

SECTION 504
OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973
AND VERMONT SCHOOLS

A MANUAL FOR PARENTS, FAMILIES, AND SCHOOLS

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INTRODUCTION

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (hereinafter “Section 504”) is a federal civil rights statute prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability. It specifically prohibits discrimination against students with disabilities and guarantees them a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). Every entity, including public and independent schools, that receives federal funding, directly or indirectly is subject to the requirements of Section 504. There is no federal or state funding provided to assist schools in complying with Section 504; all costs are the obligation of the general school district or independent school budget.

Schools receiving federal funds, directly or indirectly, are individually responsible for compliance with Section 504. Federal regulations prohibit recipient independent schools from excluding students with disabilities for whom they are able to provide an appropriate education with “minor adjustments.” If parents privately place a student in an independent school, the school may add a surcharge, or increase its tuition charge, to pay for the cost of providing Section 504 accommodations *only if providing such accommodations will result in a substantial increase in costs.*

Section 504 is a civil rights statute and not a special education statute, and thus has a broader scope than the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Students with disabilities receiving special education services are protected under Section 504 but not all Section 504 students are eligible for special education.

SUMMARY OF SECTION 504

Section 504 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability which is defined in the Rehabilitation Act as a failure to provide students with disabilities the same opportunity to benefit from educational programs, services, or activities as provided to their nondisabled peers. This means that districts/schools must make programs and activities accessible as well as the buildings and grounds. As a civil rights statute, Section 504 focuses on insuring a level of access to educational services (including both academic and extra-curricular activities) that is equal to the level of access provided to non-disabled students. This includes providing eligible students who have a physical or mental disability with a free appropriate public education (FAPE).

SECTION 504 AS COMPARED TO THE IDEA

IDEA	Section 504
An Education Act	A Civil Rights Act
Special education responsibility	General education responsibility
Administered by Special Education Director	Administered by 504 Coordinator
Funded with federal and state special education funds and local funds	Funded with general education funds
13 specific eligible disability categories	All impairments eligible if substantially limit major life activity
IEP meeting requires specific team members	504 meeting requires group of persons knowledgeable about the student and the disability

ELIGIBILITY

In order for a student to be eligible under Section 504, three criteria must be met:

- The student must have a physical or mental impairment, have a record of such impairment or be regarded as having such impairment;
- That impairment must substantially limit;
- One or more major life activities.

A **physical or mental impairment** means:

- Any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological; musculoskeletal; special sense organs; respiratory, including speech organs; cardiovascular, reproductive, digestive, genito-urinary; hemic and lymphatic; skin; and endocrine; or
- Any mental or psychological disorder, such as cognitive impairment, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness and specific learning disabilities.

“Is regarded as having such an impairment” is established if a student has been subjected to an action which is prohibited under ADA Amendments Act because of an actual or perceived physical or mental impairment (with an actual or expected duration of 6 months or more), whether or not this impairment limits or is perceived to limit a major life activity. While a student who “is regarded as having an impairment” is protected from discrimination, if the student does not have an actual impairment, he/she is not entitled to FAPE under Section 504.

Substantially limits: Whether an impairment substantially limits a major life activity is measured by comparing the student’s ability to that of other students in his/her age or grade generally, not merely to other students in the same classroom, or even in the same school. The determination of whether a disability substantially limits a major life activity must be made **without** regard to mitigating measures (with the exception of ordinary glasses or contact lenses) such as: medication, medical devices, equipment, prosthetics, hearing aids, reasonable accommodations or auxiliary aids or services.

Major life activities include, but are not limited to, activities such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating and working. In addition, a major life activity includes the operation of a major bodily function, including but not limited to, functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine and reproductive functions.

Many students found eligible under Section 504 may have special health care needs; this includes students with AIDS, Tourette syndrome, chronic fatigue syndrome, epilepsy, cancer and others. But, note that a student who is currently using illegal drugs is specifically excluded from the definition of a student with a disability.

EVALUATIONS

Referral for a Section 504 evaluation may be made by a parent, guardian, teacher, school administrator, counselor, or related service provider. How a 504 referral is made may vary from district to district, or school to school, but each district/school must have procedures in place for a referral to be made. Regardless of whether a referral is made, if a district/school has information indicating that a student

might have a disability for which he/she might require accommodations in the general education environment, or related aids and services, it must promptly determine whether the student needs to be evaluated and if so, conduct an evaluation. If a district/school refuses to evaluate a student referred by a parent, it must provide the parent with notice of his/her procedural rights under Section 504.

Informed parental consent must be received before a district/school can conduct an initial evaluation of a student. If a parent refuses to consent to a 504 evaluation, and the district/school suspects that the student may have a disability, it may request a due process hearing and seek a decision ordering such an evaluation. Districts/schools may, but are not required to, use the same process to evaluate the needs of students under Section 504 as they use to evaluate students under IDEA.

Eligibility determinations must be made by a team of persons knowledgeable about the meaning of the evaluation data, the needs of the student and about the accommodations/service options that are available. Although not specifically required by the Section 504 regulations, parental participation should always be encouraged throughout the Section 504 process as a best practice. The team should draw from a variety of sources in determining eligibility, including, for example, aptitude and achievement tests, teacher recommendations, physical condition, social and cultural background and adaptive behavior. No formal testing is required as part of a 504 evaluation and in many instances the evaluation will involve gathering and analyzing information that already exists. The team must determine if the student has a mental or physical disability or impairment that substantially limits a major life activity. If a parent disagrees with the decision of the team regarding eligibility or placement, he or she may request a due process hearing.

REEVALUATIONS

Section 504 requires “periodic” reevaluations but, unlike IDEA, contains no specified time frame. However, school districts will be in compliance if they utilize reevaluation procedures “consistent with the IDEA”, although this is not required. Additionally, Section 504 requires a reevaluation before any significant change in placement.

PLACEMENT/ACCOMMODATIONS

Once a student has been determined eligible for a Section 504 Accommodations Plan/Services, the 504 Team (consisting of a group of persons including those who are knowledgeable about the student and the meaning of the evaluation data and placement options) must determine what placement/accommodations and/or related services the student requires in order to gain equal access to school/district’s academic and extra-curricular programs, activities and services and receive FAPE.

The team must ensure that the student is educated with his/her non-disabled peers to the maximum extent possible; most 504 Plans are implemented in the general education classroom. This is referred to as the “least restrictive environment,” and applies to non-academic programs/activities, such as meals, recess, sports and clubs, as well as academic programs/activities. Transportation may be required if a district provides transportation to other students or places a student in an out-of-district program. Accommodations might include preferential seating, the use of special visual aids or video recordings. A list of suggested possible accommodations is found in Appendix A.

The placement/accommodation and/or services should be documented in a 504 Plan. The use of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is one means of meeting the Section 504 standards.

PROCEDURAL PROTECTIONS AND APPEAL RIGHTS

To be in compliance with Section 504, school districts **must** do the following:

- Designate an employee to coordinate compliance with Section 504 and provide that person's name and telephone number on notices of nondiscrimination.
- Provide grievance procedures to resolve complaints of discrimination. Grievance procedures must "incorporate due process standards and provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints." Procedures that include reasonable time frames, an opportunity to present evidence, notification of the final decision and an appeal process are sufficient to comply with this regulatory requirement.
- At least annually undertake to identify and locate all Section 504 qualified disabled students in the district's geographic area who are not receiving a public education and take appropriate steps to notify such students and their parents of the school district's obligations under Section 504. This requirement is similar to, and may be met in conjunction with, the "child find" requirements of the IDEA.
- Provide parents and guardians with notice of their rights, an opportunity to review relevant records and an impartial hearing. Vermont's special education regulation, SBEM Rule 1253, allows for conflicts and alleged violations under Section 504 to be resolved through a due process hearing in the same manner as for a special education due process hearing. The procedures set forth in SBEM Rule 2365.1.6.1 and the time limits set forth in 16 V.S.A § 2957 apply to 504 hearings. Hearing Officers in a Section 504 due process case may award declaratory and injunctive relief only and not money damages, costs or attorney's fees.
 - o **Stay Put** - "Stay put" operates in the special education context to require that a student be maintained in his or her current educational placement when his or her parent contests a proposed change of placement by filing a request for a due process hearing with the Agency of Education. Although Section 504 does not have an explicit "stay put" provision, the Office of Civil Rights at the US Department of Education (OCR) has advised that "stay put" is inherent to the procedural safeguards requirements of Section 504 and believes that a fair due process system would encompass the school district waiting for the results of the due process hearing before making the change.

