



WASHINGTON

State Independent Living Council

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Position on School to Young Adulthood (Transition Planning)

Washington State Independent Living Council
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Position. The transition from school to young adulthood can present challenges for students with disabilities, whether they use 504 Plans or the tenets of Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Act of 2004 (still referred to as IDEA) to advance their education goals. The transition period also entails opportunities for educators, parents and practitioners to provide young people with experiences that lead to success. The Washington State Independent Living Council (SILC) believes that students with disabilities should have the opportunity to fulfill school goals that are similar to those of other young adults, including continuing education and training, attaining employment, enhancing social competencies, and increasing independence.

Background Information

- Beginning at the age of 16 or younger, transition planning should involve identifying measurable post secondary goals, transition services, and a course of study that will help students achieve those transition goals.
- Students with disabilities should receive assistance through instruction that focuses on transition planning skills, which instruction will help students understand their interests and abilities and make informed decisions about their future.
- Effective transition planning should be characterized by the consistent involvement and participation of appropriate individuals, including parents and students together with regular and special education personnel and others from agencies outside the school system.
- Transition services should be a coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability that:

- (a) is designed with an outcome-oriented process which promotes movement from school to post-school activities including postsecondary education, vocational training, integrated employment including supported employment, continuing and adult education, independent living, or community participation, and
- (b) is based upon the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests; and includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives and, when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills, and functional evaluation (IDEA 1990)
- Nationally, the unemployment statistics of persons with disabilities is quite large. Depending on the definition of disability and how you define unemployment, the rate of unemployment ranges from 30% to 80% of the working age disability population. In large part, lack of consistent and robust transition services are a key issue in the prevalence of unemployment of persons with disabilities.
- It is hoped that the new Title VII Part B contracts between the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and Centers for Independent Living will lead to additional opportunities for students with disabilities in the communities in which they reside.

Conclusion. It is the position of the SILC that all students with disabilities have the right to a successful transition program.

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