

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

FOR PEOPLE WITH AUTISM

Supporting children with autism and their families since 1989

Transition—Chapter 688

- A Guide to Chapter 688: MA Transitional Planning Program (MA Dept. of Elementary & Secondary Ed.)
- Chapter 688 Transitional Services (Dept. of Developmental Services)
- Chapter 688 Directions (MA Dept. of Education)
- Chapter 688 Student Referral Form (MA Bureau of Transitional Planning)
- Transition: A Guide for Students, Families, Professionals (MA Dept. of Developmental Services)
- A Guide to the Turning 22 Law (MA Dept. of Health and Human Services)
- Legal Requirements for Transition Planning (Doherty, Wallace, Pillsbury & Murphy, P.C.)
- Chapter 688 Human Service Agency Information (MA Dept. of Elementary & Secondary Ed.)
- Transition from School to Adult Life (MA Dept. of Elementary & Secondary Ed.)
- Transition Planning Form (MA Dept. of Elementary & Secondary Ed.)

Community Resources for People with Autism

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a division of **THE ASSOCIATION** FOR COMMUNITY LIVING

*Creating Opportunities, Building Relationships, Improving Lives
for children and adults with developmental disabilities since 1952*

What is the parent/student role?

A possible 688 referral should be discussed at the IEP Team meeting *at least two years before the student is expected to graduate or turn 22*, as part of transition planning. Ask the school to submit a 688 referral for your child. It must be signed by the parent, legal guardian, or by the young adult who is 18 or older. Request a copy of the form that is submitted.

In addition, the parent/student may want to consider applying for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for any individual who may meet the 688 eligibility criteria. (See Additional Resources)

For more information about 688 and transition requirements of IDEA, visit the Massachusetts Department of Education Special Education Transition Planning webpage at:
<http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/links/transition.html> or call The Parent Training Information Center at the Federation for Children with Special Needs at 1-800-331-0688.

For Chapter 688 specific questions contact Betty Anne Ritcey, Director of the Bureau of Transitional Planning (BTP) within The Executive Office of Health and Human Services, (EOHHS) at 617-573-1600.

Resources:

State Human Service Agencies

Department of Mental Health (DMH)

617-573-7600 or 617-727-9842 (TDD)

Department of Mental Retardation (DMR)

617-624-7590 or 617-624-7783 (TDD)

Department of Public Health (DPH)

617-624-6000

Department of Social Services (DSS)

617-748-2000 or 617-261-7440 (TDD)

Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB)

617-727-5550 or 800-392-6450

Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH)

617-740-1600 (Voice) or 800- 882-1155 (Voice/TTY)

Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission

617-204-3600 (Voice/TDD/TTY)

800-245-6543 (Voice/TDD/TTY)

Additional Resources:

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) eligibility or any other issue affecting you or your son or daughter who is disabled:

Social Security Administration

800-772-1213

Legal Information:

Disability Law Center, Inc.

11 Beacon Street, Suite 925

Boston, MA 02108

617-753-8455 (Voice/TTY) 800-872-9992

Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council

1150 Hancock St. 3rd Floor

Quincy MA, 02169

617-770-7676 617-770-9499 (TDD)

Arc Massachusetts

217 South Street

Waltham, MA 02453

781-891-6270

Autism Society of America

789 Clapboardtree Street

Westwood, MA 02090

781-329-4244

Boston Center for Independent Living

95 Berkeley Street, Suite 206

Boston, MA 02116

617-338-6665 Or 617-338-6662 (TDD)

Massachusetts Brain Injury Association

30 Lyman Street

Westborough, MA 01581

508-475-0032

800-242-0030

United Cerebral Palsy Association

71 Arsenal Street

Watertown, MA 02172

617-926-5480 617-926-8051 (TTY)

A Guide To Chapter 688: Massachusetts' Transitional Planning Program

Special Education to Adult Life

Bureau of Transitional Planning
Executive Office of Health and
Human Services

Department of Education
Special Education Planning and Policy
Development Office

What is Transition?

There are two laws that provide very different types of transition requirements for youth with disabilities. These different requirements can be confusing because although they both are called “transition” and they involve many of the same players (parents, school district, human service agency representatives, and the young adult); the two transition processes do very different things.

1) **IDEA** -- The federal special education law, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) contains a number of requirements related to transition, which focus on the **school district’s** obligation to provide transition services **before** a young adult graduates or turns 22 and exits special education. These are school services which will help ensure that young adults will live, work, and/or go to post-secondary school as independently as possible when they leave public school.

2) **688** -- Chapter 688 (commonly referred to as the “turning 22 law”) establishes a planning process which identifies services or supports which may be needed through the adult service system once the student has graduated or turns 22 and special education entitlements have terminated

Chapter 688 is a law developed in partnership with parents, advocates and educators to address the needs of young adults who will lose their entitlement to special education services upon graduation or at age 22. It provides a two-year planning process for young adults with severe disabilities who meet the eligible criteria listed below.

As part of the 688 process, an adult human service state agency will work with 688 eligible individuals to develop an Individual Transition Plan (ITP). 688 **IS** designed for the young adult with severe disabilities who, if provided appropriate support services, will continue to learn and develop throughout his/her life.

Chapter 688 is **NOT** a continuation of special education, nor is it an entitlement which guarantees services after age 22. It is not intended for the many young adults who have received special education services and are now able to begin competitive employment, continue on to college and lead independent lives as adults.

Who is Eligible for 688?

Persons who are automatically eligible for Chapter 688 include:

Anyone receiving SSI and/or SSDI based on his/her own disability

Or

Anyone listed in the registry of the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind

All young adults referred to Chapter 688 must be:

Receiving special education services in Massachusetts paid for by the school district (LEA)

And

In need of continuing services because of the severity of their disability

And

Unable to work 20 or more hours per week in competitive employment

How does the Chapter 688 process work?

At least two years prior to graduation or turning 22, the school district, through the IEP Team, makes a referral if a young adult will need additional services after leaving special education.

The school district must ask the parent, young adult, or guardian to sign the consent in order to send school records to the appropriate local human services agency (DMR, DMH, MRC, etc.)

The Human Services Agency must develop an Individual Transition Plan (ITP) with the family, young adult and school system personnel.

The ITP outlines the day, vocational, residential, and the support services the individual may need, and the agencies responsible for providing those services once eligibility has been determined. The ITP should be completed **before** the young adult finishes his or her education or turns 22 whichever occurs first.

If more than one agency seems appropriate, the 688 referral form, copies of the current IEP and the most recent assessments should be submitted to the Bureau of Transitional Planning.

Although the young adults are free to apply directly to the human services agencies outside of the 688 process, going through the process ensures that the agencies have enough time to set up a seamless transition.

What are the benefits of 688?

The 688 process ensures that 688 eligible individuals are working with the appropriate human service agency before exiting special education, and provides very specific timelines which ensures sufficient planning for a smooth transition to the new agency.

Once agency eligibility is determined the ITP enables the agency to understand the students’ needs and to begin programmatic and fiscal planning required to provide necessary services.

The ITP does not create an entitlement to the services and supports listed; the services and supports are contingent on the funding of the state agency. By specifying an individual’s needs before exiting special education, the family and agency can plan and advocate as appropriate.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Department of Mental Retardation (WWW.mass.gov/dmr/)
Chapter 688 Transitional Services

What is Chapter 688?

For young persons with severe disabilities still in need of services Chapter 688 serves as a bridge from educational services into the adult human services program. The law provides for a two year transitional process for those young adults who will lose their entitlement to special education upon graduation or reaching the age of 22. It creates a single point of entry into the adult human services system by developing an Individual Transition Plan (ITP) for every person with a severe disability who is found eligible.

Who is eligible for Chapter 688?

All persons referred to Chapter 688 must be receiving special education services and graduating or turning 22 years of age on or after March 22, 1984 (the effective date of the law). They must be in need of continuing services and unable to work 20 or more hours per week in competitive, non-sheltered, nonsupported employment.

An individual is automatically eligible for Chapter 688 if receiving SSI, SSDI or registered with the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind.

The process to be determined Chapter 688 eligible is different then the eligibility process for DMR services or for other adult state agencies.

The Chapter 688 Referral Process

Only school systems can refer students that they believe may be eligible for adult services through Chapter 688. If the school system believes DMR is the lead agency then a Chapter 688 referral form is sent to the local DMR Area Office.

What is DMR?

The Department of Mental Retardation (DMR) is an independent agency within the Executive Office of Health and Human Services that is responsible for providing services and supports to Massachusetts' citizens with mental retardation. Every day the DMR provides these specialized services and supports to approximately 32,000 adults with mental retardation and children with developmental disabilities. Specialized services and supports are provided to eligible adults and children in a manner that is responsive to diverse ethnic, cultural, and linguistic groups.

What services and supports can DMR provide?

DMR provides supports through state-operated programs and by contracting with 235 private provider agencies. Supports include service coordination; flexible family support; employment and day supports; transportation; and residential supports. DMR often provides supports in

conjunction with supports from other state agencies or generic provider agencies.

DMR works with the student and family to identify and provide supports based on need. DMR works to create supports that are well matched to the individual's needs, and supports individuals having a voice in identifying these needs. DMR promotes individualized choices, family involvement, and integrated community membership.

DMR Eligibility Criteria

Mental retardation refers to substantial limitations in present functioning. It is characterized by significantly sub average intellectual functioning existing concurrently with related limitations in three or more areas of the following adaptive skill areas: communication, self-care, home living, community use, health and safety, functional academics, and work.

Mental retardation manifests before 18 years of age.

DMR has separate eligibility determination criteria for children under age 18 and for adults aged 18 and older. Eligibility determination is different from Chapter 688 eligibility

What is a DMR Transition Coordinator?

A Transition Coordinator, sometimes called the "688 Coordinator", is a case manager who works at the local DMR Area Office. The Transition Coordinator is the individual's primary link to assistance from DMR during the transition from special education to adult life. The Transition Coordinator visits the student's programs and attends IEP meetings as needed in preparation for the Individual Transition Plan (ITP) development. The Transition Coordinator will work with the individual and their family to explore less restrictive alternatives to a court appointed guardian.

The Transition Coordinator will help the individual, their family and school personnel to understand what DMR and other agencies can offer and assists in identifying and securing needed supports, which are consistent with the individual's vision and ITP. Referrals are made to services and coordination continues if an individual receives adult supports upon graduation or reaching the age of 22.

After the initiation of DMR adult services an individual will be assigned a Service Coordinator who will work with the individual, their family and team to develop the Individual Support Plan (ISP), which is an on-going process of establishing goals for individuals and of identifying supports and strategies that will promote achievement of those goals.

What is the Timeline of the Ch. 688 Process?

Age 15 - 18

Transition planning begins no later than the time of the annual development of the IEP through the use of the school provided transition planning form which states the vision of the student, identification of transition needs and development of an action plan. This is coordinated by the school and reviewed annually and modified accordingly.

Age 18

Age of Majority - In Massachusetts, regardless of the severity of their disability, students are considered adults and content to make their own decisions at age 18. Unless there is a court appointed guardian or the student has chosen to share decision making with his or her parent, the school district must seek the consent of the student to continue the special education program. If

is also a time for the student to seek adult eligibility for DMR services and/or from other state agencies.

Age 18 - 20

Continued refinement of vision and action plan occur which are part of the transition planning form. School makes the Chapter 688 referral. It is a time for the student and family to understand adult services which is a non-entitlement system.

Age 20 – 21

The Transitional Agency such as DMR, and as part of the Chapter 688 planning process, will develop an Individual Transition Plan (ITP) outlining needed post school services and supports and identifying the state agency responsible for them.

Age 22

Beginning of post school Adult Services

Key Points to Remember

1. Application to the Social Security Administration for SSI eligibility determination is encouraged. In Massachusetts, regardless of the severity of one's disabilities, a person is presumed competent at age 18. A person who is SSI eligible will automatically be eligible for Mass Health.
2. Become familiar with the adult services in your area long before your child reaches graduation or turns 22.
3. Involve yourself with a parent group, because parents have often been the stimulus in supporting their son or daughter in transitioning to adult services.
4. The student is encouraged to be as prepared, informed and engaged as possible with transition planning and with the Chapter 688 planning process.
5. In Massachusetts schools are mandated to provide entitled special education services, as identified in the individual education plan, to students until the age of 22 or until the student earns a high school diploma. Post school adult services are not an entitlement and are subject to the availability of resources.

Q: What should I know about transition from school, and when should I plan?

A: Learn as much as you can, and start planning now

Chapter 688 Directions

Chapter 688 Referral – *Why do it?*

Filing a Chapter 688 referral creates a documented need for services and supports for adults with severe disabilities. The primary goal of filing a Chapter 688 referral is to plan for needed adult services for students. In those cases where a student is determined to be eligible and services are not provided due to a lack of funding or program availability, agency personnel can advocate to increase funds in the budget planning process for the next fiscal year in order to provide the needed services.

688 Referral Process – *one referral per student*

In Massachusetts, students with severe disabilities access adult service agencies through the Chapter 688 referral process. Chapter 688 provides a two year coordinated planning process for students whose entitlements to special education services will end when they graduate from school or turn 22 years of age. Contact each agency to find out the eligibility processes specific to each agency as well as the services that are available to adults with disabilities in order to determine the appropriate agency that should receive the Chapter 688 referral for each student.

Eligibility- *students in need of continued services as adults*

Students who receive services in accordance with an IEP and receive SSI/SSDI and/or are on the registry at the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB) are automatically eligible for Chapter 688. Other students who may be eligible are those students with severe disabilities who are in need of continued services and are unable to work 20 or more hours per week in competitive, non-sheltered, non-supported employment at the time they are ready to leave school.

Refer 2 Years before Student Graduates or Turns 22 – *filing late jeopardizes service availability*

Only school systems can refer students that they believe may be eligible for adult services through Chapter 688. A referral must be made at least 2 years before the student is expected to graduate from school or turns 22 years of age. This 2 year planning period allows enough time to determine eligibility for adult services and for an agency(ies) to include the anticipated cost of services for the student in the budget request which is submitted to the Massachusetts Legislature each year.

Chapter 688 referrals and supporting documentation are sent directly to the appropriate agency and a copy of the 688 referral form is sent to the Bureau of Transitional Planning (BTP). Referrals can be made to the Department of Mental Retardation (DMR), the Department of Mental Health (DMH), the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC), the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB), the Department of Social Services and the Department of Youth Services.

Individual Transition Plan – *a planning document outlining needed adult services*

Special education services provided while a student is in school are entitlements mandated by federal and state law. Chapter 688 is not a continuation of special education services and is not an entitlement to services. If a student meets the Chapter 688 eligibility requirements, an Individual Transition Plan (ITP) is required and written for each student. The ITP is developed in conjunction with school personnel, parents, students and the appropriate agencies. The delivery of services identified on the ITP are linked to program availability that is dependent on funds allocated in the annual state budget.

Send Chapter 688 Referral Form and Documentation to the Appropriate Agency Send a Copy of the Chapter 688 Referral Form to BTP

DMR	DMH	MRC	MCB	MCDHH	DSS or DYS	BTP
Area Office	Area Office	Area Office	Regional Office	Central Office	Area Office	Main Office
Original 688 referral and documentation	Original 688 referral and documentation	Original 688 referral and documentation	Original 688 referral and documentation	Original 688 referral and documentation	Original 688 referral and documentation	Copy of 688 referral only
	Adult services not available until the student is 19 years of age				Process coordinated by DSS or DYS. Adult services provided by another agency.	

Appeals

Appeals can be made to the Bureau of Transition Planning (BTP) relative to decisions about eligibility and the ITP. For more information call BTP at 617-727-7600.

CHAPTER 688 STUDENT REFERRAL FORM

Directions:

- 1) Complete only one referral form per student.
2) Clearly print or type information.
3) Mail the original referral form with copies of the current IEP and the most recent assessments to the selected human service agency (see list).
4) Next, mail only a copy of the referral form to the Bureau of Transitional Planning (BTP) for the statewide database.
5) If you don't know which agency, or more than one agency seems appropriate send items in Step 3 to the BTP.
6) Keep one copy in the student record.

STUDENT INFORMATION:

DATE COMPLETED: _____

Student Name: _____ Last First DOB: ____/____/____ Sex: [] M [] F

Language Spoken: _____ S.S.#: ____/____/____ Receives SSI/SSDI: [] Yes [] No [] Unknown

Disability type the student was found eligible for special education: _____

Present Address: _____ Phone: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____ Legal Guardian: [] Yes [] No
(circle one) Last First

Address (if different from student): _____

Phone (if different from student): _____ Language Spoken (if different from student): _____

SCHOOL DISTRICT/PROGRAM INFORMATION:

School District (LEA): _____ Expected date of graduation, or turning 22: ____/____/____

LEA Address: _____

LEA Contact Person: _____ Name Role Phone: _____

Specific Education Placement Program Location: _____

Type of Placement: _____ List All Funding Agencies: _____

____ Date Signature of Special Education Director/Designee Phone Number

CHAPTER 688 REFERRAL SEND TO: (Choose only one.)

Human Service Agencies.

- [] Department of Social Services (DSS) [] Department of Mental Retardation (DMR)
[] MA Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) [] Department of Mental Health (DMH)
[] Department of Youth Services (DYS) [] MA Commission for the Blind (MCB)
[] MA Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH)

Specify, if applicable, Area Office sent to:

If you don't know which agency, or more than one seems appropriate send to:

- [] Bureau of Transitional Planning (Send original form and records here only if an appropriate agency could not be determined.)

I hereby authorize the release of all personal information contained in this student's records, including medical and educational evaluations, to the Bureau of Transitional Planning at EOHHS and to any member agencies for the purpose of eligibility determination and transitional planning. I also authorize the release of any other personal information concerning this student that is required during the transitional planning process by any state agency to any other state agency.

____ Date Signature of Student 18 or over -or- Legal Guardian (Circle one.)

TRANSITION:

A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS, FAMILIES, PROFESSIONALS

Prepared by the Department of Mental Retardation
August 2002

School

IDEA

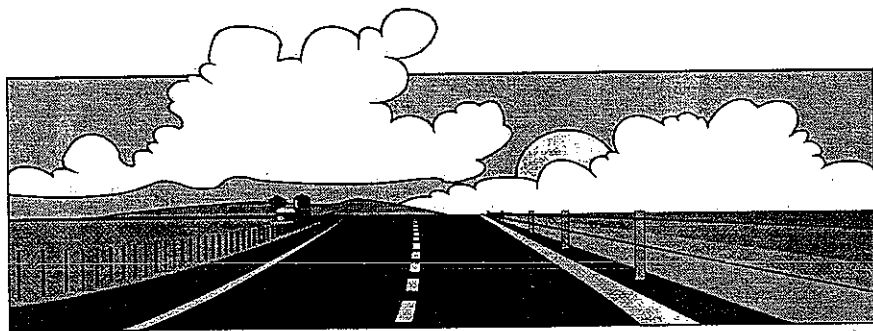
IEP

688

ITP

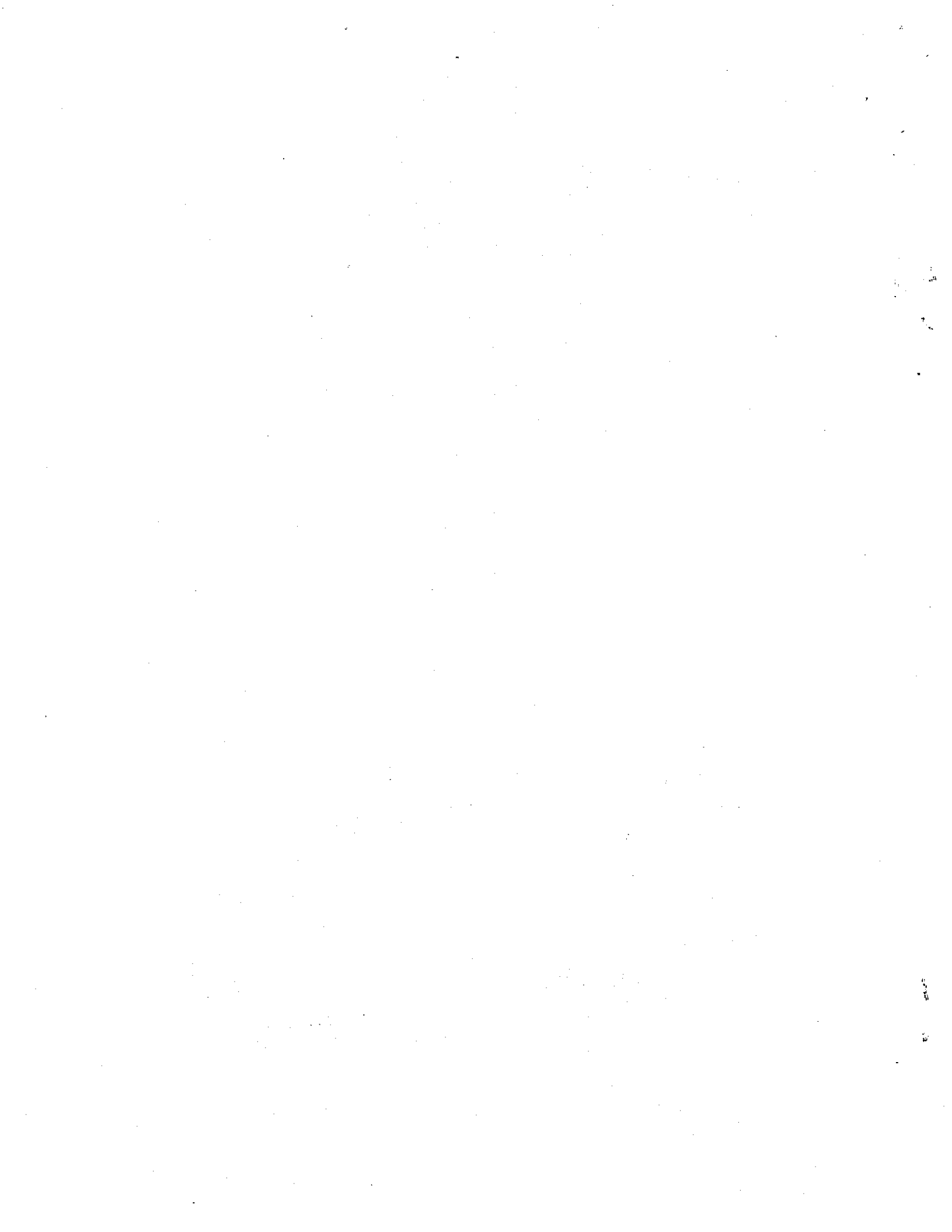
Turning 22

DMR – Adult Services



Q: What should I know about transition from school, and when should I plan?

A: Learn as much as you can, and start planning now.



This booklet has been prepared by the Department of Mental Retardation to help individuals understand and access the planning and services described. This booklet has been put together for students, families, school systems, agencies and anyone involved in any aspect of transition from school to adult life. It does not constitute legal advice, and does not create any legal rights or obligations. The 688 planning process described here is governed by various laws and regulations. If you do not understand the information you should seek help from one of the organizations listed in the resource section of this publication.

- There is a question and answer format to this booklet with the most frequently asked questions.**
- There is also a reference and resource section.**

The short answer for anyone involved in the transition process is simply:

Start planning as early as possible; encourage a “vision” of life after turning 22 and work toward that vision with all involved in the process while the student is still in school.

**Transition - Chapter 688 - Transitional Agency - DMR - ITP -
Maximizing Educational Benefits - Problem Solving -
Transitional Advisory Committee - Planning for Adult Life -
Transition Timeline**

TRANSITION

What is Transition Planning?

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is the Federal law for special education services, (PL.101-476). This requires state and local education officials to provide appropriate special education services for eligible students. A "Statement of Needed Transition Services" is mandated by IDEA to be part of each student's Individual Education Program at age 14. This statement needs to reflect the student's preferences and interests. It should be the beginning vision for adult life, and the corresponding areas of need and related services. It is reviewed annually by the educational team which includes student and family, and should change to reflect the student's more focused vision each year past age 14.

