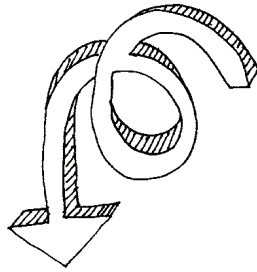


# HIGH SCHOOL & BEYOND



## A Guide to **TRANSITION** Services in Maine

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Welcome! The Department of Health and Human Services is pleased to have partnered with a variety of State of Maine agencies, private service providers, and valued community members to bring you **A Guide to Transition Services in Maine**.

The Guide was developed with the assistance of youth and families to provide resource and planning information to youth and young adults, their families, and their supports to address the many different areas of transition planning. It is my hope that you will find this Guide helpful in supporting youth and young adults in their successful transition to adulthood.

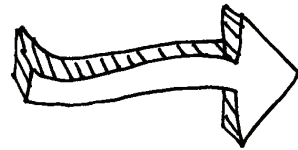
The transition to adulthood has many exciting opportunities and pathways. I hope **A Guide to Transition Services in Maine** will provide you with valuable information, ideas, and resources to assist in the journey.

We wish to thank everyone who contributed their knowledge, time, and resources to make this Guide possible.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Todd A. Landry".

Todd A. Landry, Ed.D.  
Director  
Office of Child and Family Services





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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MAINE

### Muskie School of Public Service

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## GOOD to KNOW

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### **The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) defines Transition Services as:**

“a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that is designed to be within a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child’s movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation.”

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The services are based on the child’s needs and strengths and can include related services, community services and acquisition of daily living skills.



# INTRODUCTION

The transition from high school into the world of adulthood is an exciting milestone for all young people. There are so many possibilities to explore as students dream and plan for their future. Across the country youth with disabilities often face challenges when seeking employment and living independently after high school. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that schools provide transition services as one way to improve these outcomes for students with disabilities.

Maine youth with disabilities who are provided special education services will receive transition services no later than ninth grade or at age 16, whichever happens first. Transition services are provided by the school in collaboration with the young person, family, and appropriate community services. They are designed to help students achieve success in school, identify their personal goals, and prepare them for life after high school.

This handbook offers practical information about the transition process and services available to youth with disabilities in Maine. It is designed for young people, families, schools, service providers, and anyone else working with transition aged youth. It can be used throughout the transition process from preparing students before they begin, to guiding families and advocates during high school, and as a reference to helpful resources after graduation.



## WHAT IS TRANSITION ?

Transition is the process of making a change, moving from one place or experience to another. Post-secondary transition is when a young person completes high school and blazes a new trail into adulthood. The work to prepare youth with disabilities for this transition begins in high school through special education services.

**In Maine, special education services end when students:**

**A. graduate with a regular high school diploma**

**OR**

**B. turn 20 years old and complete the current school year.**

This change marks a significant shift in how support services are identified and delivered to youth with disabilities, since after graduation they are no longer provided by the public schools.



# WHAT are TRANSITION SERVICES?

In Maine, all students who receive special education services are entitled to transition services beginning no later than 9th grade. **Transition services are a coordinated set of activities that support a young person's move from school to post-school activities.** These include but are not limited to: continuing education, employment, adult services, recreation, and independent living. Schools are legally required to provide transition services under a federal law called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or IDEA.

These services help students and their families plan and prepare for the young person's life after high school. They are intended to improve the quality of life for young people with disabilities.

## **The services must include:**

- 1) instruction**
- 2) related services**
- 3) community experiences**
- 4) the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives**
- 5) if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and provision of a functional vocational evaluation**

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Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provides reasonable accommodations or modifications for students who have a physical or mental disability that limits their participation in a major life activity. These protections are different from special education services. Section 504 provides that students with disabilities are entitled to receive a free and appropriate public education and may require specialized instruction and services.