DISCIPLINE

A student with a 504 Plan may be disciplined in the same manner as other students, except that whenever a Section 504 student is suspended for more than 10 consecutive (or 10 cumulative days that constitute a pattern), it is considered a change in placement. Before a district/school can change the placement of a student with a 504 plan, it must conduct a reevaluation. If a student may be an eligible student with a disability under Section 504, the district/school must conduct an initial evaluation to determine eligibility for 504 services before it can change the placement of that student.

A "suspension" is a removal from a student's current educational placement to a setting where the child is no longer able to benefit from the accommodations provided under his or her Section 504 plan and make reasonable progress in the general curriculum. An "in school suspension" will be considered a significant change in placement when the setting of the suspension deprives the student access to the general curriculum, or does not allow participation with peers in nonacademic settings, such as the school lunchroom. A suspension for part of a day counts as a full day of suspension toward the 10-day limit.

Before there can be a change of placement due to suspensions from school for an eligible student, the district/school must implement a process to determine if the student's behavior was the result of the student's disability. A team, comprised of people knowledgeable about the student and the meaning of evaluation data, should meet and review information available about the student and make a determination as to whether or not the student's conduct was the result of his/her disability.

If it is determined that the misconduct is caused by the disability, the Section 504 team must consider alterations to the child's Section 504 plan, and may change the student's educational placement if a change is determined by the team to be appropriate. The team may also consider the implementation and enforcement of a behavior management plan as part of the student's overall Section 504 plan. If it is determined that the behavior resulting in the suspension is not a manifestation of the student's disability, the school/district may expel or suspend the student for misconduct on the same basis as non-disabled students. Under these circumstances, the school/district is not required to continue educational services during this period of suspension or expulsion. In contrast, after 10 consecutive days of removal (or 10 cumulative days that constitute a pattern), IDEA eligible students are entitled to continued educational services during periods of suspension or expulsion.

Exceptions:

- **Weapons:**

If a 504 student possesses or carries a weapon to school or at a school function, the student's placement may be changed immediately to an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) determined by the 504 team, for up to 45 days. The team shall also determine the services to be provided in this setting. If the parent/guardian disagrees with the change in placement, he/she may request a due process hearing or, in lieu of such hearing, they may file a complaint with OCR.

- **Drugs/Alcohol:**

The disciplinary protections of Section 504 **do not** apply to an eligible student who is being disciplined for use or possession of illegal drugs or alcohol at school or at a school function **and** the student is a current user of illegal drugs or alcohol.

The State Board rule governing discipline procedures for Section 504 students provides for due process hearings to resolve disagreements between parents and school districts over discipline. Parents may also seek redress through the OCR complaint process.

DISCRIMINATION UNDER SECTION 504

Discrimination under Section 504 occurs when a district/school, for example:

- **Denies an eligible student with a disability the opportunity to participate in or benefit from an aid, benefit or service that is afforded non-disabled students or one that is equal to that afforded non-disabled students.** For example, students with disabilities may not be denied credit on the basis of poor attendance when their absences are caused by their disability. Eligibility for honor roll and academic awards cannot be denied automatically on the basis of disability status; however, a school/district is not required to **significantly alter** their standards for receiving honor roll or class rank distinctions so as to include students with disabilities.

Providing an equal opportunity to participate in extra-curricular activities does not mean that the standards of participation must be altered for students with disabilities. It means that disabled students must be given an equal opportunity to meet the participation requirements of athletic or

other extracurricular activities, if an accommodation will allow a disabled student to participate in an activity, it may be required; unlike accommodations to academic programs required to provide a FAPE, there is a limit to the extent to which a school must alter its non-academic program through an accommodation. The general rule is that a school need not “fundamentally alter the nature of a program” in order to allow the participation of a student with a disability.

- **Fails to provide aids, benefits, or services to an eligible student with a disability that are as effective as those provided to non-disabled persons.** “Effective” means equivalent as opposed to identical. To be effective, an aid, benefit or service need not produce equal results; but it must afford an equal opportunity to achieve equal results. This applies to both services and facilities.
- **Fails to have all facilities be accessible and useable to eligible students with disabilities.** This requirement extends to all or any portion of buildings, structures, equipment, roads, walks, and parking lots, and includes accessibility within a facility as well as accessibility between facilities. The age of a facility determines the extent to which alterations may be required to make it fully accessible.
- **Fails to adequately respond to allegations that a disabled student has been harassed on the basis of his or her disability.** Harassment of students based on disability, or failure to respond to allegations of disability-based harassment, are also potential violations of the ADA and Vermont law.

The nondiscrimination requirements apply to students who are currently disabled and those who are not currently disabled, but are regarded as disabled or have a record of being disabled, and are denied benefits as a result. It would be unlawful discrimination, for example, to deny a student who had recovered from a disabling condition the opportunity to participate on an equal basis with other students in a school’s athletic activities.

Parents and family members who meet the definition of qualified persons with disabilities are also protected by Section 504 and the ADA and have a right to accommodations and services that will allow them to have an equal opportunity to participate in school and school sponsored programs and activities.

APPENDICES

Appendix A - General Strategies

(From OCR Guidelines for Educators and Administrators for Implementing Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 – Subpart D, 2010)

The following is a list of possible services, strategies, and accommodations for identified students. Each case must be considered based upon the unique needs of the student by the Section 504 Team.

Environmental Strategies:

- Provide a structured learning environment.
- Adjust class schedule.
- Provide classroom aides and note takers.
- Modify nonacademic times such as lunch room and recess.
- Modify physical education.
- Change student seating.
- Provide use of a study carrel.
- Alter location of personal or classroom supplies for easier access or to minimize distraction.

Organizational Strategies:

- Modify test delivery.
- Use tape recorders, computer-aided instruction, and other audiovisual equipment.
- Select modified textbooks or workbooks.
- Tailor homework assignments.
- Use one-to-one tutorials.
- Provide peer tutoring.
- Set time expectations for assignments.
- Provide tests in segments so that student finishes one segment before receiving the next part.
- Highlight main ideas and supporting details in the book.

Behavior Strategies:

- Use behavioral management techniques.
- Implement behavioral/academic contracts.
- Use positive reinforcements (rewards).
- Use negative reinforcements (consequences).
- Confer with the student's parents and other teachers.
- Establish a home/school communication system for behavior monitoring.
- Post rules and consequences for classroom behavior.
- Write a contract for student behavior.
- Offer social reinforcements (e.g., praise) for appropriate behavior.
- Establish daily/weekly progress report for the student.
- Implement self-recording of behaviors.

Appendix B - Parent Rights

A parent/guardian has the right to:

- Have their student participate in and receive benefit from recipient education programs without discrimination based on disability and receive a FAPE;
- Have the school/district advise them of their rights under the law;
- Receive notice with respect to the identification, evaluation and placement of the student;
- Have their student educated in facilities and receive services comparable to those provided to nondisabled students;
- Have eligibility and placement decisions based upon a variety of information sources and by individuals who are knowledgeable about the student and placement options;
- Have their student receive an equal opportunity to participate in non-academic and extracurricular activities through the provision of reasonable accommodations;
- Examine all relevant records relating to decisions regarding the student's identification, eligibility, accommodations and placement;
- Obtain copies of educational records at a reasonable cost, unless the fee would effectively deny access to the records;
- Receive a response from the school/district to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of the student's records;
- Request an impartial hearing from the Agency of Education for resolution of issues related to the student's identification, eligibility or placement;
- File a formal complaint with the regional Office for Civil Rights, located at:

Boston Office
Office for Civil Rights
US Department of Education
8th Floor
5 Post Office Square
Boston, MA 02109-3921

Telephone: 617-289-0111
Fax: 617-289-0150; TDD: 800-877-8339
Email: OCR.Boston@ed.gov

Appendix C - Section 504 Regulations

TITLE 34 EDUCATION

SUBTITLE B REGULATIONS OF THE OFFICES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

CHAPTER I -- OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

PART 104 -- NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF HANDICAP IN PROGRAMS OR ACTIVITIES RECEIVING FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

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APPENDIX B TO PART 104 GUIDELINES FOR ELIMINATING DISCRIMINATION AND DENIAL OF SERVICES ON THE BASIS OF RACE, COLOR, NATIONAL ORIGIN, SEX, AND HANDICAP IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS [NOTE]

AUTHORITY: 20 U.S.C. 1405; 29 U.S.C. 794.