The planning process should contain:

- A dream – or vision. A transition specialist from the Federation for Children with Special Needs likens the planning process to an architectural plan developed when creating a building. Those plans always start with the vision.
- You also need an architect to develop the blueprint in accordance with the vision.
- A builder who will build the building in accordance with the vision and adherence to the blueprint.

The people involved in the planning process are the student, family, school and any other involved professionals. So too, the planning process for students needs these ingredients, and is a collaborative process throughout the high school years which increases the possibility of reaching the vision by more adequate and active preparation.

CHAPTER 688

What is Chapter 688?

Chapter 688 is a law enacted in 1983 to provide a two year planning process for young adults with severe disabilities who will lose their entitlement to special education at the age of 22, or at the time of graduation from high school, whichever comes first. This "Turning 22 law" is NOT a continuation of the Massachusetts Special Education Statute, nor is it an entitlement guaranteeing services after the age of 22. The law creates a single point of entry into the adult human service system.

Who is eligible for Chapter 688?

To be eligible for Chapter 688 services, a person must:

- ◆ Be receiving special education paid for by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts,
- ◆ Need continuing habilitative services at the time of turning 22 or graduating from special education, and
- ◆ Be unable to work competitively (without specialized supports) for more than 20 hours per week at the time of leaving school.

An individual is automatically eligible for Chapter 688 if receiving SSI, SSDI or registered with the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind.

If an individual is not automatically eligible for 688, the 688 Eligibility Unit located at Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) must determine 688 eligibility. In order for 688 eligibility to be determined, the 688 Coordinator at the Transitional Agency must send a copy of the 688-referral packet to the 688 Eligibility Unit for review.

How is a 688 referral made?

Only the local school system, also known as the Local Education Authority or LEA, can make a 688 referral. The referral must be made while the student is still in school. The local school system typically decides which human service agency might best meet that student's needs as an adult and sends the referral directly to that agency. If an individual is being referred to DMR, the referral typically is sent directly to one of the DMR Area Offices. If a student or parent feels a 688 referral has not been made, but should have been, he/she should contact the Special Education Department at the school, or the director of special education services for the school system.

When should the 688 referral be made?

Chapter 688 requires the school system to make the 688 referral two years before a student graduates or turns 22, whichever is earlier. In order to facilitate the planning process, DMR prefers to have the 688 referral even earlier than required by Chapter 688. DMR suggests that referrals be made at age 18 to coincide with DMR adult eligibility age requirements.

Referrals that are made with less than two years until graduation do not afford adequate planning time to assist a student in the most meaningful way possible. Students or families who are concerned about the timing of a 688 referral should contact both the school system and the local DMR Area Office if they feel DMR would likely become the Transitional Agency.

If a student is already known to DMR, is a 688 referral still necessary?

Yes. Even though some individuals with mental retardation receive DMR services as children, a referral should still be made. The 688 referral starts the DMR planning process for the individual student. The 688 referral also assists in obtaining an accurate count as DMR works with the Legislature to secure appropriate funding for individuals who are turning 22.

What is the “sped date” and why is it important?

The special education date (or “sped date”) is the date on which a student is planning to leave special education and school. Typically, the sped date is either the student’s expected date of graduation or his/her 22nd birthday. The sped date is used in the 688-referral process as the reference date for planning. If the sped date changes, inform the DMR or the Transitional Agency (TA). Students leaving on short notice in advance of the sped date specified on the 688 referral may not have the benefit of adequate planning time to assist with a smooth, well planned transition.

What happens if a student leaves school without a 688 referral?

If a student leaves school without a 688 referral being made, the student is not eligible for planning through 688. The student can still apply to DMR or other state agencies serving adults at any time as any citizen could.

TRANSITIONAL AGENCY

What is the Transitional Agency (TA)?

The Transitional Agency (TA), sometimes referred to as the Lead Agency, is the state agency that receives the 688 referral. It is the agency that the local school system feels will best meet the student’s future needs as an adult.

The TA is responsible to assist the individual in planning to move from special education services into adult life. DMR is one such agency. Other Transitional Agencies are listed in the Transitional Advisory Committee section of this booklet.

For students who receive a 688 referral to DMR, the role of the TA is delegated to the DMR Area Office that covers the town of the responsible local school system. Often this coincides with where the student lives, unless the student is placed in a residential school.

In some cases, which Area Office is responsible may be less clear because of either frequent moves or complicated geography issues. If an individual is followed by DSS, we often look at which DSS office is responsible for the individual and use that as a guideline to determine which DMR Area Office is responsible.

If a student moves after a 688 referral is made, the Area Office receiving the 688 referral is responsible for that individual until a transfer referral is made and accepted within the DMR system.

DMR

What is DMR?

The Department of Mental Retardation (DMR) is an independent agency within the Executive Office of Health and Human Services that is responsible for providing services and supports to Massachusetts' citizens with mental retardation.

Every day the DMR provides a wide array of services to more than 30,000 individuals. Their level of disability may require assistance in job placement, transportation, residential services, or intense levels of treatment, monitoring and care.

What supports can DMR provide?

DMR provides supports through some state-operated programs and by contracting with various provider agencies. Supports include service coordination; flexible family support; employment and day supports; transportation, and residential supports. DMR often provides supports in conjunction with supports from other state agencies or generic providers.

DMR utilizes a "consumer-driven" approach to providing supports, based on individual needs and preferences. DMR works to create supports that are well matched to the individual's needs and desires. DMR supports individuals having a voice in identifying these needs and desires. DMR promotes individualized choices, family involvement, and integrated community membership.

What is a DMR Transition Coordinator?

A Transition Coordinator, sometimes called the "688 Coordinator", is a case manager who works at the local DMR Area Office. The Transition Coordinator is an individual's primary link to assistance from DMR during the transition from special education to adult life. The Transition Coordinator will help the individual and families understand what DMR can offer and assist in identifying and securing needed supports. Coordination continues if an individual receives adult supports through DMR with the development and annual review of the Individual Support Plan (ISP) and other assistance as needed. The assigned DMR Coordinator is then identified as a "Service Coordinator".

ITP

What is an "ITP"?

The Individual Transition Plan (ITP) is the document that specifies what kinds of support the student will need upon leaving special education. The Transitional Agency (TA) arranges and chairs a meeting or meetings in order to develop the ITP. The ITP meeting(s) typically involve the student, family members, school personnel and other individuals who know the student well. It is important to invite staff from other state agencies, such as the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) to the ITP meeting if that agency could assist that particular student. The Transitional Agency representative is responsible for inviting other agency staff, but students and their families may also invite others whom they feel would be helpful.

While the TA may engage in a number of activities and meetings to get to know a student better, each student only has one official ITP.

The purpose of the ITP meeting is to develop an individualized plan that includes the interests, skills and needs of the person. The ITP does not contain specific goals and objectives, or identify specific provider agencies. The ITP functions as more of a "blueprint" of the student's needs. Supports identified in the ITP are not guaranteed; they are subject to appropriation and availability.

If DMR is identified as the "lead agency", the DMR Transition Coordinator conducts the meeting and writes the ITP. DMR's Central Office reviews the plan and sends it to the individual or guardian for approval. If the individual or guardian does not approve the ITP, they may appeal to the Bureau of Transitional Planning (BTP). Contact information for the BTP is included in the "Resources" section of this booklet.

The ITP meeting is usually held about one year before the student is ready to leave school. If the ITP is held too early in the student's career, the student may not have had all the learning experiences that would be important to consider. If the ITP is held too late, there will not likely be adequate planning time for implementation of those plans.

At the ITP development focuses on three main areas:

- ✓ **living situation**
- ✓ **day/vocational and**
- ✓ **ancillary supports.**

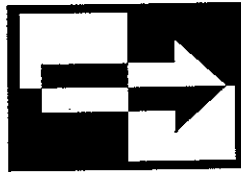
How are supports outlined in the ITP implemented?

