

What are my rights as a parent/ guardian under Section 504?

As a parent or guardian, you have the right:

- To have the school staff consider whether your child might need a 504 Plan, based on information from a variety of sources.
- To examine all records regarding your child's 504 Plan.
- To be told ahead of time about any actions the school is planning to take that are related to your child's 504 Plan.
- To have your child's 504 Plan reviewed and evaluated on a regular basis.
- To be told before any major changes are made to the services your child is getting under his or her 504 Plan.

If you disagree with the decisions of the 504 team, you have the right to contact the District 504 Coordinator about your concerns, and, if not addressed at the district level, to contact the Office of Civil Rights.

Who should I contact at my child's school to inquire about a Section 504 evaluation?

Ask to speak to the school site 504 Coordinator or the administrator.

SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973



Parent Information



Section 504 Parent/Guardian Information



What is Section 504?

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a civil rights law that protects students with disabilities from discrimination.

The law requires school districts that receive federal funding to provide students with disabilities reasonable accommodations and/or services which allow them to have their needs met as adequately as students without disabilities. The 504 plan details what the school will do to ensure it is meeting a student's needs at school.

Which students can receive a 504 Plan?

In order to have a 504 Plan, a student must meet all 3 requirements below:

- 1) The student must have a **physical or mental impairment** that gets in the way of learning or participating in school programs or activities.

Examples of impairments include: Mental or psychological disorders, including Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD); diabetes; cancer; severe asthma; seizure disorder; or a learning disability.

- 2) The student's impairment **must affect at least one "major life activity."** "Major life activities" include such things as seeing, hearing, speaking, walking, thinking, caring for one's self, and learning.

- 3) The impairment must limit the student in a "**substantial**" way. Generally, having a "substantial" limitation means that a student with a disability is unable to perform a major life activity in the same way as a student without a disability.

How do students receive a 504 plan?

Each school has a staff member who serves as the 504 Coordinator and handles the 504 process at that school. If someone thinks a student might have an impairment that meets the requirements for having a 504 Plan, the 504 Coordinator will follow up. Usually, it's a parent, teacher, school nurse, or other staff member who informs the school's 504 Coordinator about a student who might need a 504 Plan.

If I think my child might need a 504 Plan, what should I do?

A parent/guardian, teacher, or other school staff may raise a concern about a student. Parents/guardians, teachers, and other school staff will meet together as a Student Success Team (SST) to discuss all relevant information about the student. Family participation in this meeting is critical and helps to establish an accurate picture of the student's needs. The team will consider issues that may be interfering with the student's academic, behavioral or emotional success. If the team feels that the student has an impairment that is substantially limiting, they will request written consent to assess the student for 504 eligibility.

If my child has a 504 evaluation, what happens next?

The 504 evaluation process includes gathering information about your student from you, from your child's records, from other school staff who might be familiar with the needs of your child, and from community-based professionals. School staff might also arrange for further evaluations or testing, if needed, and with your permission, to have a better understanding of your child's needs.

After information has been gathered, a 504 Team meeting will be held to review the information and decide whether your child meets the requirements. The meeting will include you, the 504 Coordinator, your student's teachers, and other school staff who know your student and can evaluate the information presented. If your child qualifies, the team will develop the 504 Plan during the meeting.

What accommodations/services are available through a 504 Plan?

504 services and accommodations are designed to meet the individual needs of each eligible student. An example of an accommodation might be allowing a student with a writing disability to use a computer for written assignments. A service might be nursing services for a student with diabetes.