

Transition Information: Ohio

Timeline

- *By the age of 14:*
 - The transition planning should begin, and the transition part of the IEP should begin to be developed.
 - At this point, the IEP should include a statement of needed services related to prospective course work and also any other educational or training experiences that the student will be involved in for the purpose of developing their knowledge or eventually leading to a specific career path.
 - A transition team should be formed.
 - The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) process including coordination with the state VR agency, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD), can begin as early as age 14, depending on vocational need, but should begin no later than two years prior to exiting high school with a signed diploma.
- *By the age of 16:*
 - The transition plan goes into effect at age 16.
 - By the age of 16, the IEP should include any training, instruction and rehabilitation programs that the student will be involved in over the following few years, as well as any agency participation that is specific to the transition process.
 - By the age of 16, 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, individuals should begin developing an understanding of the world of work by exploring their vocational interests and improving upon their job-seeking skills.
- *Before the age of 17:*
 - The guardianship/conservatorship process should begin. (The age of majority in Ohio is 18).
 - At 17, a statement of consent and acknowledgement must be included in the IEP that states that the student and the family understand that this transfer will occur, as well as the responsibilities that result from this transfer.
 - 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.
 - Before the age of 17, individuals should consider participating in authentic community-based work experiences designed to help students with disabilities learn appropriate work behaviors, communication, interpersonal skills and other vocational areas as needed.
- *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.
- Before the age of 18, individuals should identify a specific goal, including an employment goal, and discuss all the necessary supports needed to achieve and maintain that goal including long-term supports.
- *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.
 - By the age of 18, individuals should be working towards their specific employment goal if they are working towards a goal of competitive integrated employment.

Starting the Transition Process:

The transition planning process should begin when the student turns 14 years old or earlier. At this point, the IEP should include a statement of needed services related to prospective course work and also any other educational or training experiences that the student will be involved in for the purpose of developing their knowledge or eventually leading to a specific career path. These plans should be flexible and related to what the student wants and is interested in. However, at this point, the transition plan in the IEP should be specific to education and future course work. At this point, a transition team should also be assembled to help cultivate the full transition plan, which will go into effect once the student turns 16 years old.

At the age of 14, all assessments need to be conducted and future planning should take place in accordance with the present levels of performance and the desired courses of study. The transition team should include the student's parents, teachers, therapists and representatives from other external agencies that will be involved in the transition of the student. Also, at this age, the student should be involved in their IEP planning and should be invited to the annual IEP meetings where the annual goals are viewed and the progress of the student is assessed. If the student cannot be involved at the IEP meetings, it is important that there is someone that is present at the meetings to advocate the student's interests and preferences.

At 16 years old, the IEP should include a statement of needed transition services, which include any training, instruction and rehabilitation programs that the student will be involved in over the following few years. It is important the IEP is as detailed as possible to provide local school districts and the student's school with the kind of curriculum that they should be following based on the goals of the students. The information in this portion of the IEP should also relate to community experiences, living skills training and any linkages with adult service providers. It should also include a coordinated set of activities and strategies that the student will be using and information regarding any other agencies that will be involved in the student's progress.

It is also important to determine the eligibility for the usage of various adult service providers, which can often be different depending on the provider. This could be different based on age or level of disability.

Education:

The IEP should include information about coursework throughout the IEP process and is necessary so that the school or educational program that the student is involved in understands the best curriculum for the student's development. The IEP should also include information regarding any possible post-secondary education, including enrollment in college or another higher education institution. If this is the case, it is important the student plans within their IEP to take any standardized tests or complete college applications by a specified date. It also should indicate what the prospective graduation or completion date is and which diploma option the student will be interested in pursuing.

FAPE is available for all students until they turn 22 years old or if earlier, until they complete their requirements.

Pertaining to graduation, the state of Ohio provides minimum requirements for graduation and LEAs can add to those requirements. The diploma options available for students from Ohio are either an honors diploma or a standard high school diploma. Any allowances for the requirements or state testing should be addressed and approved in the IEP of the student. There is a state exit exam for all students in Ohio. The test and the passing score is the same for all students regardless of disability. If the student fails the exam, he or she is allowed to retake the same exam either twice or thrice.

