



## Transition Information: Indiana

### **Timeline**

- *By the age of 14:*
  - By 14, all students' must have IEPs that include a portion dedicated to transition planning, including a prospective course of study and any employment training and participation that the student might need.
  - The IEP should be updated annually based on the student's progress, and whether or not the outcomes are still reasonable given the student's pace of development.
- *Before the age of 17:*
  - The guardianship/conservatorship process should begin. (The age of majority in Indiana is 18)
  - At this age, the student has the right to make decisions for him or herself (e.g medical, financial decisions, etc.) However, if the student is considered incapable of making those decisions, a legal guardian or educational representative can be appointed by the local courts to make certain specified decisions for the student.
  - 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 18<sup>th</sup> 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 transition services planning portion of the student's IEP should be in the IEP at the earliest age appropriate. However, by 14, all students' must have IEPs that include a portion dedicated to transition planning, including a prospective course of study and any employment training and participation that the student might need. This means that the transition team, including the school's case conference committee, must identify what the appropriate path for the student is before he or she reaches adulthood and what services are necessary to prepare the student for that specific path. Therefore, the IEP must include an idea about possible post-secondary outcomes for the student. A case conference committee is a group of school personnel and the individual's parents/guardians who determine what components should be included in the IEP and for what purpose. They help decide whether the child will pursue certain options for graduation (certificate or diploma). The IEP must be updated at least annually based on the student's progress, and whether or not the outcomes are still reasonable given the student's pace of development.

## **Education:**

With respect to graduation requirements, the state of Indiana does provide minimum requirements for disabled students to achieve a high school diploma, but LEAs may be able to add to them. Disabled students have the option of an honors diploma, a regular standard high school diploma, a certificate of attendance, or a certificate of achievement. There are no allowances made for students with disabilities in relation to their high school graduation. There is a high school exit exam that must be completed by ALL students. All students who fail the exam are allowed to retake the same exam again. If they receive a certificate when they graduate, they can return to high school until they turn 21 years old.

*Is College for You? Setting Goals and Taking Action:* Indiana Institute on Disability and Community: [www.iidc.indiana.edu/styles/iidc/defiles/CCLC/College4U-5.pdf](http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/styles/iidc/defiles/CCLC/College4U-5.pdf)

## **Guardianship:**

The age of majority in Indiana is 18 years old. At this age, the student has all rights to make decisions transferred to themselves (e.g medical, financial decisions, etc.) However, if the student is considered incapable of making those decisions, a legal guardian or educational representative can be appointed by the local courts to make certain specified decisions for the student.

The legal guardian must be appointed by a local court after the person is declared incompetent or incapable of making important life decisions. This must be done through

a physician or a professional who understands the needs of the student. The court will specify the legal rights that that guardian has since certain individuals with disabilities may have the ability to make decisions on their own. The court can take away those rights at any point from the guardian. The rights over decisions pertaining to the individual's estate can also be given to the guardian if considered necessary. Individuals have the right to a legal representative if they feel that they can make decisions on their own. This decision occurs in a local probate court.

Other options include: conservatorship, power of attorney, and educational representation. Conservatorship is a voluntary legal request by the disabled individual to appoint someone to manage their financial affairs. The individual must be legally declared incapable of making financial decisions. The power of attorney process gives one party the authority to make decisions, but these rights are given voluntarily to their appointed guardian. Finally, educational representation means that the court can appoint someone after the age of 18 to make all education-related decisions for the individual.

### **Vocational Rehabilitation:**

Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS), a program of the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS), provides quality individualized services to enhance and support people with disabilities to prepare for, obtain or retain employment.

Locate a local VR office for people with developmental disabilities at [www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs/2760.htm](http://www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs/2760.htm).

Their offices can provide vocational rehabilitation services and help you decide on which waivers to apply for, how to deal with Medicaid, etc.

### **Social Security:**

Benefits should be applied for before the student's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday and then be re-evaluated after the student's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. It is also important that the office be contacted well in advance before the student's 18<sup>th</sup> 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](http://www.socialsecurity.gov)
- *Social Security Benefit Application:* [www.socialsecurity.gov/disabilityonline](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/disabilityonline)
- *Social Security Benefits for People with Disabilities:* [www.ssa.gov/disability](http://www.ssa.gov/disability)
- *Social Security Office Locator:* <https://secure.ssa.gov/ICON/main.jsp>

## **Housing Resources:**

Indiana Public Housing Agency Contact Information:

[www.hud.gov/offices/pih/pha/contacts/states/in.cfm](http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/pha/contacts/states/in.cfm)

US Department of Housing and Urban Development: HUD in Indiana

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

Disability.gov Guide to Housing:

[www.disability.gov/resource/disability-govs-guide-housing](http://www.disability.gov/resource/disability-govs-guide-housing)

## Indiana Resources

### **Office of Special Education**

Indiana Department of Education

(317) 232-0570

(877) 851-4106

[www.doe.in.gov/specialed](http://www.doe.in.gov/specialed)

[specialeducation@doe.in.gov](mailto:specialeducation@doe.in.gov)

### **Indiana Institute on Disability and Community**

University Center for Excellence

(812) 855-6508

[www.iidc.indiana.edu](http://www.iidc.indiana.edu)

### **Indiana Resource Center for Autism**

*Indiana Institute on Disability and Community*

[www.iidc.indiana.edu/index.php?pageId=32](http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/index.php?pageId=32)

### **Indiana Secondary Transition Resource Center**

Indiana University Center for Excellence

[iidc@indiana.edu](mailto:iidc@indiana.edu)

[www.iidc.indiana.edu/instrc](http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/instrc)

### **Vocational Rehabilitation Services**

Indiana Family and Social Services Administration

[www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs/2636.htm](http://www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs/2636.htm)

Find your local office: [www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs/2760.htm](http://www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs/2760.htm)

### **Division of Disability & Rehabilitative Services**

Family & Social Services Administration

(800) 545-7763

(317) 232-78422

[www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs](http://www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs)