

Transition Planning at 21

- Include young adult in IEP meeting.
- Include young adult's SSA (Service and Support Administrator from the Board of DD) in IEP meetings if eligible for services, and with permission from young adult over 18 or guardian. *Discuss eligibility for these services if there are questions.*
 - Discuss Social Security, Medicaid, Age of Majority questions/concerns
- The IEP team should complete/review a Future Transition Planning Survey and complete Age Appropriate Transition Assessments to provide information on the student's preferences, interests, needs and skills relating to further education and training, competitive employment, and independent living (if necessary).
- Discuss the Postsecondary Transition section (4 & 5) of the student's IEP. These sections of the IEP should drive the annual goals of the IEP, section 6.
- Discuss future program options and expected graduation date.
- Discuss agencies that may provide future supports/services needed by your young adult. Consider inviting them to the IEP meeting to answer questions and provide more information. (These agencies may include, but are not limited to, the County Board of DD, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD), Social Security Administration, Children's Services, juvenile or family court and Job and Family Services. The purpose is to collaborate with these agencies to provide services as needed for the transition to post-school life.
- Discuss readiness for referral to Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR) if applicable. Invite VR counselor to IEP meetings for transition services 2 yrs. prior to exiting school age services.
- Revisit if the student will seek a driver's license or needs to obtain a state ID card.
- If your young adult is graduating this year, please make sure that your home school district is aware of this and that your son/daughter is included in all graduation preparations.
- **For more information and definitions of terms above, please continue on to the next page.**

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- **Why should the young adult attend the IEP meeting?**

Students MUST be *invited* to the IEP meeting beginning with the IEP during which he/she turns 14. This is when transition planning for his/her future begins to take place, and students have both the right and responsibility to participate in this planning. The student should receive his/her own invitation and/or the signature on the IEP form can serve as proof of being invited.
- **Why should we invite the young adult's SSA?**

If your son/daughter has an SSA (Services and Supports Administrator) through the Board of DD, this person can become an invaluable link to support transition planning for students still in school and beyond into adulthood. An SSA can help your student/family link to needed agencies and funding sources such as Social Security and Medicaid.
- **What are Social Security benefits? How do I apply?**

There are different categories of benefits, but eligibility is based upon disability and the ability to be gainfully employed. You can apply online (if your young adult has a work history) or call 1-800-772-1213 for an appointment. Take along a current copy of the IEP, ETR, court order of Guardianship or power of attorney (if applicable) and photo ID (driver's license or state ID card). The Lima office of Social Security is located at 401 W. North Street, Suite 10, Lima, Ohio.
- **What is Medicaid? How do I apply?**

Medicaid can provide for medical needs as a secondary insurance to supplement your young adult's existing insurance. Medicaid can also provide a *Medicaid Waiver* that will pay for support persons for employment for individuals in *enclave* settings.
Medicaid income is disability based, and has income/asset levels as part of eligibility.
Apply for Medicaid at Mercer County Job and Family Services (JFS) 220 W. Livingston St. Suite 10, Celina, OH 419-586-5106.
- **What is Guardianship?**

Guardianship gives the parent(s) the right to make decisions for the young adult concerning medical or legal issues. It DOES NOT limit the young adult's ability to vote, date/marry. Contact an attorney to begin the paperwork if you choose to pursue guardianship.
- **What is Power of Attorney?**

Power of Attorney is like a contract between you and your young adult giving you their permission to help them make decisions. Your young adult will indicate which areas you may help with and how much help he/she may need. Power of Attorney can be revoked by the young adult at any time. Contact an attorney to have this document drawn up.
- **What is a Special Needs Trust?**

This trust allows your young adult to have money available to them as they age, while not endangering their eligibility for Social Security or Medicaid benefits. Contact an attorney to arrange such a trust as it is very specific to each family situation.
- **What is the Age of Majority?**

The Age of Majority is the transfer of all of the rights and responsibilities of adulthood to the student when he/she turns 18. This includes the right to vote, register for the armed services, and be capable of and responsible for handling his/her own affairs and any legal obligations created by his/her actions.