# GOOD to KNOW

**Each student's services are a little different, since they are developed to support his or her individual needs and future plans, and may include:**

- **continuing education:** college, vocational programs, job training
- **employment:** paid work, supported work
- **adult services:** case management, vocational rehabilitation
- **recreation:** social groups, clubs
- **independent living:** supported housing, financial management skills, health care

## **Ideas for youth to practice adult responsibilities:**

- cook something using a recipe
- do chores around the house
- introduce everyone at your Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings
- get your driver's license
- make your next doctor's appointment yourself
- create a budget
- job shadow places where you might want to work
- create an agenda for, and run, your IEP meeting

The National Gateway for **Self-Determination** gives the following definition: Self-determination is "a characteristic of a person that leads them to make choices and decisions based on their own preferences and interests, to monitor and regulate their own actions and to be goal-oriented and self-directing." [www.ngsd.org](http://www.ngsd.org)



## WHY ARE TRANSITION SERVICES IMPORTANT?

After high school, all students face many choices about where they want to live, what they want to learn, and what kind of work they want to do as young adults. Students with a disability also face a change in the kind of supports that are available to them, once special education services end. Transition services are designed to help students with disabilities make the move from school to post school activities smoothly.

Why are these services so important? Research shows that youth with disabilities are less likely than youth without disabilities to:

- attend four year colleges
- graduate from college
- be employed in adulthood

**There is good news!** When youth with disabilities plan their future and practice adult responsibilities, they become more independent. They are also more likely to achieve their goals after high school. In fact, when youth have paid work experiences and learn self-determination skills when they are in high school, they are more likely to be employed and continue their education as young adults.

Transition services can provide life skills and community connections that will benefit students for years to come.



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## When Does TRANSITION PLANNING BEGIN?

Transition planning and services are initiated by the school and documented in Section 8 (Post-Secondary Transition Plan) of the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP).

It might seem too early to begin thinking about adulthood in 9th grade, but it's not! The 9th grade year is a formative one for all students, as they select their course of study for their time in high school. The path selected in 9th grade impacts the choices students will have for future education and career options. **The earlier a transition plan begins, the more likely a student is to live independently, pursue a job, or attend college.** The school and family may elect to begin transition work before 9th grade if they believe it makes sense. IDEA requires that transition be discussed annually for all transition-aged students, and more often if possible.

Planning requires **collaboration** between the school, student, family, and any related service providers. **The student should be at the center of the process.**

The plan that is developed should reflect what the student wants to do after high school. Research indicates that when young people are engaged in their transition planning, they are more invested in the process and have better outcomes after high school. A strong IEP should describe how a student's school programming will help the student attain his or her desired job, continuing education, and living situation after high school.

## Who Is ON THE TEAM?

The school is responsible for pulling together the team that will work on the student's transition plan in the IEP throughout high school. The IEP team must include:

- the student
- parents
- administrator with fiscal authority
- regular teacher
- special education teacher
- vocational rehabilitation counselor  
(must be invited no later than the 11<sup>th</sup> grade)
- additional support personnel and community agencies may also be invited by the team to attend, especially if they provide a link to work or independent living opportunities

## WHAT DOES THE TEAM DO?

The transition planning team supports the student in identifying their goals for life after high school, steps to reach those goals, and services that will support reaching those goals. Federal law requires that the team consider the student's wishes and strengths when creating the transition plan. The student's post-secondary goals must be specific, measurable, and included in the IEP. Specifically, that team supports the student in exploring and determining their priorities for:

- 1) post-secondary education
- 2) vocational education
- 3) employment
- 4) continuing education
- 5) adult services
- 6) independent living
- 7) community participation



## GOOD to Know

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### **A great way to help students get involved is to encourage them to lead their own IEP meeting.**

Teachers can work with students outside of the IEP meeting to help them prepare for it. During the meeting, students can introduce group members, share their interests/strengths/weaknesses, ask questions about their services, answer questions, and summarize their IEP goals at the end of the meeting for everyone. For more ideas, visit:

<http://transitionta.org/taxonomy/term/85>

### **The Key to Success:** Self-Determination

When students are responsible for making their own decisions and solving problems they learn self-determination. A great time for students to practice making choices and speaking up for themselves is during high school. It is a safe environment with lots of adult support. Students who have self-determination skills have a better quality of life and are more independent than those who don't. The IEP can be used as a tool to help students learn self-determination skills. Therefore, goals and opportunities to learn self-determination skills should be written right into the IEP.

For more information about self-determination, visit the National Gateway to Self-Determination at [www.ngsd.org](http://www.ngsd.org)



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## HOW IS THE PLAN CREATED?

