

|                          | <u>IEP</u>   | <u>504 Plan</u>   |
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| <b>Basic Description</b> | A blueprint or plan for a child's special education experience at school.  | A blueprint or plan for how a child will have access to learning at school.   |
| <b>What It Does</b>      | <p>Provides individualized special education and related services to meet the unique needs of the child.</p> <p>These services are provided at no cost to parents.</p> | <p>Provides services and changes to the learning environment to meet the needs of the child as adequately as other students.</p> <p>As with IEPs, a 504 plan is provided at no cost to parents.</p> |
| <b>What Law Applies</b>  | <p>The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act(IDEA)</p> <p>This is a federal special education law for children with disabilities.</p>                            | <p>Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973</p> <p>This is a federal civil rights law to stop discrimination against people with disabilities.</p>   |

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| <b>Who Is Eligible</b>                | <p>To get an IEP, there are two requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* A child has one or more of the 13 specific disabilities listed in IDEA. Learning and attention issues may qualify.</li> <li>*The disability must affect the child’s educational performance and/or ability to learn and benefit from the general education curriculum.</li> </ul> | <p>To get a 504 plan, there are two requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*A child has any disability, which can include many learning or attention issues.</li> <li>*The disability must interfere with the child’s ability to learn in a general education classroom. Section 504 has a broader definition of a disability than IDEA. That’s why a child who doesn’t qualify for an IEP might still be able to get a 504 plan.</li> </ul> |
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| <b>Who Creates the Program / Plan</b> | <p>There are strict legal requirements about who participates. An IEP is created by an IEP team that must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*The child’s parent</li> <li>*At least one of the child’s general education teachers</li> <li>*At least one special education</li> </ul>   | <p>The rules about who’s on the 504 team are less specific than they are for an IEP.</p> <p>A 504 plan is created by a team of people who are familiar with the child and who understand the evaluation data and special services options. This might include:</p> <p>The child’s parent</p>   |

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|   | <p>teacher</p> <p>*School psychologist or other specialist who can interpret evaluation results</p> <p>*A district representative with authority over special education services</p> <p>The entire team must be present for IEP meetings.</p>   | <p>General and special education teachers</p> <p>The school principal</p>  |
| <p><b>What is in the Program / Plan</b></p> | <p>The IEP sets learning goals for a child and describes the services the school will give her. It's a written document.</p> <p>Here are some of the most important things the IEP must include:</p> <p>The child's present levels of academic and functional performance—how she is currently doing in school</p> <p>Annual education goals for the child and how the school will track her progress</p> | <p>There is no standard 504 plan. Unlike an IEP, a 504 plan doesn't have to be a written document.</p> <p>A 504 plan generally includes the following:</p> <p>Specific accommodations, supports or services for the child</p> <p>Names of who will provide each service</p> <p>Name of the person responsible for ensuring the plan is implemented</p> |

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|                             | <p>The services the child will get—this may include special education, related, supplementary and extended school year services</p> <p>The timing of services—when they start, how often they occur and how long they last</p> <p>Any accommodations—changes to the child’s learning environment</p> <p>Any modifications—changes to what the child is expected to learn or know</p> <p>How the child will participate in standardized tests</p> <p>How the child will be included in general education classes and school activities</p> |   |
| <p><b>Parent Notice</b></p> | <p>When the school wants to change a child’s services or placement, it has to tell parents in writing before the change. This is called prior written notice. Notice is also required for any IEP meetings and evaluations.</p> <p>Parents also have “stay put”</p>   | <p>The school must notify parents about evaluation or a “significant change” in placement. Notice doesn’t have to be in writing, but most schools do so anyway.</p> |

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|  | rights to keep services in place while there's a dispute.   |  |
| <b>Parent Consent</b>                      | A parent must consent in writing for the school to evaluate a child. Parents must also consent in writing before the school can provide services in an IEP.                                   | A parent's consent is required for the school district to evaluate a child.  |
| <b>How Often It's Reviewed and Revised</b> | The IEP team must review the IEP at least once a year.<br><br>The student must be reevaluated every three years to determine whether services are still needed.                               | The rules vary by state. Generally, a 504 plan is reviewed each year and a reevaluation is done every three years or when needed.  |
| <b>How to Resolve Disputes</b>             | Specific ways to resolve disputes (usually in this order):<br><br>Mediation<br><br>Due process complaint<br><br>Resolution session<br><br>Civil lawsuit<br><br>State complaint<br><br>Lawsuit | Section 504 gives parents several options for resolving disagreements with the school:<br><br>Mediation<br><br>Alternative dispute resolution<br><br>Impartial hearing<br><br>Complaint to the Office of Civil Rights (OCR)<br><br>Lawsuit |

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| <b>Funding / Costs</b> | <p>Students receive these services at no charge.</p> <p>States receive additional funding for eligible students.</p> | <p>Students receive these services at no charge.</p> <p>States do not receive extra funding for eligible students. But the federal government can take funding away from programs (including schools) that don't comply.</p> <p>IDEA funds can't be used to serve students with 504 plans.</p> |