

ADULT AND COMMUNITY AGENCIES

Special education services are mandated or required for all eligible students with disabilities in K-12 education. Services through adult agencies may have eligibility requirements and waitlists. Partnerships between the school, family, and agencies are an important aspect of the transition planning process.

IDEA requires that the student's Individual Education Program (IEP) include statements of interagency responsibilities or any linkages that are needed for the student to successfully transition (§300.347(b)(2)). A representative from any agency that is likely to provide or pay for transition services during the current school year (§300.344(b)(3)) must be invited to the IEP meeting.

There are many agencies that serve youth and adults with disabilities. Some offer vocational and residential services, others provide personal support or financial assistance. State agencies have services available in most local communities throughout the state, however it is important to identify locally what is available in your community.

AGENCIES

COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT -- WORKFORCE CENTERS

Workforce Centers offer numerous services including work registration, job referrals, career guidance and counseling, job data banks, interviewing and networking skills, resume writing, training, and assessment. The Centers work closely with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) to obtain more intensive services that may be needed by clients with disabilities. Find the nearest Workforce Center in your local phone book or <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdle/wfc>

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION AND DISABILITY DETERMINATION SERVICES (DDS)

The Social Security Administration provides supplemental security income (SSI or SSDI) to persons who are disabled, fall below a specified level of income, and are unable to generate an adequate income through employment. Additional services include medical benefits through Medicaid. <http://www.ssa.gov/> The Disability Determination Services (DDS) is the state agency that makes the disability decisions for Social Security. <https://www.colorado.gov/dds>

- **SOCIAL SECURITY WORK INCENTIVE PLANNING AND ASSISTANCE (WIPA)**

The WIPA program is a community-based organization that receives funding from Social Security to provide all Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) disability beneficiaries (including transition-to-work age youth) with FREE access to work incentive planning and assistance. Ability Connection Colorado is the only nonprofit approved to provide benefit counseling services through the Social Security Administration program. Certified Community Work Incentives Coordinators (CWIC) under the grant with the Social Services Administration must undergo high level security screening and training in order to provide and protect important beneficiary information. This information is provided free of charge. <http://www.abilityconnectioncolorado.org/programs/employment/social-security-work-incentive-planning/>

COLORADO DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (DVR)

Vocational Rehabilitation helps individuals with disabilities prepare for, secure, retain, advance in or regain employment by providing a range of services based on their individual employment needs and goals. The optimum timing for DVR to begin working with a student with a disability is when he or she is ready, and available, to engage in the activities necessary to

establish an employment goal, develop an employment plan, and participate in vocational services in order to become employed. The time at which this occurs is unique to each individual, and does not necessarily correspond to a specific age or a specific event such as graduation. Rather, it should occur at a time when the youth's emphasis shifts from an academic focus to an employment focus, and the youth becomes available for vocational programming. Earlier opportunities are available through the provision of pre-employment transition services for young adults to realize their potential through building a career pathway. To find the nearest VR office visit: <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/dvr> or call 303-318-5871.

- **SCHOOL TO WORK ALLIANCE PROGRAM – SWAP**

SWAP is an optional, collaboratively funded program between school districts and DVR. The program serves youth that have mild to moderate needs in employment, meet eligibility requirements for DVR services, and are likely to require short-term services to become successfully employed. Referrals can be initiated by school staff or through a DVR office. To find out if SWAP is available in your area, talk to your special education staff or contact your local DVR office. <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/dvr>.

- **CENTERS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING (CIL)**

Centers for Independent Living (CIL): Centers for Independent Living provide a variety of services to persons with significant physical, mental, cognitive or sensory disabilities to help them function more independently in their home, workplace, and community. The CILs are contracted by the Office of Independent Living Services at the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to provide services to individuals with disabilities of all ages. To find the CIL nearest to you, call the Office of Independent Living Services at 303-318-8568 or go to the Colorado Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) website at <http://coloradosilc.org/independent-living-center-locator/>.

THE OFFICE OF COMMUNITY LIVING IN THE DEPARTMENT FOR HEALTH CARE POLICY AND FINANCING

This office is responsible for services for people who have a physical or intellectual and developmental disability. Someone with an Intellectual or Developmental Disability typically would have an IQ score of 70 or below and/or adaptive behavior needs. The Office of Community Living administers supports and services for individuals with an intellectual or developmental disability through contracts with private not-for-profit agencies in local communities who are designated as Community Centers Boards (CCB). Each of the CCBs throughout Colorado has a designated geographical service area and offers a range of services including employment, residential, and community participation. It is important for parents to work with their local CCB to complete the eligible determination process at the age of 14 or as soon as possible, even if they are unsure about the types of services their child may need as an adult. To find out further information please contact your local Community Centered Board (CCB) or by contacting your local Department of Human Services or you may call 1-800-221-3943. To find further information on all services and supports for individuals with disabilities please follow this link: <https://www.colorado.gov/hcpf/programs-individuals-physical-or-developmental-disabilities>

OFFICE OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH CENTERS The Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) administers the two state mental health hospitals, purchases services to prevent and treat mental health and substance use disorders through contracts with behavioral health providers, regulates the public behavioral health system, and provides training, technical assistance, evaluation, data analysis, prevention services and administrative support to behavioral health providers and relevant stakeholders. For services nearest to you, refer to the website at <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdhs/behavioral-health> or contact the state Office of Behavioral Health at (303) 866-7400.

COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

This agency is responsible for protecting and improving the health and environment for people in Colorado. Services are provided through local health departments and county nursing service agencies. Services available include nutrition, pre-natal care, drug and alcohol intervention, immunization, health management of chronic conditions, and family planning. For further information call 303-692-2000 or refer to <https://www.colorado.gov/cdphe>

COLORADO COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM (CCCS) AND CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE)

This state agency is responsible for secondary and postsecondary certificates and degree programs as well as career and technical education. Services and support provided at secondary and postsecondary levels assist persons inclusive of those identified with disabilities to select and succeed in career pathways, technical training, credential and certificate programs. www.coloradostateplan.com . Each of the 13 statewide community college campuses and 3 technical colleges has a Disability Services Coordinator on staff. www.cccs.edu

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION SYSTEM

Coordinators of Disability Services are on staff at most community colleges, four-year colleges and universities to assist students with disabilities to select courses and obtain the supports necessary to succeed in the postsecondary education setting. Students must contact the Office of Disability Services at the college and provide documentation of disability in order to request accommodations and/or services. For further information, contact your high school counselor, special education teacher, or the postsecondary schools. <https://highered.colorado.gov/>

Sample Questions to Ask

Once you have identified agencies that may possibly provide services to your child or student, the following questions may be helpful in gathering and clarifying the information you will need to make a referral. Based on the agency, and the needs of the individual, some questions may not apply.

- What services does your agency provide?
- What are the eligibility requirements?
- How old does an individual need to be to apply for and receive your services?
- Is there a waiting list for your services?
- Is there a fee for services offered?
- Do you provide vocational evaluation?
- Do you provide financial assistance toward vocational training or postsecondary education?
- Do you offer tutorial help?
- Do you provide job placement?
- Do you provide on the job training?
- Do you offer individual or family counseling?
- What information and documentation is required in order to apply for services?
- What is my role and level of involvement?

This CDE guidance document is meant for clarification, is not legally binding, and is not to be confused with legal advice. This guidance reflects CDE's recommendations, but Administrative Units (AUs) may have developed their own policies or procedures that differ from those described herein. Be sure to refer to your local AU's policies and procedures through the Director of Special Education. If you are seeking legal advice, please contact your legal counsel.

The contents of this handout were developed under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. However, the content does not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the federal government.