There are so many paths a young person can take after high school! It helps to think about the options and decisions that lay ahead while young people are still in high school. Working together, families and schools can help young people choose their path, map out ways to follow it, and move into adult life seamlessly.

Here are the **KEY STEPS** to creating a quality transition plan:

### 1) **Assess the student:**

Schools are responsible for using a variety of assessments to gather information about the student's strengths, interests and needs. **Assessments should show what the student needs to learn and how he or she will learn it best to live the adult life of their choice.** Assessments can include both formal (test or surveys) and informal (interviews with the student, family, teachers, or classroom observations) evaluations. In Maine, schools have the freedom to select assessments of their choice that best suit individual students. For example, a school might use assessments that measure academic performance, job related skills, or independent living skills. Assessments also provide the team with information about the student's interests that will help guide the creation of goals and transition services. The school is responsible for providing assessments, but parents can request that the team consider a specific assessment.

## 2) Identify the student's vision:

One of the most important steps for planning ahead is helping the student develop a picture of his or her future. This vision should include the student's ideas of **where they want to live, what continuing education they would like to pursue, and what kind of work they want to do after high school.** It should capture a limited amount of time, such as over the next four or five years. These three domains (education, employment, and independent living) are required for transition planning under IDEA, but there are others that are helpful to consider. These include ideas for staying healthy and well, forging personal relationships in a community, learning about financial literacy, and exploring types of transportation the young person will need. Planning for all these areas is important because they are interrelated. For example, in order to get to work or college, a student needs to have the knowledge and skills to access appropriate transportation.

**For examples of assessment tools,** check out OCALI's Quickbook of Transition Assessments:

[www.ocali.org/up\\_doc/Quickbook\\_of\\_Transition\\_Assessment.pdf](http://www.ocali.org/up_doc/Quickbook_of_Transition_Assessment.pdf)

## 3) Set goals:

Students who set specific, measurable goals in their IEP transition plan, are more likely to reach those goals. Post-secondary goals are the specific things the student will do after high school. They must fall under the three domains required by IDEA: education, employment, and independent living.

### *CONTINUING EDUCATION EXAMPLE:*

**Education:** Student will attend a two-year veterinary technician program in college after high school.

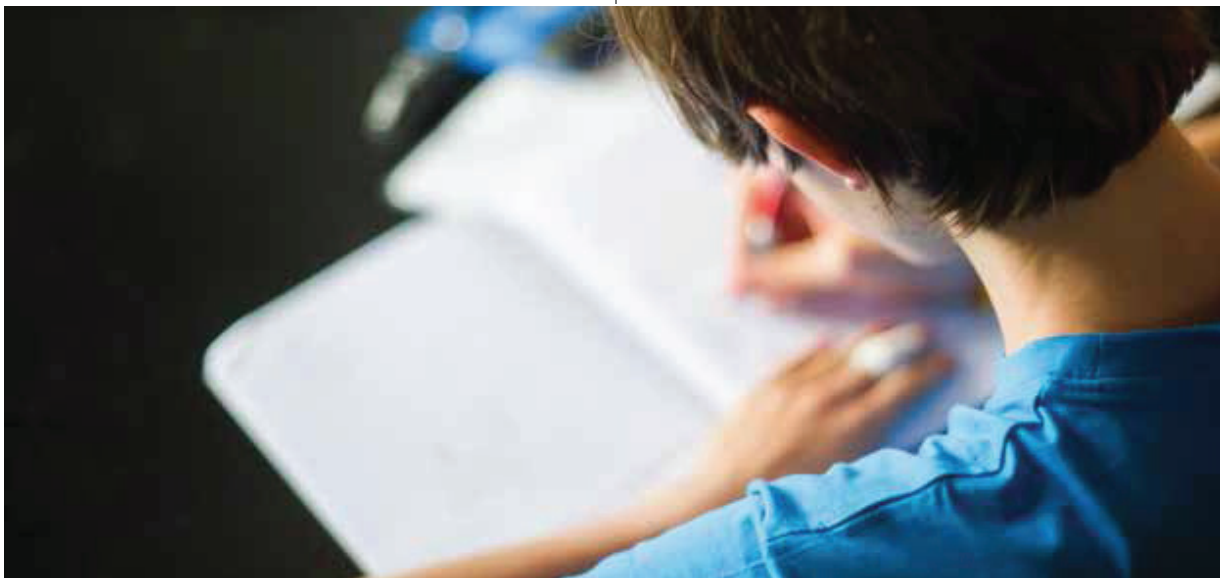
**Employment:** Student will work as a veterinary technician, after completing the two-year program.