There is not one standard answer for every student turning 22. Presuming DMR is the lead agency identified in the ITP to provide supports, those supports will be coordinated by the student's DMR service coordinator. DMR may be one of several appropriate

resources for a student to use. Family partnerships, supports from other state agencies and community resources may also play a role in a successful transition. For example, a student who is able to work competitively would likely be an appropriate referral to the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, in which case, the DMR Coordinator and the MRC office would work together to assess needs and plan for supports.

The supports outlined in the ITP are not guaranteed but are subject to appropriation and availability. DMR is very fortunate to have received an annual appropriation from the Legislature every year since the law took effect. This specialized funding has helped DMR provide supports to individuals as they leave special education.

DMR is interested in assisting in the development of creative support options as part of a team with the individual and family. The type and amount of DMR supports provided to an individual leaving special education are determined on the basis of the individual's needs and available resources.



Maximizing Educational Benefits

Should a student accept a diploma before turning 22?

Students receiving special education services are entitled to remain in school until their 22nd birthday.

Sometimes, students consider graduating or leaving school prior to their 22nd birthday. The decision to leave school prior to age 22 is a complex one that should be well thought out in advance. Leaving school prior to 22 means that the student is giving up the entitlement to educational services. Unlike special education, adult services are not an entitlement but are subject to appropriation and availability. Although DMR and other adult agencies make every effort to assist students who are eligible for supports, supports are not guaranteed by law as they are under special education.

Some thoughts about leaving school before the age of 22:

Students who choose to leave school prior to 22 should think about whether they are prepared to meet the challenges of adult life. If there are additional skills that they need to meet these challenges, the student may benefit from working with school personnel in order to identify creative and satisfying ways to develop these skills. A student, who decides to leave school between the ages of 18-22, possibly because his or her friends are leaving school, should realize several things:

- **Many school systems offer or have the capacity to develop work-training experiences, which may include job coaches and hands on preparation for adult life.**
- **Many schools provide these services outside of the high school, and may provide the student a chance to “try out” a variety of options.**
- **If the school doesn’t yet offer what is of interest, ask for it. Talk about options with the school.**
- **The Mass Rehabilitation Commission may be a resource.**

The Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission is a state agency that provides comprehensive vocational rehabilitation and independent living services to adults with disabilities who are seeking employment or who need assistance living independently. Students who leave school abruptly without planning risk that there will not be sufficient time and resources to ensure that needed supports are available. Advance planning time and clear communication with the school, DMR, and other resources such as MRC are essential.



Problem Solving

What if the local school system is unsure which agency would best serve a particular student?

The local school system can send the 688 referral to the Bureau of Transitional Planning (BTP) for assistance. The BTP will review the referral and decide which agency should take a lead role in planning for that student.

If the local school system feels that more than one agency might be able to assist a student, should more than one 688 referral be sent?

No. Each individual should only have one 688 referral. The school system should send the 688 referral to the agency that appears to be most likely to play the greatest role for that student. A 688 referral to a specific agency does not limit an individual from accessing services provided by other agencies. General referrals, meaning non-688 referrals, may be made to other agencies as appropriate at any time. More than one agency can have a role in an individual's supports when an individual leaves school.

Is eligibility for 688 and eligibility for DMR the same?

No. Eligibility for 688 is more general than eligibility for DMR. Individuals eligible for 688 have a variety of diagnoses or disabilities. Eligibility for DMR is more specific. An individual must be a person with mental retardation and meet other eligibility criteria currently specified by DMR.

What if a 688 referral is made to DMR and the person is found ineligible for DMR?

When a 688 referral is made to DMR, DMR determines if he/she is eligible for supports through the agency. If the person is eligible for 688 services but is not eligible for DMR, services, DMR transfers the case to another state agency for 688 planning assistance. Any student whom DMR finds ineligible for services also has the right to appeal that decision.

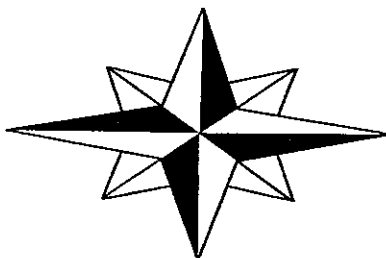
The transfer of a case for 688 planning is done with the assistance of DMR's Central Office. The Transition Coordinator in the local DMR Area Office must send a complete package of material for the ineligible person to Central Office in order to complete the transfer. In addition to supporting material, a copy of the 688 referral and the DMR ineligibility letter is included in the packet. The individual then will be a candidate for transfer to another state agency. This will be completed by DMR Central Office working with the Central Office of the agency of the proposed transfer. In order for a 688 referral to be transferred to another agency, there must be at least six months lead-time before the student leaves school.

What is the Bureau of Transitional Planning (BTP)?

The Bureau of Transitional Planning is a unit of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) responsible for the administration of Chapter 688. The BTP can provide technical assistance to schools, state agencies, individuals and families regarding the policies and practices relevant to Chapter 688. The BTP works with a number of state agencies in order to ensure that policies and practices related to 688 are up to date and implemented effectively within the agencies.

What is the Transitional Advisory Committee?

The Transitional Advisory Committee (TAC) consists of: the Director of the Bureau of Transitional Planning and representatives from the Department of Mental Health (DMH), the Department of Mental Retardation (DMR), the Department of Social Services (DSS), the Department of Youth Services (DYS), the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB), the Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH), the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC), and the Department of Education (DOE). The TAC assists the BTP in developing policies and practices related to Chapter 688. In addition, the TAC is a resource for problem solving for complex cases.



Planning for Adult Life

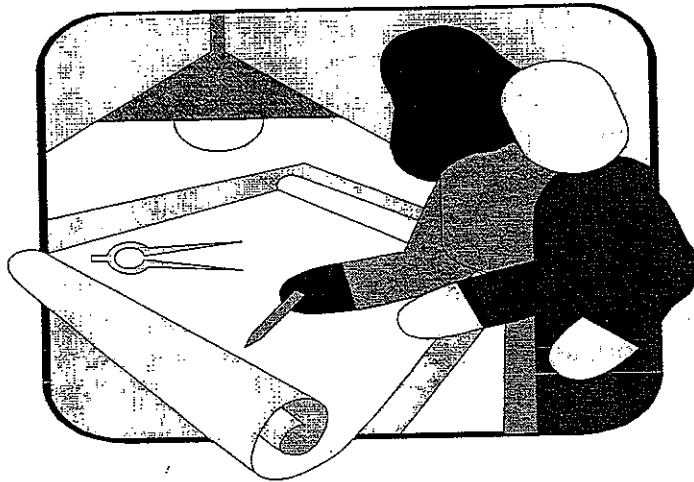
When should we start planning for adult life?

- Start planning now.
- Consider a vocational assessment while the student is still in school, and make job placement a priority as part of the educational plan.
- For some students, continuing education may be a reality. Consider college or community college programs, vocational training programs, and technical training programs. Whether or not a degree is the goal, there's may be benefit to additional classes and training.
- Learn about state regulations regarding employment of individuals with disabilities.
- Learn about work options.....supported employment.....job coaching.....work training.....Day Activity.....Day Habilitation

Hopefully the IEP throughout High School identifies areas of interest that will lead to work opportunities. Beginning at age 14, the students IEP needs to contain a statement of transition services, and the IEP indicates areas of instruction that will assist towards the identified goals. Start planning now.

SUMMARY

Start planning now by learning more about the educational system, and the laws on disability and the implications for transition. Talk with other families; attend trainings on IEP, ITP, 688 and Transition. Be an active part of the process. Learn about DMR adult services by contacting your local DMR Area Office and Transition Coordinator. The more you can learn now and the more familiar you become with what the options might be – the better off the student will be in the long run.





Resource List:

The Department of Mental Retardation has Regional and Area Offices throughout the State. The DMR home page on the web provides information about the Department and can also point you to the office in your area with the "Area Office Locator". The DMR offices throughout the state are also listed on a separate page in this booklet.

