

Transition Information: California

Timeline

- *Before the age of 15:*
 - Transition planning should begin.
 - 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:*
 - The first IEP must be in effect by age 16 and meetings should be conducted and the IEP must be updated annually. This should outline the strengths, weakness and the individual's desires for their future.
 - At 16, the student should be included in all IEP meetings.
- *Before the age of 17:*
 - The guardianship/conservatorship process should begin. (The age of majority in California is 18)
 - California has no program that provides full guardianship over someone over the age of majority. Instead, if the individual is incapable of making informed decisions or is declared legally incompetent by the state system, there are two options of guardianship over the individual's rights and decisions: conservatorship or limited conservatorship.
 - 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.
 - 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.
 - 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.
- *Before the age of 22:*
 - Students are eligible to take the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE), or to receive a Certificate of Achievement or Completion

Starting the Transition:

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. The first IEP must be in effect by age 16 and meetings should be conducted and the IEP must be updated annually. This should outline the strengths, weakness and the individual's desires for their future. Re-evaluations can occur until age 22. The individual must have informed consent by their 17th birthday within the IEP that the transfer of rights is occurring at the age of majority which is 18.

California created a WorkAbility project whose missions is to encourage the greater community to planning and implement different transition services to help those who are disabled achieve a more successful transition from schooling to employment and also to improve the overall quality of the disabled individual's life.

Education:

If one has an IEP plan, they have the option of being exempt from the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE), but they must be able to complete all the local and state requirements for graduating high school. While they are encouraged to take the CAHSEE, they are not forced to. If they choose not to take the exam, they are eligible to complete the exam until age 22. If they are not planning on taking the exam, that should be mentioned in their IEP.

Exemption for Eligible Students with Disabilities:

www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/cahseefaexempt.asp.

If the student chooses not to graduate with the high school diploma, they are eligible to receive a Certificate of Achievement or Completion until age 22.

Guardianship/Conservatorship:

California has no program that provides full guardianship over someone over the age of majority in California, which is 18 years old. Instead, if the individual is incapable of making informed decisions or is declared legally incompetent by the state system, there are two options of guardianship over the individual's rights and decisions: conservatorship or limited conservatorship.

Before this process begins, the individual must be informed and consent to the proceedings that will transfer their legal rights from themselves after the age of 18 to another person that is chosen by the court. The conservator is responsible for ensuring that the quality of life of the individual is maintained and has control over the individual's money and property.

Limited conservatorship only applies to those who are developmentally-disabled and who will eventually become or who already clients of the California Regional Center. This is also determined by the California court system. It is different from the full conservatorship because it allows the individual to keep control of their health (e.g nutrition, hygiene, and housing) and also over their money and assets.

See California Conservatorship: Reasons & Benefits:
www.will-trust-probate.com/conservatorship-reasons.htm.

See FAQs on limited conservatorship:
www.scservice.org/probate/adult/limitedconserv.htm .

Vocational Rehabilitation:

The California Department of Rehabilitation's vocational rehabilitation services program assists Californians with disabilities obtain and retain employment and maximize their ability to live independently in their communities. The Department develops, purchases, provides, and advocates for programs and services in vocational rehabilitation, habilitation and independent living with a priority on service for persons with the most significant disabilities.

DOR has over 85 field offices located throughout California, which are grouped into 13 districts. (www.dor.ca.gov/eps)

It is good practice to invite representatives from these organizations to the last IEP meeting before the student turns 22 to establish linkages.

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:

California Public Housing Agency Contact Information:

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

Disability.gov California Housing Resources:

[www.disability.gov/housing/state %26 local resources/california](http://www.disability.gov/housing/state_%26_local_resources/california)

US Department of Housing and Urban Development: HUD in California

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

Other California Resources

California Department of Special Education

1430 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 327-3536
www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se

WorkAbility I: Students Earn to Learn

www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/sr/wrkabltyI.asp

Training Modules for the Transition to Adult Living: An Information and Resource Guide

www.calstat.org/transitionGuide.html

Directory of Regional Centers in California:

www.dds.ca.gov/RC/RCList.cfm

State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency

Department of Rehabilitation
2000 Evergreen Street
Sacramento, CA 95815-3832
(916) 324-1313 (VOICE)
(916) 558-5807 (TTY)
www.rehab.cahwnet.gov

Office of Career Technical Education

California Department of Education
1430 N Street, Suite 4503
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 445-2652
www.cde.ca.gov/ci/ct

Department of Developmental Services

California Health and Human Services Agency
1600 9th Street, Room 240
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 654-1897
www.dds.ca.gov