**Independent Living:** Student will live in an apartment with a roommate during college.

### *EMPLOYMENT EXAMPLE:*

**Education:** Student will participate in an orientation program for camp counselors at a local summer camp.





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**Employment:** Student will work at a local summer camp, after completing orientation.

**Independent Living:** Student will live in a dorm at the summer camp.

#### **4) Choose the transition services:**

Transition services should enable the student to reach his or her measurable post-secondary goals. They should be listed in the IEP with deadlines and the name of the person who is responsible for providing them. Services include, but are not limited to, things like these:

- asking the student to complete an interest inventory at school
- providing ways for the student to acquire self-determination skills
- connecting a student with a business owner who has a job shadowing opportunity
- helping a student find a paid position where they work with a job coach
- introducing a student to a community member who needs a volunteer
- working together to select high school classes that match the student's strengths, interests, and goals
- supporting a student to learn how to use public transportation to get to appointments
- giving a student training and instruction needed to open a bank account
- visiting a college campus and locating the Disability Services office
- identifying clubs at school that match a student's recreational or job interests
- signing up for an SAT prep class
- completing an application for adult services eligibility

**GOOD  
to KNOW**

**Transition Planning**  
Keeping the Young Person at the Center of the Plan



## 5) Find support:

Supports for young adults entering the adult world should include both **natural community supports and paid formal support services**. During high school the transition team should connect the student with appropriate community supports and families should familiarize themselves with available programming.

### **Some examples of natural supports are:**

- family members
- neighbors
- local clubs like the YMCA
- church groups
- mentors
- online resources

### **Paid supports include things like:**

- education technicians
- adult services
- case managers
- day programs
- supported employment services
- job coaches
- group living arrangements

Paid formal supports should **supplement** the natural supports that are in place.



### **Keep the student central:**

The diagram to the left shows how transition planning keeps the young person actively at the center of the plan. The transition services for the student are chosen based on the student's self-identified interests, strengths, and needs. This is known as person-centered planning.

# TRANSITION PLANNING ROLES

## STUDENT

- prepare for IEP meetings before they happen, with a teacher and a parent
- talk about personal dreams for the future with family and teachers
- ask: "Where do I want to live, what do I want to learn and what kind of work do I want to do?"
- share strengths and interests with team
- learn how to describe disability and supports that work for them
- participate in the discussion at IEP meetings or lead the meetings!
- keep track of progress on IEP transition goals
- volunteer, job shadow, or work during high school

## FAMILY

- offer opportunities for student to develop self-advocacy skills, responsibility, and independence at home
- talk to the student about what he or she wants to do in the future
- discuss with student how and why specific accommodations may be helpful before IEP meetings
- attend IEP meetings
- share student's strengths, skills, and limitations
- support the student
- monitor student's progress on his or her transition goals
- become familiar with post-secondary programs, adult services, and community support programs
- encourage student to volunteer, job shadow, or work during high school

## SCHOOL

- initiate the transition planning process
- ensure that an appropriate transition plan is developed
- ensure that appropriate transition services are provided
- invite the student to his or her IEP meetings no later than 9th grade
- prepare the student ahead of time to present or lead the IEP meetings
- provide a variety of assessments to determine a student's skills, abilities, and areas that need accommodations
- include the student in developing goals based on his or her strengths and interests
- provide time and opportunities to explore a student's future goals
- identify school programming and accommodations for the student
- connect the student and family to adult services, continuing education programs, and supports in the community
- encourage student to volunteer, job shadow, or work during high school
- initiate the application to Vocational Rehabilitation Services during junior year
- refine goals in IEP each year so they apply to student's plans for the future
- provide solutions if other providers fail to provide required services



### **What are Team Members' Roles?**

Transition planning works best when the student, family members, and school staff are committed to working together.