SOURCE: 45 FR 30936, May 9, 1980, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A -- General Provisions

104.1 Purpose.

The purpose of this part is to effectuate section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which is designed to eliminate discrimination on the basis of handicap in any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

104.2 Application.

This part applies to each recipient of Federal financial assistance from the Department of Education and to the program or activity that receives such assistance.

104.3 Definitions.

As used in this part, the term:

- (a) *The Act* means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Pub. L. 93-112, as amended by the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1974, Pub. L. 93-516, 29 U.S.C. 794.
- (b) *Section 504* means section 504 of the Act.
- (c) *Education of the Handicapped Act* means that statute as amended by the Education for all Handicapped Children Act of 1975, Pub. L. 94-142, 20 U.S.C. 1401 et seq.
- (d) *Department* means the Department of Education.

- (e) *Assistant Secretary* means the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the Department of Education.
- (f) *Recipient* means any state or its political subdivision, any instrumentality of a state or its political subdivision, any public or private agency, institution, organization, or other entity, or any person to which Federal financial assistance is extended directly or through another recipient, including any successor, assignee, or transferee of a recipient, but excluding the ultimate beneficiary of the assistance.
- (g) *Applicant for assistance* means one who submits an application, request, or plan required to be approved by a Department official or by a recipient as a condition to becoming a recipient.
- (h) *Federal financial assistance* means any grant, loan, contract (other than a procurement contract or a contract of insurance or guaranty), or any other arrangement by which the Department provides or otherwise makes available assistance in the form of:
- (1) Funds;
 - (2) Services of Federal personnel; or
 - (3) Real and personal property or any interest in or use of such property, including:
 - (i) Transfers or leases of such property for less than fair market value or for reduced consideration; and
 - (ii) Proceeds from a subsequent transfer or lease of such property if the Federal share of its fair market value is not returned to the Federal Government.
- (i) *Facility* means all or any portion of buildings, structures, equipment, roads, walks, parking lots, or other real or personal property or interest in such property.
- (j) *Handicapped person* -- (1) *Handicapped persons* means any person who (i) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, (ii) has a record of such an impairment, or (iii) is regarded as having such an impairment.
- (2) As used in paragraph (j)(1) of this section, the phrase:
- (i) *Physical or mental impairment* means (A) any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological; musculoskeletal; special sense organs; respiratory, including speech organs; cardiovascular; reproductive, digestive, genito-urinary; hemic and lymphatic; skin; and endocrine; or (B) any mental or psychological disorder, such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities.
 - (ii) *Major life activities* means functions such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working.

- (iii) *Has a record of such an impairment* means has a history of, or has been misclassified as having, a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.
- (iv) *Is regarded as having an impairment* means (A) has a physical or mental impairment that does not substantially limit major life activities but that is treated by a recipient as constituting such a limitation; (B) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits major life activities only as a result of the attitudes of others toward such impairment; or (C) has none of the impairments defined in paragraph (j)(2)(i) of this section but is treated by a recipient as having such an impairment.
- (k) *Program or activity* means all of the operations of--
- (1)(i) A department, agency, special purpose district, or other instrumentality of a State or of a local government; or
 - (ii) The entity of such State or local government that distributes such assistance and each such department or agency (and each other State or local government entity) to which the assistance is extended, in the case of assistance to a State or local government;
 - (2)(i) A college, university, or other postsecondary institution, or a public system of higher education; or
 - (ii) A local educational agency (as defined in 20 U.S.C. 8801), system of vocational education, or other school system;
 - (3)(i) An entire corporation, partnership, or other private organization, or an entire sole proprietorship--
 - (A) If assistance is extended to such corporation, partnership, private organization, or sole proprietorship as a whole; or
 - (B) Which is principally engaged in the business of providing education, health care, housing, social services, or parks and recreation; or
 - (ii) The entire plant or other comparable, geographically separate facility to which Federal financial assistance is extended, in the case of any other corporation, partnership, private organization, or sole proprietorship; or
 - (4) Any other entity which is established by two or more of the entities described in paragraph (k)(1), (2), or (3) of this section; any part of which is extended Federal financial assistance.
- (Authority: 29 U.S.C. 794(b))
- (1) *Qualified handicapped person* means:
- (1) With respect to employment, a handicapped person who, with reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential functions of the job in question;

- (2) With respect to public preschool elementary, secondary, or adult educational services, a handicapped person (i) of an age during which non-handicapped persons are provided such services, (ii) of any age during which it is mandatory under state law to provide such services to handicapped persons, or (iii) to whom a state is required to provide a free appropriate public education under section 612 of the Education of the Handicapped Act; and
- (3) With respect to postsecondary and vocational education services, a handicapped person who meets the academic and technical standards requisite to admission or participation in the recipient's education program or activity;
- (4) With respect to other services, a handicapped person who meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of such services.
- (m) *Handicap* means any condition or characteristic that renders a person a handicapped person as defined in paragraph (j) of this section.

104.4 Discrimination prohibited.

- (a) *General.* No qualified handicapped person shall, on the basis of handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity which receives Federal financial assistance.
- (b) *Discriminatory actions prohibited.* (1) A recipient, in providing any aid, benefit, or service, may not, directly or through contractual, licensing, or other arrangements, on the basis of handicap:
 - (i) Deny a qualified handicapped person the opportunity to participate in or benefit from the aid, benefit, or service;
 - (ii) Afford a qualified handicapped person an opportunity to participate in or benefit from the aid, benefit, or service that is not equal to that afforded others;
 - (iii) Provide a qualified handicapped person with an aid, benefit, or service that is not as effective as that provided to others;
 - (iv) Provide different or separate aid, benefits, or services to handicapped persons or to any class of handicapped persons unless such action is necessary to provide qualified handicapped persons with aid, benefits, or services that are as effective as those provided to others;
 - (v) Aid or perpetuate discrimination against a qualified handicapped person by providing significant assistance to an agency, organization, or person that discriminates on the basis of handicap in providing any aid, benefit, or service to beneficiaries of the recipients program or activity;
 - (vi) Deny a qualified handicapped person the opportunity to participate as a member of planning or advisory boards; or
 - (vii) Otherwise limit a qualified handicapped person in the enjoyment of any right, privilege, advantage, or opportunity enjoyed by others receiving an aid, benefit, or service.

- (2) For purposes of this part, aids, benefits, and services, to be equally effective, are not required to produce the identical result or level of achievement for handicapped and nonhandicapped persons, but must afford handicapped persons equal opportunity to obtain the same result, to gain the same benefit, or to reach the same level of achievement, in the most integrated setting appropriate to the person's needs.
- (3) Despite the existence of separate or different aid, benefits, or services provided in accordance with this part, a recipient may not deny a qualified handicapped person the opportunity to participate in such aid, benefits, or services that are not separate or different.
- (4) A recipient may not, directly or through contractual or other arrangements, utilize criteria or methods of administration (i) that have the effect of subjecting qualified handicapped persons to discrimination on the basis of handicap, (ii) that have the purpose or effect of defeating or substantially impairing accomplishment of the objectives of the recipient's program or activity with respect to handicapped persons, or (iii) that perpetuate the discrimination of another recipient if both recipients are subject to common administrative control or are agencies of the same State.
- (5) In determining the site or location of a facility, an applicant for assistance or a recipient may not make selections (i) that have the effect of excluding handicapped persons from, denying them the benefits of, or otherwise subjecting them to discrimination under any program or activity that receives Federal financial assistance or (ii) that have the purpose or effect of defeating or substantially impairing the accomplishment of the objectives of the program or activity with respect to handicapped persons.
- (6) As used in this section, the aid, benefit, or service provided under a program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance includes any aid, benefit, or service provided in or through a facility that has been constructed, expanded, altered, leased or rented, or otherwise acquired, in whole or in part, with Federal financial assistance.
- (c) *Aid, benefits or services limited by Federal law.* The exclusion of nonhandicapped persons from aid, benefits, or services limited by Federal statute or executive order to handicapped persons or the exclusion of a specific class of handicapped persons from aid, benefits, or services limited by Federal statute or executive order to a different class of handicapped persons is not prohibited by this part.

