

## IEP - 504 PLAN COMPARISON

	<u>IEP</u>	<u>504 Plan</u>
Basic Description	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.
What It Does	<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>
What Law Applies	<p>The <u>Individuals with Disabilities Education Act</u> (IDEA)</p> <p>This is a federal special education law for children with disabilities.</p>	<p><u>Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act</u> of 1973</p> <p>This is a federal civil rights law to stop discrimination against people with disabilities.</p>
Who Is Eligible	<p>To get an IEP, there are two requirements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A child has one or more of the 13 specific disabilities listed in IDEA. Learning and attention issues may qualify.</li> <li>2. The disability must affect the child's educational performance and/or ability to learn and benefit from the</li> </ol>	<p>To get a 504 plan, there are two requirements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A child has any disability, which can include many learning or attention issues.</li> <li>2. 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> </ol>

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Who Is Eligible Cont.	general education curriculum.	
Independent Educational Evaluation	<p>Parents can ask the school district to pay for an <i>independent educational evaluation</i> (IEE) by an outside expert. The district doesn't have to agree.</p> <p>Parents can always pay for an outside evaluation themselves, but the district may not give it much weight.</p>	Doesn't allow parents to ask for an IEE. As with an IEP evaluation, parents can always pay for an outside evaluation themselves.
Who Creates the Program/Plan	<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 teacher</li> <li>• School psychologist or other specialist who can interpret evaluation results</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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The child's parent</li> <li>• General and special education teachers</li> <li>• The school principal</li> </ul>

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Who Creates the Program/Plan Cont.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A district representative with authority over special education services</li> </ul> <p>With a few exceptions, the entire team must be present for IEP meetings.</p>	
What's in the Program/Plan	<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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The child's present levels of academic and functional performance—how she is currently doing in school</li> <li>• Annual education goals for the child and how the school will track her progress</li> <li>• The services the child will get—this may include special education, related, supplementary and extended school year services</li> <li>• The timing of services—when they start, how often they occur and how long they last</li> </ul>	<p>There is no standard 504 plan. Unlike an IEP, a 504 plan doesn't <i>have</i> to be a written document.</p> <p>A 504 plan generally includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific accommodations, supports or services for the child</li> <li>• Names of who will provide each service</li> <li>• Name of the person responsible for ensuring the plan is implemented</li> </ul>

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What's in the Program/Plan Cont.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any accommodations— changes to the child’s learning environment</li> <li>• Any modifications— changes to what the child is expected to learn or know</li> <li>• How the child will participate in standardized tests</li> <li>• How the child will be included in general education classes and school activities</li> </ul>	
Parent Notice	<p>When the school wants to change a child’s services or placement, it has to tell parents in writing <i>before</i> 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” rights to keep services in place while there’s a dispute.</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>
Parent Consent	<p>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.</p>	<p>A parent’s consent is required for the school district to evaluate a child.</p>

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How Often It's Reviewed and Revised	<p>The IEP team must review the IEP at least once a year.</p> <p>The student must be reevaluated every three years to determine whether services are still needed.</p>	<p>The rules vary by state. Generally, a 504 plan is reviewed each year and a reevaluation is done every three years or when needed.</p>
How to Resolve Disputes	<p>IDEA gives parents several specific ways to resolve disputes (usually in this order):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mediation</li> <li>• Due process complaint</li> <li>• Resolution session</li> <li>• Civil lawsuit</li> <li>• State complaint</li> <li>• Lawsuit</li> </ul>	<p>Section 504 gives parents several options for resolving disagreements with the school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mediation</li> <li>• Alternative dispute resolution</li> <li>• Impartial hearing</li> <li>• Complaint to the Office of Civil Rights (OCR)</li> <li>• Lawsuit</li> </ul>
Funding/Costs	<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>