**Each member of the student's transition team has a different but complementary set of responsibilities.**

***However, the school plays the most significant role since it is responsible for ensuring that an appropriate transition plan is created and services provided.*** The school is also responsible for creating alternative solutions if other agencies or team members fail to provide a required service. All members must keep the student at the center of the work and intentionally support the young person to steer the process.

The graphic to the left highlights the primary tasks for students, families, and schools.





## GOOD to KNOW

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### **Where Can I Turn for Help?**

Parents and students have a right to be fully involved in the IEP process. They should have access to all available information and play a role in decisions related to school programming and placement. If families believe they are not receiving meaningful transition services, adequate assessments, access to vocational programming, or work experiences, there are several places they can turn to for help.

Families who believe their rights have been violated can file complaints, utilize mediation, or go through a due process hearing. The forms and additional information can be found here:  
[www.maine.gov/doe/specialed/support/dispute/procedures/index.html](http://www.maine.gov/doe/specialed/support/dispute/procedures/index.html)

Disability Rights Maine provides advocacy and legal advice for Maine citizens with disabilities:  
[www.drcme.org/DRM\\_Overview.html](http://www.drcme.org/DRM_Overview.html)

Maine Parent Federation provides support and training to parents of children with disabilities:  
[www.startingpointsforme.org/content/about-us](http://www.startingpointsforme.org/content/about-us)



## GETTING TO WORK

Work is an important part of adult life. Work can be a place to make friends, learn new skills, and of course—earn a paycheck!

The world of work is changing. Due to new technologies, there are many exciting new jobs that never existed before. Work has become more flexible too, with varied shifts and ways to work.

Preparing for employment opportunities after high school can be challenging. Students might not know how to find out about available jobs in the community or may not know how their skills and interests match up with possible careers. Sometimes job accommodations or assistive technology may be needed for students with disabilities to perform the required job duties in their field of choice.

### **VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (VR)**

Vocational Rehabilitation, or VR, is a service that assists young people with disabilities to prepare for, find, and keep employment. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has offices across the state, co-located in the Maine Department of Labor's Career Centers.



There is a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor assigned to every high school in Maine. Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors help to develop an Individualized Plan for Employment that will help students reach their employment goals. The plan might include activities like participating in the Transition Career Exploration Workshop, visiting employers in the community, job shadows, and work experience opportunities.

Every student's plan is different because it is individualized!

**It is important to start early. VR recommends making an application for services about age 16 or two years before finishing high school.**

Students may also be able to participate earlier in Vocational Rehabilitation-sponsored career exploration activities through school. If a young person receives special education services, schools should invite VR to participate in transition planning (IEP) meetings so that VR can be part of the transition-planning team.

For more information about VR, applying for services, or to view a video about someone who found the job they wanted through VR services, go to [www.maine.gov/rehab](http://www.maine.gov/rehab)



### **SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME (SSI):**

Supplemental Security Income or SSI, is a federal program that provides monthly income to adults who are older, blind, or disabled, and living on little to no income. Children with disabilities can also be eligible for SSI benefits. When children receiving SSI benefits turn 18, they must reapply to determine if they remain eligible.

### **Children who do not have SSI may become eligible once they turn 18 years old.**

The best way to find out if a young adult is eligible is to call the closest Social Security Office: [www.socialsecurityoffices.info/state/maine](http://www.socialsecurityoffices.info/state/maine)

### **SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY INSURANCE (SSDI):**

Families often wonder if young people will lose their benefits by accepting a paying job. Good news: young people under the age of 22 can work when they receive SSI benefits! There are protections in place for young people to keep their SSI, health insurance, and other benefits. Maine Medical Center offers Benefits Counseling Services to help people receiving SSI who want to work. Their Community Work Incentive Coordinators (CWICs) are experts in the special rules that apply when someone receiving benefits wants to work. Families can contact a Community Work Incentives Coordinator to get more information at 1-888-208-8700 or: [www.mmc.org/benefits-counseling-services](http://www.mmc.org/benefits-counseling-services)

Social Security Disability Insurance, or SSDI, is a program that provides monthly income and benefits to adults who become disabled and are no longer able to work. These benefits can extend partially to the person's spouse or dependent children as well. There are times when adults can receive both SSI and SSDI at the same time.