<http://www.dmr.state.ma>

ARC Massachusetts

217 South Street Waltham, MA 02453

<http://www.gis.net/~arcmass>

781-891-6270

Bureau of Transitional Planning/ EOHHS

One Ashburton Place

Boston, MA 02108

617-727-7600

Massachusetts Department of Education

350 Main Street

Malden, MA 02148

<http://www.doe.mass.edu>

781-338-3723

Federation for Children with Special Needs

1135 Tremont Street (Suite 420) Boston, MA 02120

www.fcsn.org

617-236-7210

Institute for Community Inclusion

Children's Hospital 300 Longwood Avenue Boston, MA 02115

www.childrenshospital.org/ici

617-355-6956

Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission

Fort Point Place 27 Wormwood St #600

Boston, MA 02210

<http://www.state.ma.us/mrc/>

800-245-6543

617-204-3600

How to contact the Department of Mental Retardation

500 Harrison Avenue, Boston, MA 02118

Tel. (617) 727-5608 or visit our website at: www.dmr.state.ma.us

West

Regional Office
1380 Main Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413) 731-7742

Franklin/Hampshire
One Roundhouse Plaza
Northampton, MA 01060
(413) 586-4948

Berkshire
333 East Street
Pittsfield, MA 01201
(413) 447-7381

Holyoke/Chicopee
88 Front Street
Holyoke, MA 01040
(413) 535-1022

Springfield
436 Dwight Street Suite 205
Springfield, MA 01103
(413) 784-1339

Westfield

125 North Elm Street
Westfield, MA 01085
(413) 562-1599

Central

Regional Office
Glavin Regional Center
214 Lake Street
Shrewsbury, MA 01545
(508) 845-9111

North Central
285 Central Street
Leominster, MA 01453
(508) 792-7490

South Valley - Millford
Westview Mall
Millford, MA 01757
(508) 792-7749

South Valley *
309 Main Street
Southbridge, MA 01550
(508) 792-7756

Worcester
40 Southbridge Street
Worcester, MA 01608
(508) 792-7545

Northeast

Regional Office
Hogan Regional Center
Halthorne, MA 01937
(978) 774-5000

Lowell
325 Chelmsford Street
Lowell, MA 01851
(978) 970-0223

Merrimack Valley
200 Main Street
Haverhill, MA 01832
(978) 521-9432

Metro North
27 Water Street
Wakefield, MA 01880
(781) 338-2300

North Shore
100 Cummings Center
Suite 150B
Beverly, MA 01915
(978) 927-2727

Southeast

Regional Office
68 North Main Street
Carver, MA 02330
(508) 866-5000

Taunton/Attleboro
21 Spring Street
Taunton, MA 02780
(508) 824-0614

Brockton
500 Belmont Street
Brockton, MA 02401
(508) 427-5731

Cape Cod/Islands
270 Communications Way, Bldg. 5
Hyannis, MA 02601
(508) 771-2595

Fall River
305 Pleasant Street
Fall River, MA 02720
(508) 730-1209

Plymouth

68 North Main Street
Carver, MA 02330
(508) 866-3689

New Bedford
908 Purchase Street
New Bedford, MA 02740
(508) 992-1848

Metro

Regional Office
Fernald Developmental Center
200 Trapelo Road
Waltham, MA 02154
(781) 314-7547

Metro Boston
65 Sprague Street
Reedville, MA 02137
(617) 360-2400

Central Middlesex
20 Academy Street
Arlington, MA 02174
(781) 646-5500

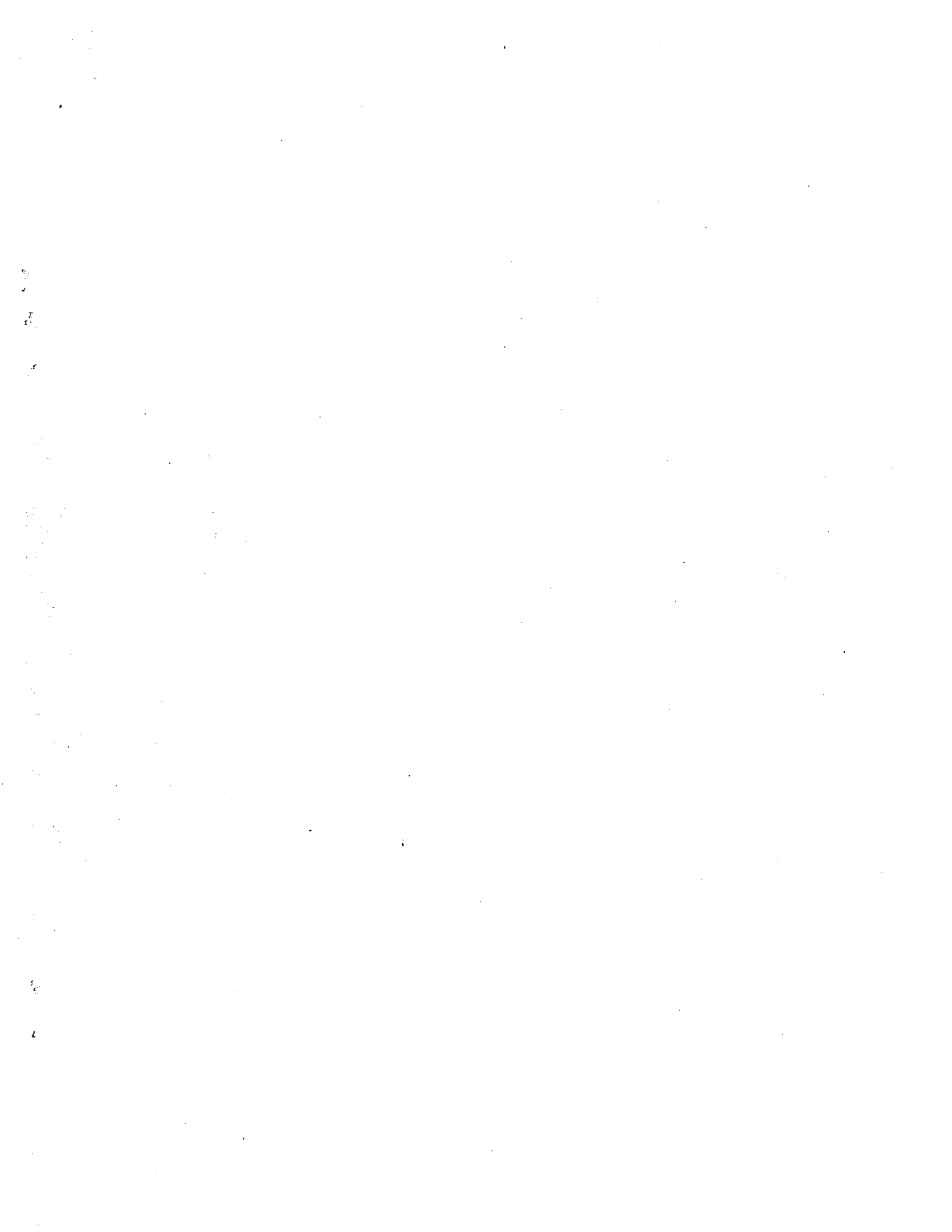
Charles River West
255 Elm Street
Somerville, MA 02144
(617) 623-5950