104.5 Assurances required.

- (a) *Assurances.* An applicant for Federal financial assistance to which this part applies shall submit an assurance, on a form specified by the Assistant Secretary, that the program or activity will be operated in compliance with this part. An applicant may incorporate these assurances by reference in subsequent applications to the Department.
- (b) *Duration of obligation.* (1) In the case of Federal financial assistance extended in the form of real property or to provide real property or structures on the property, the assurance will obligate the recipient or, in the case of a subsequent transfer, the transferee, for the period during which the real property or structures are used for the purpose for which Federal financial assistance is extended or for another purpose involving the provision of similar services or benefits.

- (2) In the case of Federal financial assistance extended to provide personal property, the assurance will obligate the recipient for the period during which it retains ownership or possession of the property.
- (3) In all other cases the assurance will obligate the recipient for the period during which Federal financial assistance is extended.
- (c) *Covenants.* (1) Where Federal financial assistance is provided in the form of real property or interest in the property from the Department, the instrument effecting or recording this transfer shall contain a covenant running with the land to assure nondiscrimination for the period during which the real property is used for a purpose for which the Federal financial assistance is extended or for another purpose involving the provision of similar services or benefits.
- (2) Where no transfer of property is involved but property is purchased or improved with Federal financial assistance, the recipient shall agree to include the covenant described in paragraph(b)(2) of this section in the instrument effecting or recording any subsequent transfer of the property.
- (3) Where Federal financial assistance is provided in the form of real property or interest in the property from the Department, the covenant shall also include a condition coupled with a right to be reserved by the Department to revert title to the property in the event of a breach of the covenant. If a transferee of real property proposes to mortgage or otherwise encumber the real property as security for financing construction of new, or improvement of existing, facilities on the property for the purposes for which the property was transferred, the Assistant Secretary may, upon request of the transferee and if necessary to accomplish such financing and upon such conditions as he or she deems appropriate, agree to forbear the exercise of such right to revert title for so long as the lien of such mortgage or other encumbrance remains effective.

104.6 Remedial action, voluntary action, and self-evaluation.

- (a) *Remedial action.* (1) If the Assistant Secretary finds that a recipient has discriminated against persons on the basis of handicap in violation of section 504 or this part, the recipient shall take such remedial action as the Assistant Secretary deems necessary to overcome the effects of the discrimination.
- (2) Where a recipient is found to have discriminated against persons on the basis of handicap in violation of section 504 or this part and where another recipient exercises control over the recipient that has discriminated, the Assistant Secretary, where appropriate, may require either or both recipients to take remedial action.
- (3) The Assistant Secretary may, where necessary to overcome the effects of discrimination in violation of section 504 or this part, require a recipient to take remedial action (i) with respect to handicapped persons who are no longer participants in the recipient's program or activity but who were participants in the program or activity when such discrimination occurred or (ii) with respect to handicapped persons who would have been participants in the program or activity had the discrimination not occurred.
- (b) *Voluntary action.* A recipient may take steps, in addition to any action that is required by this part, to overcome the effects of conditions that resulted in limited participation in the recipient's program or activity by qualified handicapped persons.

- (c) *Self-evaluation.* (1) A recipient shall, within one year of the effective date of this part:
- (i) Evaluate, with the assistance of interested persons, including handicapped persons or organizations representing handicapped persons, its current policies and practices and the effects thereof that do not or may not meet the requirements of this part;
 - (ii) Modify, after consultation with interested persons, including handicapped persons or organizations representing handicapped persons, any policies and practices that do not meet the requirements of this part; and
 - (iii) Take, after consultation with interested persons, including handicapped persons or organizations representing handicapped persons, appropriate remedial steps to eliminate the effects of any discrimination that resulted from adherence to these policies and practices.
- (2) A recipient that employs fifteen or more persons shall, for at least three years following completion of the evaluation required under paragraph (c)(1) of this section, maintain on file, make available for public inspection, and provide to the Assistant Secretary upon request:
- (i) A list of the interested persons consulted,
 - (ii) A description of areas examined and any problems identified, and
 - (iii) A description of any modifications made and of any remedial steps taken.

104.7 Designation of responsible employee and adoption of grievance procedures.

- (a) *Designation of responsible employee.* A recipient that employs fifteen or more persons shall designate at least one person to coordinate its efforts to comply with this part.
- (b) *Adoption of grievance procedures.* A recipient that employs fifteen or more persons shall adopt grievance procedures that incorporate appropriate due process standards and that provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action prohibited by this part. Such procedures need not be established with respect to complaints from applicants for employment or from applicants for admission to postsecondary educational institutions.

104.8 Notice.

- (a) A recipient that employs fifteen or more persons shall take appropriate initial and continuing steps to notify participants, beneficiaries, applicants, and employees, including those with impaired vision or hearing, and unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with the recipient that it does not discriminate on the basis of handicap in violation of section 504 and this part. The notification shall state, where appropriate, that the recipient does not discriminate in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its program or activity. The notification shall also include an identification of the responsible employee designated pursuant to 104.7(a). A recipient shall make the initial notification required by this paragraph within 90 days of the effective date of this part. Methods of initial and continuing notification may include the posting of notices, publication in newspapers and magazines, placement of notices in recipients' publication, and distribution of memoranda or other written communications.

- (b) If a recipient publishes or uses recruitment materials or publications containing general information that it makes available to participants, beneficiaries, applicants, or employees, it shall include in those materials or publications a statement of the policy described in paragraph(a) of this section. A recipient may meet the requirement of this paragraph either by including appropriate inserts in existing materials and publications or by revising and reprinting the materials and publications.

104.9 Administrative requirements for small recipients.

The Assistant Secretary may require any recipient with fewer than fifteen employees, or any class of such recipients, to comply with 104.7 and 104.8, in whole or in part, when the Assistant Secretary finds a violation of this part or finds that such compliance will not significantly impair the ability of the recipient or class of recipients to provide benefits or services.

104.10 Effect of state or local law or other requirements and effect of employment opportunities.

- (a) The obligation to comply with this part is not obviated or alleviated by the existence of any state or local law or other requirement that, on the basis of handicap, imposes prohibitions or limits upon the eligibility of qualified handicapped persons to receive services or to practice any occupation or profession.
- (b) The obligation to comply with this part is not obviated or alleviated because employment opportunities in any occupation or profession are or may be more limited for handicapped persons than for nonhandicapped persons.

Subpart B -- Employment Practices

104.11 Discrimination prohibited.

- (a) *General.* (1) No qualified handicapped person shall, on the basis of handicap, be subjected to discrimination in employment under any program or activity to which this part applies.
- (2) A recipient that receives assistance under the Education of the Handicapped Act shall take positive steps to employ and advance in employment qualified handicapped persons in programs or activities assisted under that Act.
- (3) A recipient shall make all decisions concerning employment under any program or activity to which this part applies in a manner which ensures that discrimination on the basis of handicap does not occur and may not limit, segregate, or classify applicants or employees in any way that adversely affects their opportunities or status because of handicap.
- (4) A recipient may not participate in a contractual or other relationship that has the effect of subjecting qualified handicapped applicants or employees to discrimination prohibited by this subpart. The relationships referred to in this paragraph include relationships with employment and referral agencies, with labor unions, with organizations providing or administering fringe benefits to employees of the recipient, and with organizations providing training and apprenticeships.
- (b) *Specific activities.* The provisions of this subpart apply to:
- (1) Recruitment, advertising, and the processing of applications for employment;

- (2) Hiring, upgrading, promotion, award of tenure, demotion, transfer, layoff, termination, right of return from layoff and rehiring;
 - (3) Rates of pay or any other form of compensation and changes in compensation;
 - (4) Job assignments, job classifications, organizational structures, position descriptions, lines of progression, and seniority lists;
 - (5) Leaves of absence, sick leave, or any other leave;
 - (6) Fringe benefits available by virtue of employment, whether or not administered by the recipient;
 - (7) Selection and financial support for training, including apprenticeship, professional meetings, conferences, and other related activities, and selection for leaves of absence to pursue training;
 - (8) Employer sponsored activities, including those that are social or recreational; and
 - (9) Any other term, condition, or privilege of employment.
- (c) A recipient's obligation to comply with this subpart is not affected by any inconsistent term of any collective bargaining agreement to which it is a party.