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For more information, contact your County Board SSA: 419-586-2369

<http://www.disabilityrightsohio.org/faq-guardianship>

➤ What is a Future Transition Planning Survey?

An informal survey designed to identify the student's preferences, interests, needs and strengths. This survey will help the team plan for the student's future employment, education & training, and possible independent living needs. Inventory provided by the student's teacher.

➤ What are Post-Secondary Transition Goals?

Post-secondary transition goals are based upon the student's *projected* needs in the areas of *education & training, employment and independent living (if needed)* once they leave school. These needs are determined through age appropriate assessments and the student's plans for the future. Services, activities and courses of study to support the student's post-secondary goals must be included in the IEP starting at age 16.

➤ What agencies are available for future supports/services?

These agencies may include, but are not limited to, the county board of DD, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD), Social Security Administration, Children's Services, juvenile or family court and Job and Family Services. The purpose is to collaborate with these agencies to provide services as needed for the transition to post-school life.

➤ What are the student's future program options?

Besides the special education classes provided within each school district, Mercer County provides additional programs that may assist in meeting your student's future educational, employment and independent living needs if needed. Examples include:

- Tri-Star Career Compact/Vantage Career Center
- MCEC Vocational Skills Center
- MCEC Transition Center

➤ Who is the County Board of DD

The Mercer County Board of Developmental Disabilities (Board of DD/CA Discovering Abilities) is a county-wide program for eligible individuals with disabilities that provides the following services:

- SSA's: (Services and Supports Administrators)
SSA's assist with information on services and funding sources available to the student/family, such as Employment, Adult Services, Waivers, Family Resources, Social Security, and Medicaid. SSA's can advocate for the student/family during IEP meetings, and with community agencies and medical professionals. They offer lifelong support.

*An eligibility test for *Adult Services* is necessary (OEDI: Ohio Eligibility Determination Instrument)

Contact: Beth Gehret, Service and Support Administration (SSA) Director, 419-586-2369 ext. 220 for more information.

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➤ Who is the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR)?

BVR is an agency (under the *Opportunity for Ohioans with Disabilities Agency – OOD*) whose goal is to help eligible students with disabilities transition from school to employment or post-school activities. A BVR counselor will help determine possible jobs based on skills and interests. BVR can provide job exploration, community based work assessments, job social skills training, career development skills, and services to help obtain and maintain employment.

*A referral can be initiated by the school, family member, other educational or community resource or by the student. More information can be found at <http://www.ood.ohio.gov> or from your student's teacher or SSA.

➤ When is the "right time" to refer to BVR?

BVR services are available to youth 14-22 who have a disability that impacts work. The time to refer a student for BVR services is when the IEP team begins to identify transition or other post-secondary services that target *competitive employment (community based employment at or above minimum wage)* as an outcome for a student with a disability.

- Students considering Tri-Star may want to be referred in their sophomore year as they begin to make plans toward future career goals.
- A general "rule of thumb" is to refer students for BVR services 2 years prior to exiting school age services. If a student is not yet ready for *competitive employment* and requires more continued training, a referral to BVR should not yet be made.
- Other work options, such as an *enclave*, offer supervised and structured work experience and training within a community business for those individuals who are not yet ready for competitive employment. An *enclave* provides a small group of individuals with the close supervision needed for success at work. BVR does NOT fund individuals working in enclaves. Those working in *enclaves* are supported through *waiver* programs available through the *Board of DD*.

➤ Is there help for the student in getting a driver's license?

Capabilities Driving School has an instructor with a specialized certification for teaching people with disabilities how to drive. Call 419-394-0003 or go to <http://capabilitiesinc.biz/driving.php>

➤ Why a State ID Card and how do I get one?

A State of Ohio ID Card is recommended for your student if they will not have a driver's license. It provides identifying information that will be needed for employment and many service agencies. State ID Cards are available at the Bureau of Motor Vehicles BMV, 320 Portland St. Celina, OH. 419-586-7144. You will need to take a certified birth certificate, social security card and proof of address. There is a nominal fee.