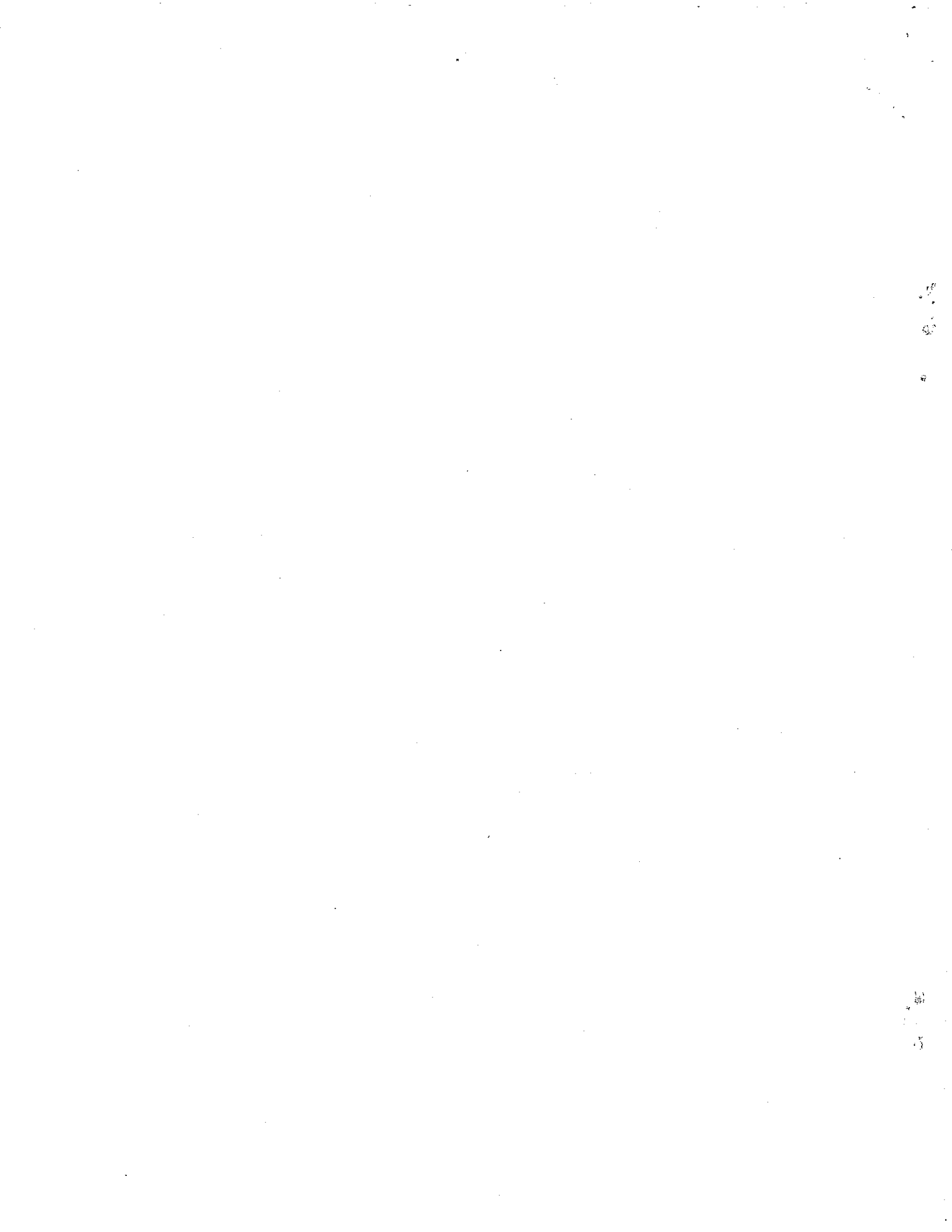
Middlesex West
46 Park Street
Framingham, MA 01702
(508) 879-1111

Newton/South Norfolk
125 West Street
Walpole, MA 02081
(508) 668-3679

South Coastal

1221 Main Street
South Weymouth, MA 02190
(781) 337-2165







[Home](#) > [Consumer](#) > [Disability Services](#) >

A Guide to the Turning 22 Law

For young persons with severe disabilities still in need of services Chapter 688 serves as a bridge from educational services into the adult human services program. The law provides for a two year transitional process for those young adults who will lose their entitlement to special education upon graduation or reaching the age of 22. It creates a single point of entry into the adult human services system by developing an Individual Transition Plan (ITP) for every person with a severe disability who is found eligible.

THE PROCESS

The Turning 22 (T-22) system is area based and designed to allow a person to remain where his or her family lives. The process for each consumer is monitored by the Bureau of Transitional Planning at the Executive Office of Health and Human Services. The local school district, through the Chapter 766 evaluation team, makes the decision whether the individual needs additional services beyond graduation or T-22.

The student and/or parents may request a T-22 referral and it must go through the local school district. The school district then forwards the case to the appropriate human services agency, 2 years prior to the termination of a student's special education.

The Transitional Agency opens a client case file, establishes eligibility and assists with a referral to the Social Security Administration or the Turning 22 Eligibility unit at MRC. The Transitional Agency is responsible for developing an ITP. Other appropriate human services agencies, school system personnel, the family and the person with the disability may participate.

The ITP is approved by the Executive Office of Health and Human Services and signed off by the Secretary. This plan spells out services needed and specifies those to be provided immediately upon graduation.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

All persons referred to Chapter 688 must be receiving special education services and graduating or turning 22 years of age on or after March 22, 1984 (the effective date of the law). They must be in need of continuing services and unable to work 20 or more hours per week in competitive, non-sheltered, nonsupported employment.

HOW ELIGIBILITY IS DETERMINED

A unit at the MRC determines Turning 22 eligibility for individuals not eligible for Supplementary Security Income (SSI) by reviewing the individual's records, work evaluations and/or conducting a personal interview, when necessary.

Individuals who are automatically eligible and require no further determination include:

- Anyone receiving SSI and SSDI based on their own disability
- Anyone listed in the registry of the blind at the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind

THE APPEALS PROCESS

All appeals are directed to the Bureau of Transitional Planning in the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS). There are two kinds of appeals under 688.

- person may appeal the eligibility decision that determined him/her ineligible for Chapter 688.
- person may reject and appeal the ITP after it has been signed by the Secretary of EOHHS.

SEARCH

[Health & Human Services](#)

[Search](#)

WHEN SHOULD MY SON / DAUGHTER GRADUATE?

Chapter 766 provides special education services to students until the age of 22 or until the student earns a high school diploma. Services mandated in the individual Education Plan must be provided. Once a person graduates from school, he or she is no longer eligible.

Young people and their parents should make informed decisions about the many options available under Chapter 766. Adult services are limited to appropriation by the State Legislature. It is important to consider that special education services for older students, 16-22, may be individually designed and more vocationally oriented if the current program is no longer appropriate.

KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER

Application to the Social Security Administration for SSI eligibility determination is encouraged. In Massachusetts, regardless of the severity of one's disabilities, a person is presumed competent at age 18. Every individual 18 or over must sign all consent forms including the referral from to give permission to share information. If unable to sign, it must be signed by the person currently authorized to sign the person with a disability's Individual Education Plan. Become familiar with the adult services in your area long before your child reaches graduation or turns 22. Involve yourself with a parent group-, parents have often been the stimulus in developing adult services.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Bureau of Transitional Planning (617) 727-7600

Massachusetts Department of Education, Special Education Division (781) 388-3300

Disability Law Center (617)723-8455(Voice) (617)-227-9464(TTY)

Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council (617) 727-6374(voice) (617)727-1885(TTY)

The Federation for Children with Special Needs (617) 482-2915(V/TTY)

Massachusetts Brain Injury Association (508) 795-0244 or 797-0101 (TTY)

United Cerebral Palsy (617) 926-5480 (617) 926-805 1 (TTY)

Department of Mental Health 617) 727-5500

Department of Mental Retardation (617) 624-7785

Department of Public Health (617) 624-6000

Department of Social Services (617) 727-3171

Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (617) 204-3600

Mass. Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (617) 695-7500 (V/TDD) 1-800-882-1155

Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (617) 727-5550

Statewide Independent Living Council (617) 695-2622

This information is provided by the [Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission](#).

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR TRANSITION PLANNING

DOHERTY, WALLACE, PILLSBURY & MURPHY, P.C.

**ONE MONARCH PLACE, SUITE 1900
1414 MAIN STREET
SPRINGFIELD, MA 01144
TEL: (413) 733-3111**

**60 STATE STREET
NORTHAMPTON, MA 01060
TEL: (413) 584-1500**

**ATTORNEY REBECCA L. BOUCHARD
rbouchard@dwpm.com
ATTORNEY CLAIRE L. THOMPSON
cthompson@dwpm.com**

REBECCA L. BOUCHARD is an associate in the firm of Doherty, Wallace, Pillsbury & Murphy, P.C. As an associate in the firm's litigation area, she concentrates her practice in education and employment law as well as other civil litigation matters. Ms. Bouchard represents clients in a variety of forums, from state and federal courts to hearings before administrative agencies. She also provides training and has authored materials on various employment and education law issues. She is a graduate of Dartmouth College, Harvard University Graduate School of Education, and Western New England College School of Law. Prior to practicing law, Ms. Bouchard enjoyed a career as a high school teacher, coach and administrator.

