

Transition Information: Connecticut

Timeline

- *Before the age of 13:*
 - The best transition planning should begin before the individual's 13th birthday and a transition team should be assembled to discuss what the most appropriate transition plan for the individual should be.
 - An ITP (Individual Transition Plan) must be developed at the annual IEP review meeting immediately after the individual becomes 13 years old.
- *At the age of 14:*
 - The student must also be invited to all of their IEP meetings and meetings with the PPT (Planning and Placement Team) starting at age 14.
- *At the age of 16:*
 - Most people begin vocational rehabilitation services around the age of 16, but the services should begin whenever the individual feels comfortable preparing for employment services.
 - At 16, a statement of needed transition services must be included in the IEP.
- *Before the age of 17:*
 - The guardianship/conservatorship process should begin. (The age of majority in Connecticut is 18)
 - The student must be informed of the transfer of rights and the guardianship options by age 17.
 - There needs to be a statement of informed consent, detailing that the individual recognizes that they will have to make their own educational decisions after their 18th birthday
 - 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:*
 - 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.
 - 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:*
 - 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:

The best transition planning should begin before the individual's 13th birthday and a transition team should be assembled to discuss what the most appropriate transition plan for the individual should be, including in terms of employment/post-secondary education, independent living and community participation.

An ITP (Individual Transition Plan) must be developed at the annual IEP review meeting immediately after the individual becomes 13 years old, which will include a "statement of transition services needs", including a future course of study. The student must also be invited to all of their IEP meetings and meetings with the PPT (Planning and Placement Team) starting at age 14.

The transition of rights occurs at Connecticut's age of majority, which is at 18. Therefore, the student must be informed and a statement of informed consent must be placed in the student's IEP before the student turns 17. It should be reviewed and affirmed numerous times before the individual turns 18 years old.

It should be realized that upon an individual's 18th birthday, they change from a system of being entitled to certain rights and privileges to a system of eligibility. They have to be considered eligible the adult services system. This could be difficult based upon the funding for certain organizations or the severity of the individual's disorder.

Education:

The IEP by 14 must include the future courses of study and a plan for a specific graduation option, higher education or vocational training. At 16, a statement of needed transition services must be included in the IEP and well before 18, there needs to be a statement of informed consent, detailing that the individual recognizes that they will have to make their own educational decisions after their 18th birthday, unless deemed incapable of making that decision. In that case, a parent/guardian will be appointed to represent their interests at the IEP meetings.

Connecticut does provide alternate graduation options, beyond just the high school diploma. However, they provide a limited single allowance to receive that standard high school diploma. Connecticut offers up to five alternate options for graduation. They have diploma options that vary by the LEAs within the individual state. The options include: an honors diploma, a standard diploma, an IEP/special education diploma, a certificate of attendance, or an LEA-based diploma option. Connecticut also does not require disabled students to take any statewide exit exam.

Guardianship/Conservatorship:

The transfer of rights occurs at Connecticut's age of majority, which is 18 years old. The student must be notified and provide a statement of informed consent within their IEP by age 17. They

must discuss this transfer of rights and become acquainted with making those decisions before they turn 18 years old.

If families feel that the individual is incapable of making informed decisions on their own, they can petition for guardianship through the Connecticut Probate Court system. This process should occur well before the student's 18th birthday, preferably it should start by the student's 17th birthday.

Vocational Rehabilitation:

The VR program serves eligible individuals who have physical and/or mental conditions which have a significant impact on their ability to enter or maintain employment. Contact the BRS office closest to your home, or call (800) 537-2549. You will talk to a staff member who can discuss your situation and answer your questions about vocational rehabilitation.

If there are limited resources, the BRS provides services to those who have the most severe disabilities, through an Order of Selection, which is also ordered according to the ability of the individual to have high capacity in crucial functional areas, including mobility, work skills and communication. If you are in a priority group that BRS is currently serving under the Order of Selection, you will work with your counselor to develop an Employment Plan which will assist you to find or keep a job.

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:

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

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

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

Connecticut Resources

Bureau of Special Education

Department of Education

(860) 713-6912

www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=320730

Secondary Transition Resources: <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322676>

Vocational Rehabilitation Program

Connecticut Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

(860) 424-4844

www.ct.gov/dss/cwp/view.asp?a=2353&q=305224

School to Work Transition: www.ct.gov/brs/cwp/view.asp?a=3891&q=456934

Connecticut Department of Developmental Services (DDS)

(860) 418-6000

www.ct.gov/dds

Connecticut's Transition Manual:

www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Special/Transition_Manual.pdf

Connecticut Adult Education: Transition to Post-Secondary Education/Training:

www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2620&q=321944&sdePNavCtr=|45559|

Connecticut Department of Education Guidelines for Identification for Children and Youth with Autism:

www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Special/Guidelines_Autism.pdf

Connecticut Bureau of Special Education: Writing Transition Goals and Objectives:

www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Special/Transition_GO.pdf

Connecticut Bureau of Special Education Post-School Outcome Goal Statements FAQ's:

www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/DEPS/Special/PSOGS_FAQ.pdf