial for the student's progress.

If higher education, such as college, is being considered, the IEP should include specific times for the student to take the standardized tests and complete the applications.

Pertaining to graduation, the state of Oregon provides a set of minimum requirements for graduation, but LEAs can add to them. The options are: honors diploma, standard high school diploma, certificate of attendance, certificate of achievement, or a modified diploma that does not specify special education. Extensions are granted for completing the required standards for graduation. There is no state exit exam required to receive the standard high school diploma. Most colleges do not accept individuals with modified diplomas but appeals can be made to consider these students. Certain community colleges accept modified diplomas for certain courses.

Guardianship:

The age of majority in Oregon is 18 years old. By the student's 17th birthday, he or she must be informed that all rights will be transferred to them from their parents or guardians. These rights include the right to make decisions related to their welfare, including medical, financial and educational decisions. A form of informed and signed consent by both the student and their family should be included in the IEP by the student's 17th birthday. It is also important that this transfer is discussed with the student's transition team to decide what needs to take place to prepare the student for the transfer. The student must understand and be reminded of the importance of this transfer and the responsibilities that come with it. For example, the student must be able to understand the consequences of making certain medical decisions.

If the person feels uncomfortable about making those decisions, or if the family feels that the student will be unable to make the best decisions for him or herself, it is possible to petition for guardianship at a local court. This process should begin at the latest 2 months before the student's 18th birthday but preferably at least a year in advance to ensure that there is sufficient time to complete the process and that all sides can be heard. Medical evidence needs to be brought to the court also to prove to the judge that the person is unable take care of him or herself. Lawyers should be appointed for both the student and the prospective guardian so that everyone's best interests are taken into consideration. Once a petition is filed with the court, the judge or jury will decide whether guardianship is necessary and decide who the best guardian is for the individual. The judge will also decide the terms of the guardianship. There are various forms of guardianship that follow the same process but are less restrictive, including emergency guardianship, powers of attorney, trusts, limited guardianships and other forms of protection.

Vocational Rehabilitation:

The OVRs provides individuals with services related to assessment, counseling, guidance, training, using assistive technology and job placement. They also provide services in independent living, such as using public transportation and money management. To begin the process, an individual must send in a personal information form to the local office and they will arrange a meeting with the individual so that they can review the medical and psychological records and assess the student's current skill set and eligibility for certain services. An IPE or Individualized Plan for Employment will be created depending on the specific career goal the student has. Once the student has been trained and is ready to search for job opportunities, the OVRs will help with job placement. They also have internship opportunities and competitive employment projects to help students understand the competitive nature of the current job market.

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 800-772-1213.

- *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>

Housing Resources:

Oregon Public Housing Agency Contact Information:

www.hud.gov/offices/pih/pha/contacts/states/or.cfm

US Department of Housing and Urban Development: HUD in Oregon

<http://portal.hud.gov/portal/page/portal/HUD/states/oregon>

Disability.gov Guide to Housing:

www.disability.gov/resource/disability-govs-guide-housing

Oregon Resources

Office of Learning Student Services Unit

Oregon Department of Education

(503) 947-5600

www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=146

Secondary Transition for Students with Disabilities:

www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=266

Transition Plan: From High School to Adult Life – A Student Handbook

www.ode.state.or.us/gradelevel/hs/transition/transplanhstoadult.pdf

State of Oregon Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Department of Human Services

www.oregon.gov/dhs/employment/VR

Find your local VR office: www.oregon.gov/dhs/employment/VR/Pages/Office-Locations.aspx

Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities

(503) 945-9941

(800) 292-4154 (in OR)

www.ocdd.org

State of Oregon Developmental Disabilities: www.oregon.gov/DHS/dd