104.12 Reasonable accommodation.

- (a) A recipient shall make reasonable accommodation to the known physical or mental limitations of an otherwise qualified handicapped applicant or employee unless the recipient can demonstrate that the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of its program or activity.
- (b) Reasonable accommodation may include:
- (1) Making facilities used by employees readily accessible to and usable by handicapped persons, and
 - (2) Job restructuring, part-time or modified work schedules, acquisition or modification of equipment or devices, the provision of readers or interpreters, and other similar actions.
- (c) In determining pursuant to paragraph (a) of this section whether an accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of a recipient's program or activity, factors to be considered include:
- (1) The overall size of the recipient's program or activity with respect to number of employees, number and type of facilities, and size of budget;
 - (2) The type of the recipient's operation, including the composition and structure of the recipient's workforce; and
 - (3) The nature and cost of the accommodation needed.

- (d) A recipient may not deny any employment opportunity to a qualified handicapped employee or applicant if the basis for the denial is the need to make reasonable accommodation to the physical or mental limitations of the employee or applicant.

104.13 Employment criteria.

- (a) A recipient may not make use of any employment test or other selection criterion that screens out or tends to screen out handicapped persons or any class of handicapped persons unless:
 - (1) The test score or other selection criterion, as used by the recipient, is shown to be job-related for the position in question, and
 - (2) Alternative job-related tests or criteria that do not screen out or tend to screen out as many handicapped persons are not shown by the Director to be available.
- (b) A recipient shall select and administer tests concerning employment so as best to ensure that, when administered to an applicant or employee who has a handicap that impairs sensory, manual, or speaking skills, the test results accurately reflect the applicant's or employee's job skills, aptitude, or whatever other factor the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the applicant's or employee's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills (except where those skills are the factors that the test purports to measure).

104.14 Preemployment inquiries.

- (a) Except as provided in paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section, a recipient may not conduct a preemployment medical examination or may not make preemployment inquiry of an applicant as to whether the applicant is a handicapped person or as to the nature or severity of a handicap. A recipient may, however, make preemployment inquiry into an applicant's ability to perform job-related functions.
- (b) When a recipient is taking remedial action to correct the effects of past discrimination pursuant to 104.6 (a), when a recipient is taking voluntary action to overcome the effects of conditions that resulted in limited participation in its federally assisted program or activity pursuant to 104.6(b), or when a recipient is taking affirmative action pursuant to section 503 of the Act, the recipient may invite applicants for employment to indicate whether and to what extent they are handicapped, *Provided, That:*
 - (1) The recipient states clearly on any written questionnaire used for this purpose or makes clear orally if no written questionnaire is used that the information requested is intended for use solely in connection with its remedial action obligations or its voluntary or affirmative action efforts; and
 - (2) The recipient states clearly that the information is being requested on a voluntary basis, that it will be kept confidential as provided in paragraph (d) of this section, that refusal to provide it will not subject the applicant or employee to any adverse treatment, and that it will be used only in accordance with this part.
- (c) Nothing in this section shall prohibit a recipient from conditioning an offer of employment on the results of a medical examination conducted prior to the employee's entrance on duty, *Provided, That:*

- (1) All entering employees are subjected to such an examination regardless of handicap, and
- (2) The results of such an examination are used only in accordance with the requirements of this part.
- (d) Information obtained in accordance with this section as to the medical condition or history of the applicant shall be collected and maintained on separate forms that shall be accorded confidentiality as medical records, except that:
 - (1) Supervisors and managers may be informed regarding restrictions on the work or duties of handicapped persons and regarding necessary accommodations;
 - (2) First aid and safety personnel may be informed, where appropriate, if the condition might require emergency treatment; and
 - (3) Government officials investigating compliance with the Act shall be provided relevant information upon request.

Subpart C--Accessibility

104.21 Discrimination prohibited.

No qualified handicapped person shall, because a recipient's facilities are inaccessible to or unusable by handicapped persons, be denied the benefits of, be excluded from participation in, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity to which this part applies.

104.22 Existing facilities.

- (a) *Accessibility.* A recipient shall operate its program or activity so that when each part is viewed in its entirety, it is readily accessible to handicapped persons. This paragraph does not require a recipient to make each of its existing facilities or every part of a facility accessible to and usable by handicapped persons.
- (b) *Methods.* A recipient may comply with the requirements of paragraph (a) of this section through such means as redesign of equipment, reassignment of classes or other services to accessible buildings, assignment of aides to beneficiaries, home visits, delivery of health, welfare, or other social services at alternate accessible sites, alteration of existing facilities and construction of new facilities in conformance with the requirements of 104.23, or any other methods that result in making its program or activity accessible to handicapped persons. A recipient is not required to make structural changes in existing facilities where other methods are effective in achieving compliance with paragraph (a) of this section. In choosing among available methods for meeting the requirement of paragraph (a) of this section, a recipient shall give priority to those methods that serve handicapped persons in the most integrated setting appropriate.
- (c) *Small health, welfare, or other social service providers.* If a recipient with fewer than fifteen employees that provides health, welfare, or other social services finds, after consultation with a handicapped person seeking its services, that there is no method of complying with paragraph (a) of this section other than making a significant alteration in its existing facilities, the recipient may, as an alternative, refer the handicapped person to other providers of those services that are accessible.

- (d) *Time period.* A recipient shall comply with the requirement of paragraph (a) of this section within sixty days of the effective date of this part except that where structural changes in facilities are necessary, such changes shall be made within three years of the effective date of this part, but in any event as expeditiously as possible.
- (e) *Transition plan.* In the event that structural changes to facilities are necessary to meet the requirement of paragraph (a) of this section, a recipient shall develop, within six months of the effective date of this part, a transition plan setting forth the steps necessary to complete such changes. The plan shall be developed with the assistance of interested persons, including handicapped persons or organizations representing handicapped persons. A copy of the transition plan shall be made available for public inspection. The plan shall, at a minimum:
 - (1) Identify physical obstacles in the recipient's facilities that limit the accessibility of its program or activity to handicapped persons;
 - (2) Describe in detail the methods that will be used to make the facilities accessible;
 - (3) Specify the schedule for taking the steps necessary to achieve full accessibility in order to comply with paragraph (a) of this section and, if the time period of the transition plan is longer than one year, identify the steps of that will be taken during each year of the transition period; and
 - (4) Indicate the person responsible for implementation of the plan.
- (f) *Notice.* The recipient shall adopt and implement procedures to ensure that interested persons, including persons with impaired vision or hearing, can obtain information as to the existence and location of services, activities, and facilities that are accessible to and usable by handicapped persons.

104.23 New construction.

- (a) *Design and construction.* Each facility or part of a facility constructed by, on behalf of, or for the use of a recipient shall be designed and constructed in such manner that the facility or part of the facility is readily accessible to and usable by handicapped persons, if the construction was commenced after the effective date of this part.
- (b) *Alteration.* Each facility or part of a facility which is altered by, on behalf of, or for the use of a recipient after the effective date of this part in a manner that affects or could affect the usability of the facility or part of the facility shall, to the maximum extent feasible, be altered in such manner that the altered portion of the facility is readily accessible to and usable by handicapped persons.
- (c) *Conformance with Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards.* (1) Effective as of January 18, 1991, design, construction, or alteration of buildings in conformance with sections 3-8 of the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) (Appendix A to 41 CFR subpart 101-19.6) shall be deemed to comply with the requirements of this section with respect to those buildings. Departures from particular technical and scoping requirements of UFAS by the use of other methods are permitted where substantially equivalent or greater access to and usability of the building is provided.

- (2) For purposes of this section, section 4.1.6(1)(g) of UFAS shall be interpreted to exempt from the requirements of UFAS only mechanical rooms and other spaces that, because of their intended use, will not require accessibility to the public or beneficiaries or result in the employment or residence therein of persons with physical handicaps.
- (3) This section does not require recipients to make building alterations that have little likelihood of being accomplished without removing or altering a load-bearing structural member.

[45 FR 30936, May 9, 1980; 45 FR 37426, June 3, 1980, as amended at 55 FR 52138, 52141, Dec. 19, 1990]

Subpart D -- Preschool, Elementary, and Secondary Education

104.31 Application of this subpart.

Subpart D applies to preschool, elementary, secondary, and adult education programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance and to recipients that operate, or that receive Federal financial assistance for the operation of, such programs or activities.