## BECOMING a LEGAL ADULT

### **AGE OF MAJORITY:**

When young people turn 18 years old, they reach what is called the Age of Majority and become legal adults. That means that all the rights and responsibilities of adulthood that were held by parents before the youth's 18th birthday transfer to the young person. Young adults with disabilities are granted all the same rights and responsibilities, regardless of their disability. Once a student receiving special education services turns 18, he or she becomes the decision maker about all aspects of his or her life, including the IEP, applying for adult services, health care and money matters. **The school is required to notify families about this transfer of power at least one year before the student turns 18.** If a student is not able to assume responsibility for making all of his or her own decisions, supported decision-making is an option.

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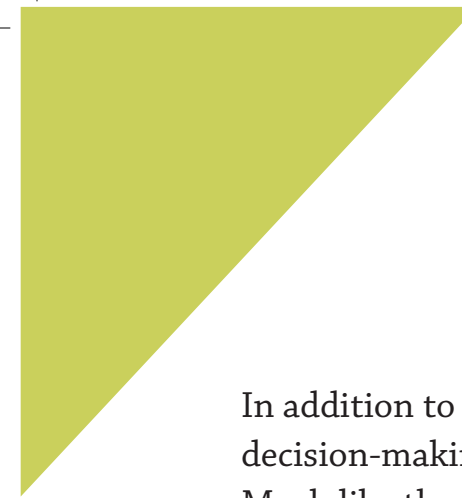
The regulation requiring Maine schools to notify families is in Chapter 101 of Maine Unified Special Education Regulation, on page 63:  
[www.maine.gov/doe/specialed/laws/chapter101.pdf](http://www.maine.gov/doe/specialed/laws/chapter101.pdf)

## **SUPPORTED DECISION-MAKING:**

Supported decision-making allows young people to retain all their legal rights and seek advice from trusted family members, friends, and professionals to make independent decisions about their lives. This option is similar to the way most adults make decisions, and gives young people control over all aspects of their lives. Research shows that supported decision-making can increase self-determination and independence, which can improve the quality of life for adults with disabilities.

There are a variety of tools that someone might include in a supported decision-making plan. Here are a few examples:

- **Releases of Information:** A release of information is a signed document that enables designated individuals to see information that would otherwise be confidential. This can be useful if the young person has someone in his or her life that he or she trusts to process information and explain a decision that needs to be made. For example, if Joe has a release of information for Sam, Joe can request information about Sam's medical services from a third party and explain to Sam what services he might be eligible for.
- **Auto-drafts:** Auto-drafts and other bill-paying mechanisms can be established to have automatic payments made for routine bills like rent or cell phone. This can be useful if a young person has trouble remembering to make certain payments. For example, if Sue has an auto draft for her cell phone bill, she doesn't have to remember to pay it, avoiding a late charge.
- **Power of Attorney (POA):** A POA is a contract that designates another individual to make decisions on a young person's behalf regarding a specific topic. This can be useful if there are certain types of decisions that an individual does not want to be involved in making or if he or she is unavailable. For example, if Jim has a seizure disorder which sometimes renders him unconscious, he can give a Power of Attorney for Medical to Sandy to make medical decisions on his behalf.



In addition to having a decision-making plan, a person having difficulty with decision-making may want to designate a Supported Decision-Making Team. Much like the IEP process, a Supported Decision-Making Team is a group of trusted individuals that agrees to meet periodically with the person to process decisions. The supporters are usually chosen to provide guidance or insight into certain decisions, but may also be using other decision-making tools like Releases or POAs.

### **GUARDIANSHIP:**

The most restrictive option for adult legal decision-making is guardianship. This appointment can only be made after petition, notice, and a hearing before a judge.