Guardianship:

The age of majority in Ohio is 18 years old. At this age, the student will receive all rights to make decisions about their welfare and their lives from their parents or their original guardians. They should be informed of this transfer by the student's 17th birthday. At that age, a statement of consent and acknowledgement must be included in the IEP that states that the student and the family understand that this transfer will occur, as well as the responsibilities that result from this transfer. Throughout that year, the student must be reminded and prepared for the responsibilities of making their own decisions regarding their health, finances and education.

If they feel uncomfortable making those decisions or if their families think that they are unable to make decisions in their best interests and do not understand the possible consequences of certain decisions, then guardianship should be considered. A petition needs to be filed with the local district court stating that the person is incapacitated and needs a guardian to take care of them. Each county has a different application process and it is important to review these applications thoroughly to ensure that this process is in the best interest of the student. Once a petition is filed with the court and the person is medically diagnosed as unable to make important decisions, a hearing will take place at which lawyers for both the student and his or her prospective guardians are present. The judge will decide whether having a guardian is in the best interest of the individual. There are various forms of guardianship: guardianship of the estate/person, plenary guardianship (combination of both), emergency guardianship, interim guardianship, guardian ad litem (for the trial) or co-guardianship. There are also authorized representatives, trusts and powers of attorney. The process for all of these guardianships is the same and the terms of termination are also discussed during the hearing.

Guardianship in Ohio: <http://ddc.ohio.gov/Pub/Guardianship7-2009.pdf>

Vocational Rehabilitation:

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) is a state agency that, as part of their mission, helps students with disabilities successfully transition from school to work. OOD transition services include but are not limited to: independent living; career guidance and counseling; community-based work experiences; job development; and job coaching. To learn more or to begin the process, a student and/or their representative can visit [OODWorks](#) to contact a local office or submit an application for services. Once an application is received, an interview will then be set up between the student, their representative (if applicable) and VR Staff at a location near you. VR Staff will reviewed information regarding the student's functional limitations including the student's school, medical or physiological records in order to determine eligibility for services and assess the current and expected skill set of the student. If eligible for

services, an IPE or an Individualized Plan for Employment will be developed. This person-centered plan will be developed in accordance with the student's interests, strengths, abilities, capabilities, preferences, informed choice and at the age which he or she feels comfortable enough to either explore or enter the working world. The IPE is developed in collaboration with the student's planning team to ensure coordination of services with the student, parents and/or legal guardians, the school and other community-based agencies from which the student is eligible for services. Planning will include details of the employment process, identification of an appropriate employment goal including current labor market trends and in-demand jobs that will lead to competitive integrated employment. Job application and interview preparation, job coaching and training related to transportation along with other Career focused services and information will be provided. For more information please visit [Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities](#).

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 Benefit Application: www.socialsecurity.gov/disabilityonline

Social Security Administration: www.socialsecurity.gov/locator

Disability and Supplemental Security Income Information: www.ssa.gov/d&s1.htm

Note: For SSI application, you must contact your local Social Security Office.

www.disabilitybenefits101.org/ca/programs/income_support/ss_disability/ssdi/program.htm

Housing Resources:

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

Disability.gov Ohio Housing Resources:
www.disability.gov/housing/state_%26_local_resources/ohio

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

Ohio Resources

Special Education

Ohio Department of Education
(614) 466-2650

<http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Special-Education>

Secondary Transition Planning:

<http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Special-Education/Federal-and-State-Requirements/Secondary-Transition-Planning-for-Students-with-Di>

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities

(800) 282-4536
(614) 438-1200

<http://www.ood.ohio.gov>

Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation: www.ood.ohio.gov/Core-Services/BVR

Ohio Department of Education Career-Tech

<http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Career-Tech>

Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities

(800) 617-6733

<http://dodd.ohio.gov>