104.32 Location and notification.

A recipient that operates a public elementary or secondary education program or activity shall annually:

- (a) Undertake to identify and locate every qualified handicapped person residing in the recipient's jurisdiction who is not receiving a public education; and
- (b) Take appropriate steps to notify handicapped persons and their parents or guardians of the recipient's duty under this subpart.

104.33 Free appropriate public education.

- (a) *General.* A recipient that operates a public elementary or secondary education program or activity shall provide a free appropriate public education to each qualified handicapped person who is in the recipient's jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the person's handicap.
- (b) *Appropriate education.* (1) For the purpose of this subpart, the provision of an appropriate education is the provision of regular or special education and related aids and services that (i) are designed to meet individual educational needs of handicapped persons as adequately as the needs of nonhandicapped persons are met and (ii) are based upon adherence to procedures that satisfy the requirements of 104.34, 104.35, and 104.36.
- (2) Implementation of an Individualized Education Program developed in accordance with the Education of the Handicapped Act is one means of meeting the standard established in paragraph(b)(1)(i) of this section.
- (3) A recipient may place a handicapped person or refer such a person for aid, benefits, or services other than those that it operates or provides as its means of carrying out the requirements of this subpart. If so, the recipient remains responsible for ensuring that the requirements of this subpart are met with respect to any handicapped person so placed or referred.

- (c) *Free education -- (1) General.* For the purpose of this section, the provision of a free education is the provision of educational and related services without cost to the handicapped person or to his or her parents or guardian, except for those fees that are imposed on non-handicapped persons or their parents or guardian. It may consist either of the provision of free services or, if a recipient places a handicapped person or refers such person for aid, benefits, or services not operated or provided by the recipient as its means of carrying out the requirements of this subpart, of payment for the costs of the aid, benefits, or services. Funds available from any public or private agency may be used to meet the requirements of this subpart. Nothing in this section shall be construed to relieve an insurer or similar third party from an otherwise valid obligation to provide or pay for services provided to a handicapped person.
- (2) *Transportation.* If a recipient places a handicapped person or refers such person for aid, benefits, or services not operated or provided by the recipient as its means of carrying out the requirements of this subpart, the recipient shall ensure that adequate transportation to and from the aid, benefits, or services is provided at no greater cost than would be incurred by the person or his or her parents or guardian if the person were placed in the aid, benefits, or services operated by the recipient.
- (3) *Residential placement.* If a public or private residential placement is necessary to provide a free appropriate public education to a handicapped person because of his or her handicap, the placement, including non-medical care and room and board, shall be provided at no cost to the person or his or her parents or guardian.
- (4) *Placement of handicapped persons by parents.* If a recipient has made available, in conformance with the requirements of this section and 104.34, a free appropriate public education to a handicapped person and the person's parents or guardian choose to place the person in a private school, the recipient is not required to pay for the person's education in the private school. Disagreements between a parent or guardian and a recipient regarding whether the recipient has made a free appropriate public education available or otherwise regarding the question of financial responsibility are subject to the due process procedures of 104.36.
- (d) *Compliance.* A recipient may not exclude any qualified handicapped person from a public elementary or secondary education after the effective date of this part. A recipient that is not, on the effective date of this regulation, in full compliance with the other requirements of the preceding paragraphs of this section shall meet such requirements at the earliest practicable time and in no event later than September 1, 1978.

104.34 Educational setting.

- (a) *Academic setting.* A recipient to which this subpart applies shall educate, or shall provide for the education of, each qualified handicapped person in its jurisdiction with persons who are not handicapped to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of the handicapped person. A recipient shall place a handicapped person in the regular educational environment operated by the recipient unless it is demonstrated by the recipient that the education of the person in the regular environment with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. Whenever a recipient places a person in a setting other than the regular educational environment pursuant to this paragraph, it shall take into account the proximity of the alternate setting to the person's home.

- (b) *Nonacademic settings.* In providing or arranging for the provision of nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities, including meals, recess periods, and the services and activities set forth in 104.37(a)(2), a recipient shall ensure that handicapped persons participate with nonhandicapped persons in such activities and services to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of the handicapped person in question.
- (c) *Comparable facilities.* If a recipient, in compliance with paragraph (a) of this section, operates a facility that is identifiable as being for handicapped persons, the recipient shall ensure that the facility and the services and activities provided therein are comparable to the other facilities, services, and activities of the recipient.

104.35 Evaluation and placement.

- (a) *Preplacement evaluation.* A recipient that operates a public elementary or secondary education program or activity shall conduct an evaluation in accordance with the requirements of paragraph (b) of this section of any person who, because of handicap, needs or is believed to need special education or related services before taking any action with respect to the initial placement of the person in regular or special education and any subsequent significant change in placement.
- (b) *Evaluation procedures.* A recipient to which this subpart applies shall establish standards and procedures for the evaluation and placement of persons who, because of handicap, need or are believed to need special education or related services which ensure that:
 - (1) Tests and other evaluation materials have been validated for the specific purpose for which they are used and are administered by trained personnel in conformance with the instructions provided by their producer;
 - (2) Tests and other evaluation materials include those tailored to assess specific areas of educational need and not merely those which are designed to provide a single general intelligence quotient; and
 - (3) Tests are selected and administered so as best to ensure that, when a test is administered to a student with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, the test results accurately reflect the student's aptitude or achievement level or whatever other factor the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the student's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills (except where those skills are the factors that the test purports to measure).
- (c) *Placement procedures.* In interpreting evaluation data and in making placement decisions, a recipient shall (1) draw upon information from a variety of sources, including aptitude and achievement tests, teacher recommendations, physical condition, social or cultural background, and adaptive behavior, (2) establish procedures to ensure that information obtained from all such sources is documented and carefully considered, (3) ensure that the placement decision is made by a group of persons, including persons knowledgeable about the child, the meaning of the evaluation data, and the placement options, and (4) ensure that the placement decision is made in conformity with 104.34.
- (d) *Reevaluation.* A recipient to which this section applies shall establish procedures, in accordance with paragraph (b) of this section, for periodic reevaluation of students who have been provided special

education and related services. A reevaluation procedure consistent with the Education for the Handicapped Act is one means of meeting this requirement.

104.36 Procedural safeguards.

A recipient that operates a public elementary or secondary education program or activity shall establish and implement, with respect to actions regarding the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of persons who, because of handicap, need or are believed to need special instruction or related services, a system of procedural safeguards that includes notice, an opportunity for the parents or guardian of the person to examine relevant records, an impartial hearing with opportunity for participation by the person's parents or guardian and representation by counsel, and a review procedure. Compliance with the procedural safeguards of section 615 of the Education of the Handicapped Act is one means of meeting this requirement.

104.37 Nonacademic services.

- (a) *General.* (1) A recipient to which this subpart applies shall provide non-academic and extracurricular services and activities in such manner as is necessary to afford handicapped students an equal opportunity for participation in such services and activities.
- (2) Nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities may include counseling services, physical recreational athletics, transportation, health services, recreational activities, special interest groups or clubs sponsored by the recipients, referrals to agencies which provide assistance to handicapped persons, and employment of students, including both employment by the recipient and assistance in making available outside employment.
- (b) *Counseling services.* A recipient to which this subpart applies that provides personal, academic, or vocational counseling, guidance, or placement services to its students shall provide these services without discrimination on the basis of handicap. The recipient shall ensure that qualified handicapped students are not counseled toward more restrictive career objectives than are nonhandicapped students with similar interests and abilities.
- (c) *Physical education and athletics.* (1) In providing physical education courses and athletics and similar aid, benefits, or services to any of its students, a recipient to which this subpart applies may not discriminate on the basis of handicap. A recipient that offers physical education courses or that operates or sponsors interscholastic, club, or intramural athletics shall provide to qualified handicapped students an equal opportunity for participation.
- (2) A recipient may offer to handicapped students physical education and athletic activities that are separate or different from those offered to nonhandicapped students only if separation or differentiation is consistent with the requirements of 104.34 and only if no qualified handicapped student is denied the opportunity to compete for teams or to participate in courses that are not separate or different.

104.38 Preschool and adult education.

A recipient to which this subpart applies that provides preschool education or day care or adult education may not, on the basis of handicap, exclude qualified handicapped persons and shall take into account the needs of such persons in determining the aid, benefits, or services to be provided.