According to “A Guide to Understanding Adult Guardianship and Guardianship Alternatives in Maine,” **a judge might issue a guardianship order if:**

- an individual is unable to make or communicate responsible decisions for him or herself
- a full guardian is absolutely necessary to ensure that continuing care is provided for this individual
- friends, staff, and family members involved in the decision have researched and ruled out less restrictive options

**A guardianship order removes a person’s right to make decisions about their life and appoints someone to make those decisions for them.**

Full Guardianship cuts the person off from making any decisions while Limited Guardianship is ordered for specific types of decisions. For more information about guardianship in Maine, visit:

[www.maine.gov/dhhs/oads/aps-guardianship/guardianship.html](http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oads/aps-guardianship/guardianship.html)



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# ADULT SERVICES IN MAINE

When planning for a student's transition from high school, the team should look to the community first to find ways to help the student build relationships, increase skills, and practice self-advocacy. All services for adults with disabilities should be least restrictive and integrated, meaning they work together to provide as many natural and community supports as possible. Formal adult services should supplement natural supports. All adults are different, and their individual needs can, and should, be met differently. Support services can be creatively pieced together from several different agencies.

## **Least restrictive services:**

- are provided in the community
- help to maintain a person's independence
- meet a person's individual needs



### **ENTITLEMENT VS. ELIGIBILITY:**

When a child is identified for special education services, he or she is legally entitled to those services through the academic year that they turn 20 years old. This means that the school is required to provide services to that child while they are in school. In Maine, once a child graduates with a regular high school diploma, or turns 20, the school is no longer required to provide services. At that time young people become eligible to apply for adult services. A different set of rules regulates how and when young people become eligible for adult services.

Adult services require young people to complete applications to help determine which services they are eligible to receive. This means that young people are no longer guaranteed or entitled to services they had while in school, but they will have access to new support services if they are found eligible. These services sometimes have waiting lists, so it is important to talk about when to apply for adult services while the young person is still in high school. This conversation should take place as part of the transition planning process, during an IEP meeting.

Students may be eligible for adult services before they exit high school, and may even receive both children's and adult services for a time. Families can find out which services their child is eligible for by completing an intake application with their local branch of Maine's Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

Information about this process can be found on DHHS's website here: [www.maine.gov/dhhs/samhs/eligible/index.shtml](http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/samhs/eligible/index.shtml). Eligibility information for employment support services under the Maine Department of Labor can be found here: [www.maine.gov/labor/contact/index.html](http://www.maine.gov/labor/contact/index.html)

# SERVICE PROVIDERS

The following gives an overview of the different departments within Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Department of Labor (DOL) that offer services for adults with disabilities.

## 1) BUREAU OF REHABILITATION SERVICES (BRS):

BRS is part of the Department of Labor.

**Disability Services** under BRS fall into three categories:

- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)
- Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired
- Division for Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Late Deafened

Services are focused on preparing and supporting adults for employment.

**Vocational Rehabilitation**, or VR, is a program under BRS that helps people with disabilities get and keep a job. They also support students who want to continue their education to prepare for a particular job or career. VR is time limited and usually ends once a person has been working for 90 days. For transition-aged youth, it is recommended that they apply for VR services by the beginning of their junior year in high school.

Examples of VR services:

- career exploration
- vocational assessments
- connections to job training programs
- assistive technology
- job coaching
- job development

Representatives from VR can be reached at 207-623-6799 and more information can be found here:

[http://www.maine.gov/rehab/dvr/youth\\_transition.shtml](http://www.maine.gov/rehab/dvr/youth_transition.shtml)

## **2) OFFICE OF AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES (OADS):**

This office develops and provides services for adults with intellectual and physical disabilities. Specifically, their services meet the needs of people under four categories: Intellectual Disability and Autism, Brain Injury, Physical Disability and Other Related Conditions. Below are examples of the kinds of support OADS provides for those who are eligible:

- case management/Care Coordination
- career planning
- home supports
- assistive technology
- work support
- community supports

Representatives from OADS can be reached at 207-287-9200 and more information can be found here: [www.maine.gov/dhhs/oads/](http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oads/)

## **3) OFFICE OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES (SAMHS):**

This office is responsible for providing mental health services and supports for adults 18 and older with severe and persistent mental illness. For those individuals who are eligible, services under SAMHS include, but are not limited to:

- community Integration Services (formerly known as case management)
- home supports
- community supports
- daily living supports
- skills development
- employment related services
- supported education funding

Representatives from SAMHS can be reached at 207-287-2595 and more information can be found here: [www.maine.gov/dhhs/samhs/](http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/samhs/)





# RESOURCES

## ■ NATIONAL RESOURCES

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act:** <http://idea.ed.gov/>