104.39 Private education.

- (a) A recipient that provides private elementary or secondary education may not, on the basis of handicap, exclude a qualified handicapped person if the person can, with minor adjustments, be provided an appropriate education, as defined in 104.33(b)(1), within that recipients program or activity.
- (b) A recipient to which this section applies may not charge more for the provision of an appropriate education to handicapped persons than to nonhandicapped persons except to the extent that any additional charge is justified by a substantial increase in cost to the recipient.
- (c) A recipient to which this section applies that provides special education shall do so in accordance with the provisions of 104.35 and 104.36. Each recipient to which this section applies is subject to the provisions of 104.34, 104.37, and 104.38.

Subpart E -- Postsecondary Education

104.41 Application of this subpart.

Subpart E applies to postsecondary education programs or activities, including postsecondary vocational education programs or activities, that receive Federal financial assistance and to recipients that operate, or that receive Federal financial assistance for the operation of, such programs or activities.

104.42 Admissions and recruitment.

- (a) *General.* Qualified handicapped persons may not, on the basis of handicap, be denied admission or be subjected to discrimination in admission or recruitment by a recipient to which this subpart applies.
- (b) *Admissions.* In administering its admission policies, a recipient to which this subpart applies:
 - (1) May not apply limitations upon the number or proportion of handicapped persons who maybe admitted;
 - (2) May not make use of any test or criterion for admission that has a disproportionate, adverse effect on handicapped persons or any class of handicapped persons unless (i) the test or criterion, as used by the recipient, has been validated as a predictor of success in the education program or activity in question and (ii) alternate tests or criteria that have a less disproportionate, adverse effect are not shown by the Assistant Secretary to be available.
 - (3) Shall assure itself that (i) admissions tests are selected and administered so as best to ensure that, when a test is administered to an applicant who has a handicap that impairs sensory, manual, or speaking skills, the test results accurately reflect the applicant's aptitude or achievement level or whatever other factor the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the applicant's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills (except where those skills are the factors that the test purports to measure); (ii) admissions tests that are designed for persons with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills are offered as often and in as timely a manner as are other admissions tests; and (iii) admissions tests are administered in facilities that, on the whole, are accessible to handicapped persons; and

- (4) Except as provided in paragraph (c) of this section, may not make preadmission inquiry as to whether an applicant for admission is a handicapped person but, after admission, may make inquiries on a confidential basis as to handicaps that may require accommodation.
- (c) *Preadmission inquiry exception.* When a recipient is taking remedial action to correct the effects of past discrimination pursuant to 104.6(a) or when a recipient is taking voluntary action to overcome the effects of conditions that resulted in limited participation in its federally assisted program or activity pursuant to 104.6(b), the recipient may invite applicants for admission to indicate whether and to what extent they are handicapped, *Provided, That:*
 - (1) The recipient states clearly on any written questionnaire used for this purpose or makes clear orally if no written questionnaire is used that the information requested is intended for use solely in connection with its remedial action obligations or its voluntary action efforts; and
 - (2) The recipient states clearly that the information is being requested on a voluntary basis, that it will be kept confidential, that refusal to provide it will not subject the applicant to any adverse treatment, and that it will be used only in accordance with this part.
- (d) *Validity studies.* For the purpose of paragraph (b)(2) of this section, a recipient may base prediction equations on first year grades, but shall conduct periodic validity studies against the criterion of overall success in the education program or activity in question in order to monitor the general validity of the test scores.

104.43 Treatment of students; general.

- (a) No qualified handicapped student shall, on the basis of handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any academic, research, occupational training, housing, health insurance, counseling, financial aid, physical education, athletics, recreation, transportation, other extracurricular, or other postsecondary education aid, benefits, or services to which this subpart applies.
- (b) A recipient to which this subpart applies that considers participation by students in education programs or activities not operated wholly by the recipient as part of, or equivalent to, and education program or activity operated by the recipient shall assure itself that the other education program or activity, as a whole, provides an equal opportunity for the participation of qualified handicapped persons.
- (c) A recipient to which this subpart applies may not, on the basis of handicap, exclude any qualified handicapped student from any course, course of study, or other part of its education program or activity.
- (d) A recipient to which this subpart applies shall operate its program or activity in the most integrated setting appropriate.

104.44 Academic adjustments.

- (a) *Academic requirements.* A recipient to which this subpart applies shall make such modifications to its academic requirements as are necessary to ensure that such requirements do not discriminate or

have the effect of discriminating, on the basis of handicap, against a qualified handicapped applicant or student. Academic requirements that the recipient can demonstrate are essential to the instruction being pursued by such student or to any directly related licensing requirement will not be regarded as discriminatory within the meaning of this section. Modifications may include changes in the length of time permitted for the completion of degree requirements, substitution of specific courses required for the completion of degree requirements, and adaptation of the manner in which specific courses are conducted.

- (b) *Other rules.* A recipient to which this subpart applies may not impose upon handicapped students other rules, such as the prohibition of tape recorders in classrooms or of dog guides in campus buildings, that have the effect of limiting the participation of handicapped students in the recipient's education program or activity.
- (c) *Course examinations.* In its course examinations or other procedures for evaluating students' academic achievement, a recipient to which this subpart applies shall provide such methods for evaluating the achievement of students who have a handicap that impairs sensory, manual, or speaking skills as will best ensure that the results of the evaluation represents the student's achievement in the course, rather than reflecting the student's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills (except where such skills are the factors that the test purports to measure).
- (d) *Auxiliary aids.* (1) A recipient to which this subpart applies shall take such steps as are necessary to ensure that no handicapped student is denied the benefits of, excluded from participation in, or otherwise subjected to discrimination because of the absence of educational auxiliary aids for students with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills.
- (2) Auxiliary aids may include taped texts, interpreters or other effective methods of making orally delivered materials available to students with hearing impairments, readers in libraries for students with visual impairments, classroom equipment adapted for use by students with manual impairments, and other similar services and actions. Recipients need not provide attendants, individually prescribed devices, readers for personal use or study, or other devices or services of a personal nature.

104.45 Housing.

- (a) *Housing provided by the recipient.* A recipient that provides housing to its nonhandicapped students shall provide comparable, convenient, and accessible housing to handicapped students at the same cost as to others. At the end of the transition period provided for in subpart C, such housing shall be available in sufficient quantity and variety so that the scope of handicapped students' choice of living accommodations is, as a whole, comparable to that of nonhandicapped students.
- (b) *Other housing.* A recipient that assists any agency, organization, or person in making housing available to any of its students shall take such action as may be necessary to assure itself that such housing is, as a whole, made available in a manner that does not result in discrimination on the basis of handicap.

104.46 Financial and employment assistance to students.

- (a) *Provision of financial assistance.* (1) In providing financial assistance to qualified handicapped persons, a recipient to which this subpart applies may not,
 - (i) On the basis of handicap, provide less assistance than is provided to nonhandicapped persons, limit eligibility for assistance, or otherwise discriminate or
 - (ii) Assist any entity or person that provides assistance to any of the recipient's students in a manner that discriminates against qualified handicapped persons on the basis of handicap.
- (2) A recipient may administer or assist in the administration of scholarships, fellowships, or other forms of financial assistance established under wills, trusts, bequests, or similar legal instruments that require awards to be made on the basis of factors that discriminate or have the effect of discriminating on the basis of handicap only if the overall effect of the award of scholarships, fellowships, and other forms of financial assistance is not discriminatory on the basis of handicap.
- (b) *Assistance in making available outside employment.* A recipient that assists any agency, organization, or person in providing employment opportunities to any of its students shall assure itself that such employment opportunities, as a whole, are made available in a manner that would not violate subpart B if they were provided by the recipient.
- (c) *Employment of students by recipients.* A recipient that employs any of its students may not do so in a manner that violates subpart B.

104.47 Nonacademic services.

- (a) *Physical education and athletics.* (1) In providing physical education courses and athletics and similar aid, benefits, or services to any of its students, a recipient to which this subpart applies may not discriminate on the basis of handicap. A recipient that offers physical education courses or that operates or sponsors intercollegiate, club, or intramural athletics shall provide to qualified handicapped students an equal opportunity for participation in these activities.
- (2) A recipient may offer to handicapped students physical education and athletic activities that are separate or different only if separation or differentiation is consistent with the requirements of 104.43(d) and only if no qualified handicapped student is denied the opportunity to compete for teams or to participate in courses that are not separate or different.
- (b) *Counseling and placement services.* A recipient to which this subpart applies that provides personal, academic, or vocational counseling, guidance, or placement services to its students shall provide these services without discrimination on the basis of handicap. The recipient shall ensure that qualified handicapped students are not counseled toward more restrictive career objectives than are nonhandicapped students with similar interests and abilities. This requirement does not preclude a recipient from providing factual information about licensing and certification requirements that may present obstacles to handicapped persons in their pursuit of particular careers.

- (c) *Social organizations.* A recipient that provides significant assistance to fraternities, sororities, or similar organizations shall assure itself that the membership practices of such organizations do not permit discrimination otherwise prohibited by this subpart.

Subpart F -- Health, Welfare, and Social Services

104.51 Application of this subpart.

Subpart F applies to health, welfare, and other social service programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance and to recipients that operate, or that receive Federal financial assistance for the operation of, such programs or activities.

104.52 Health, welfare, and other social services.

- (a) *General.* In providing health, welfare, or other social services or benefits, a recipient may not, on the basis of handicap:
- (1) Deny a qualified handicapped person these benefits or services;
 - (2) Afford a qualified handicapped person an opportunity to receive benefits or services that is not equal to that offered nonhandicapped persons;
 - (3) Provide a qualified handicapped person with benefits or services that are not as effective (as defined in 104.4(b)) as the benefits or services provided to others;
 - (4) Provide benefits or services in a manner that limits or has the effect of limiting the participation of qualified handicapped persons; or
 - (5) Provide different or separate benefits or services to handicapped persons except where necessary to provide qualified handicapped persons with benefits and services that are as effective as those provided to others.
- (b) *Notice.* A recipient that provides notice concerning benefits or services or written material concerning waivers of rights or consent to treatment shall take such steps as are necessary to ensure that qualified handicapped persons, including those with impaired sensory or speaking skills, are not denied effective notice because of their handicap.
- (c) *Emergency treatment for the hearing impaired.* A recipient hospital that provides health services or benefits shall establish a procedure for effective communication with persons with impaired hearing for the purpose of providing emergency health care.
- (d) *Auxiliary aids.* (1) A recipient to which this subpart applies that employs fifteen or more persons shall provide appropriate auxiliary aids to persons with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, where necessary to afford such persons an equal opportunity to benefit from the service in question.
- (2) The Assistant Secretary may require recipients with fewer than fifteen employees to provide auxiliary aids where the provision of aids would not significantly impair the ability of the recipient to provide its benefits or services.

- (3) For the purpose of this paragraph, auxiliary aids may include brailled and taped material, interpreters, and other aids for persons with impaired hearing or vision.

104.53 Drug and alcohol addicts.

A recipient to which this subpart applies that operates a general hospital or outpatient facility may not discriminate in admission or treatment against a drug or alcohol abuser or alcoholic who is suffering from a medical condition, because of the person's drug or alcohol abuse or alcoholism.

104.54 Education of institutionalized persons.

A recipient to which this subpart applies and that operates or supervises a program or activity that provides aid, benefits or services for persons who are institutionalized because of handicap shall ensure that each qualified handicapped person, as defined in 104.3(k)(2), in its program or activity is provided an appropriate education, as defined in 104.33(b). Nothing in this section shall be interpreted as altering in any way the obligations of recipients under subpart D.

Subpart G -- Procedures

104.61 Procedures.

The procedural provisions applicable to title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 apply to this part. These procedures are found in 100.6-100.10 and part 101 of this title.

Appendix D - Vermont State Board of Education Rules on Discipline

4312 Discipline Procedures for Students Who are Not Eligible for Special Education Services, but Who Are or May Be Qualified Individuals with Disabilities under Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 794; 34 C.F.R. § 104 et seq.)

In addition to the general disciplinary procedures found within Rule 4311, and in accordance with 34 C.F.R. §104.36, the following procedures apply to children who are qualified individuals with disabilities as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (hereinafter Section 504).

- (1) A Section 504 student shall not be removed from his or her current educational placement for disciplinary reasons for more than 10 consecutive school days in a school year unless the following procedures have been completed:
 - (a) A re-evaluation, as defined by 34 C.F.R. §104.35; and
 - (b) A determination by the student's Section 504 team that the conduct is not a manifestation of his or her disability.
- (2) A Section 504 student shall not be removed from his or her current educational placement for disciplinary reasons for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year when the removals constitute a change in placement as defined in Rule 4313.7 unless the following procedures have been completed:
 - (a) A re-evaluation, as defined by 34 C.F.R. §104.35; and
 - (b) A determination by the student's Section 504 team that the conduct is not a manifestation of his or her disability.
- (3) When it is determined by a student's Section 504 team that the conduct is not a manifestation of the student's qualifying disability, the student may be disciplined in the same manner, and subject to the same disciplinary consequences, as a non-disabled child, including suspension or expulsion without the provision of services.
- (4) When it is determined by a student's Section 504 team that the conduct is a manifestation of his or her qualifying disability, a change in program or placement may be implemented by the student's Section 504 team and the student's Section 504 team may respond to the conduct by designing, amending and/or enforcing a plan of behavior management.
- (5) If, at the time of the occurrence of conduct that gives rise to consideration of removal of a student from his or her current educational placement for more than 10 consecutive school days in a school year, the student is believed to be a qualified individual with a disability under Section 504, a Section 504 evaluation shall be completed prior to imposition of the removal.
 - (a) If the evaluation results in a determination that the student is a qualified individual with a disability under Section 504, the discipline procedures in this rule shall be followed.

- (b) If the evaluation results in a determination that the student is not a qualified individual with a disability under Section 504, the discipline procedures in Rule 4311 shall be followed.
- (6) If, at the time of the occurrence of conduct that gives rise to consideration of removal of a student who is believed to be a qualified individual with a disability under Section 504 for more than 10 cumulative school days in a school year, and the removals constitute a change in placement as defined in Rule 4313.7, a Section 504 evaluation shall be completed prior to imposition of the removal.
- (a) If the evaluation results in a determination that the student is a qualified individual with a disability under Section 504, the discipline procedures in this rule shall be followed.
- (b) If the evaluation results in a determination that the student is not a qualified individual with a disability under Section 504, the discipline procedures in Rule 4311 shall be followed.
- (7) If a child who is a qualified individual under Section 504 possesses or carries a weapon, as defined in Rule 4313.1(g), to school or at a school function, he or she may be placed in an interim alternative educational setting in accordance with the procedures set forth in Rule 4313.1(g) and Rule 1253. The student's Section 504 team shall determine the IAES, and the services provided in the IAES, in accordance with the procedures set forth in Rule 4313.1. It is the intent of this section to discipline a child who is a qualified individual under Section 504 in the same manner as students who are eligible for special education when they possess weapons at school or at school functions.
- (8) When a parent disagrees with disciplinary action taken by an LEA, the parent may request an impartial due process hearing, and the procedures in Rules 2365.1.6.2 through 2365.1.9 shall apply. In addition to or in lieu of a due process hearing a parent may file a complaint with the U.S. Agency of Education Office for Civil Rights.
- (9) A hearing officer may order a change in the placement of a child who is a qualified individual under Section 504 to an appropriate IAES for not more than 45 calendar days, if the hearing officer, in an expedited due process hearing:
 - (a) Determines that the LEA has demonstrated by substantial evidence, which for purposes of this section shall mean a preponderance of the evidence, that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or others;
 - (b) Considers the appropriateness of the child's current placement;
 - (c) Considers whether the LEA has made reasonable efforts to minimize the risk of harm in the child's current placement, including the use of supplementary aids and services; and
 - (d) Determines that the IAES that is proposed by school personnel will enable the child to continue to progress in the general curriculum. The services provided to and modifications made for the child in the IAES shall be designed to address and prevent the child's offending behavior.

- (10) This Rule (4312) shall not apply when a responsible agency takes disciplinary action against a Section 504 student if:
- (a) The misconduct for which the student is being disciplined pertains to the use or possession of illegal drugs or alcohol at school or at a school function; and
 - (b) The student is currently engaging in the use of alcohol or illegal drugs. In this instance, the Section 504 student shall be disciplined in accordance with Rule 4311.

Appendix E - Office of Civil Rights, Boston, MA

Boston Office

Office for Civil Rights

US Department of Education

8th Floor

5 Post Office Square

Boston, MA 02109-3921

Telephone: 617-289-0111

Fax: 617-289-0150; TDD: 800-877-8339

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