**Job Accommodations Network:** [www.askjan.org](http://www.askjan.org)

**National Center for Work Development:**  
[www.ncwd-youth.info/411-on-disability-disclosure](http://www.ncwd-youth.info/411-on-disability-disclosure)

**National Center on Secondary Education and Transition:**  
[www.ncset.org](http://www.ncset.org)

**National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability:**  
[www.ncwd-youth.info](http://www.ncwd-youth.info)

**National Parent Center on Transition and Employment:**  
[www.pacer.org/transition/learning-center/planning](http://www.pacer.org/transition/learning-center/planning)

**National Technical Assistance Center on Transition:**  
[www.transitionta.org](http://www.transitionta.org)

**United States Department of Labor, Office of Disability  
Employment Policy:** [www.dol.gov/odep/](http://www.dol.gov/odep/)

## ■ MAINE RESOURCES

**Community Housing of Maine:** [www.chomhousing.org](http://www.chomhousing.org)

- Provides housing and advocacy for Mainers with low incomes.
- 207-879-0347

**Disability Rights Maine:** [www.drme.org](http://www.drme.org)

- Provides legal services to individuals with disabilities, for problems related to their disability.
- 1-800-452-1948

**Employment For ME:** [www.employmentforme.org](http://www.employmentforme.org)

- Provides information about disability employment resources and initiatives.
- 207-623-7963

**Jobs for Maine's Graduates (JMG):** [www.jmg.org](http://www.jmg.org)

- Provides resources and support to help students facing barriers to education graduate and get jobs.
- 207-620-7180

**Maine's Department of Labor (DOL):**

[www.maine.gov/rehab/dvr/youth\\_transition.shtml](http://www.maine.gov/rehab/dvr/youth_transition.shtml)

- Helps people with disabilities get and keep a job.
- 207-623-6799

**Maine's Office of Aging and Disability Services (OADS):**

[www.maine.gov/dhhs/oads](http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oads)

- Provides services for adults with intellectual and physical disabilities.
- 207-287-9200

**Maine's Office of Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services**

**(SAMHS):** [www.maine.gov/dhhs/samhs/](http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/samhs/)

- Provides mental health services and supports for adults.
- 207-287-2595

**Maine Parent Federation:** [www.startingpointsforme.org](http://www.startingpointsforme.org)

- Provides support, training, and networking for families of children with disabilities.
- 1-800-870-7746

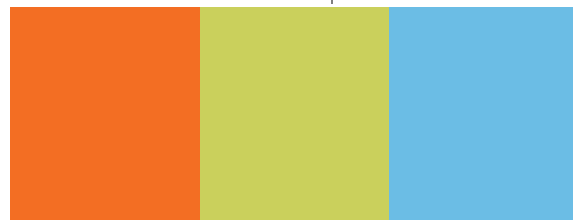


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# QUESTIONS to CONSIDER ABOUT TRANSITION

— FOR STUDENTS AND CAREGIVERS —

**Have you confirmed the student's graduation date?**

- Will the student receive a diploma or certificate of attendance?
- Will the student participate in the graduation ceremony?

**Have you been invited to an IEP meeting to work on the student's transition plan no later than 9<sup>th</sup> grade?**

**Has the school convened an IEP team, which includes:**

- the student?
- parents?
- administrator with fiscal authority?
- regular teacher?
- special education teacher?
- Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (no later than the 11<sup>th</sup> grade)?
- additional support personnel and community agencies?

**Has the school conducted an assessment to gather information about the student's strengths, interests, and needs?**

**Are the student's wishes and strengths considered when the IEP team creates the transition plan?**

*More questions on next page . . .*



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**Does the student have a transition plan as part of their IEP which identifies:**

- the student's goals for life after high school?
- measureable steps and timeframes to reach each goal?
- services/resources that will support reaching those goals?
- a plan for meaningful work/volunteer experiences in high school?
- annual review of these goals?

**Does the student's IEP describe the student's goals for life after high school and how a student's school programming will help the student attain:**

- work?
- education?
- daily living skills?
- a source of income?
- Adult Services, if needed?
- SSI benefits and representative payee, if needed?
- a strong support network and involvement in the community?
- transportation?
- alternative plans for each category?
- future living arrangements?

# NOTES



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# HIGH SCHOOL & BEYOND