CLAIRE L. THOMPSON is a partner in the firm of Doherty, Wallace, Pillsbury & Murphy, P.C., where she has a civil litigation practice with a particular specialty in education law. Ms. Thompson serves as counsel to numerous public school districts and independent schools and handles special education, discipline, and other education-related disputes. Prior to joining Doherty, Wallace, Pillsbury & Murphy, P.C. in 1988, Ms. Thompson was a law clerk to the justices of the Massachusetts Superior Court. A graduate of Western New England College School of Law and Rhode Island College, she has conducted numerous professional development presentations and published extensively in the area of education law.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR TRANSITION PLANNING

Transition planning has as its aim a smooth, successful transition from high school to adult life for every student with disabilities. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that transition planning be part of the Individualized Education Program (IEP). When Congress recently updated the IDEA (IDEA 2004), it sought to improve post-secondary results for students with disabilities by requiring school districts to provide better transition planning. In addition, beginning with the 2007-2008 school year the Massachusetts Department of Education (DOE) will require school districts to demonstrate compliance with the transition planning requirements as part of its Coordinated Program Review. Hence, school districts must make every effort to ensure immediate compliance with these new requirements.

When Must Transition Planning Begin and What is Required?

Under IDEA 2004's implementing regulations, beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child turns 16 (or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team)—and updated annually thereafter—the IEP must include:

- (1) Appropriate measurable post-secondary goals based upon age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills; and
- (2) The transition services (including courses of study) needed to assist the child in reaching those goals.

34 CFR §300.320(b); 20 U.S.C. §1414(d)(1)(A)(i)(VIII).

Note: early transition planning

IDEA 2004's regulations make it clear that IEP Teams are free to begin transition planning at an earlier age if the IEP Team determines it appropriate to do so. There may be instances when it would be prudent for school districts to begin transition services earlier than age 16, particularly, for example, when a child is at risk of dropping out of school. (See *OSEP Letter to Bereuter*, 20 IDELR 536).

What are Transition Services?

IDEA 2004 changed the definition of transition services. The term "transition services" means 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 postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including

IDEA 2004 eliminated the requirement that if an agency does not attend the IEP Team meeting, the school district “take other steps to obtain their participation” in the planning of transition services. If the agency fails to provide the transition services described in the IEP, the school must reconvene the IEP Team to identify alternative strategies to meet those objectives. In addition, the IEP Team may consider forwarding a copy of the IEP to the agency (with student and parent approval), and maintaining contact with the agency to promote their involvement. Nothing in IDEA 2004 relieves the participating agency, including a state vocational rehabilitation agency, of the responsibility to provide or pay for transition services that they would otherwise provide to students with disabilities who meet their eligibility criteria.

Note: outside agencies and due process hearings

School districts may, in the context of due process hearing, move to join certain community agencies to the action in an effort to engage them in providing transition services to a student. School districts should ensure that prior to taking such action, they take—or advise the parents to take—the necessary steps to initiate the involvement of any outside agency. Although the Bureau of Special Education Appeals has jurisdiction to order state agencies to provide services to children with special needs, it can do so only in accordance with the rules, regulations, and policies of those agencies. M.G.L. c.71B §3; 603 CMR 28.08(3). Accordingly, where agencies such as the Department of Mental Health and the Department of Mental Retardation provide service on a voluntary basis and require action on the part of the potential client to access and authorize those services, such action must be taken prior to the effort to join them as parties to a pending case.

What Does Transition Planning Include?

Clearly, transition planning should be approached as a multi-year, multi-stage process. IDEA 2004, as well as the DOE’s Transition Planning Form (TPF), contemplates a three-pronged approach to transition planning:

- (1) development of an appropriate post-secondary vision that includes measurable goals;
- (2) identification of disability related needs and skills that require IEP goals and/or related services;
- (3) and development of an action plan.

The DOE intends the TPF to both guide and document the transition planning discussion.

- failure ever to provide the parents and student with the opportunity to participate in transition planning;
- failure to develop IEPs proposing appropriate transition plans and services; and
- failure to allow the parent and their evaluator to participate meaningfully in the Team meeting described above, before the district determined the outcome of the meeting.

The Hearing Officer considered that school district's defense regarding graduation and found that it did not defeat the parents' claims. He concluded that although the fulfillment of state and district standards such as passing MCAS and completing courses is required for a student to graduate, it may not always be sufficient. This is because students with special needs must also make progress on or otherwise complete IEP requirements. Accordingly, the Hearing Officer found that a prerequisite to awarding a valid diploma to a special-education student is that adequate transition planning and services have been provided.

Analysis

School districts must carefully consider this standard. The law is clear that as a student approaches the age of 16, a school district must begin to provide transition planning and services. Failure to provide adequate planning and services, especially where a special-education student lacks the basic skills necessary to make the transition from high school to post-secondary education, independent living, or employment, will serve to invalidate the fact that the student has satisfied the school district's other criteria for graduation. In such instances, the school district will be required to provide transition services for the student regardless of whether the student has passed MCAS or earned enough credits to graduate.

In addition, as the Hearing Officer noted, graduation is not a defense to a claim for compensatory services. Therefore, even if a school district can establish that the student has graduated from high school, the district could nevertheless be ordered to provide the student with compensatory services after graduation, to make up for violations that the district had committed prior to graduation.

continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation;

- Is based on the individual child's needs, taking into account the child's strengths, preferences, and interests; and
- Includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

[34 CFR 300.43 (a)] [20 U.S.C. 1401(34)]

4. Require changes to performance goals and indicators.

The State has established goals for the performance of children with disabilities in the State that ... address graduation rates and dropout rates, as well as such other factors as the State may determine.

[34 CFR 300.157(a)(3)] [20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(15)(A)(iii)]

5. Establish an exception to requirements for evaluation before a change in eligibility.

The evaluation described in §300.305(e)(1) [see 20 U.S.C. 1414(c)(5)(B)(i)] is not required before the termination of a child's eligibility under Part B due to graduation from secondary school with a regular diploma, or due to exceeding the age eligibility for FAPE under State law.

[34 CFR 300.305(e)(2)] [20 U.S.C. 1414(c)(5)(B)(i)]

For a child whose eligibility under Part B terminates under circumstances described above, the LEA shall provide the child with a summary of the child's academic achievement and functional performance, which shall include recommendations on how to assist the child in meeting the child's postsecondary goals.

[34 CFR 300.305(e)(3)] [20 U.S.C. 1414(c)(5)(B)(ii)]

6. Change the secondary transition requirements in the IEP.

Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child turns 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team, and updated annually thereafter, the IEP must include:

- Appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment and, where appropriate, independent living skills;
- The transition services (including courses of study) needed to assist the child in reaching those goals; and
- Beginning not later than one year before the child reaches the age of majority under State law, a statement that the child has been informed of the child's rights under Part B, if any, that will transfer to the child on reaching the age of majority under §300.520 [see 20 U.S.C. 1415(m)].

[34 CFR 300.320(b) and (c)] [20 U.S.C. 1414 (d)(1)(A)(i)(VIII)]

TRANSITION PLANNING FORM (TPF)

Massachusetts requires that beginning when the eligible student is 15 for the IEP developed that year, the school district must plan for the student's need for transition services and the school district must document this discussion annually. This form is to be maintained with the IEP and revisited each year.

Student:	SASID:	Age:
Date form completed:	Current IEP dates from: _____ to: _____	
Anticipated date of graduation:		
Anticipated date of 688 referral, if applicable:		

POST-SECONDARY VISION

Write the student's **POST-SECONDARY VISION** in the box below. In collaboration with the family, consider the student's preferences and interests, and the desired outcomes for post-secondary education/training, employment, and adult living. This section should correspond with the vision statement on IEP 1.

DISABILITY RELATED NEEDS

Write the skills (disability related) that require IEP goals and/or related services in the box below. Consider all skills (disability related) necessary for the student to achieve his/her post-secondary vision.

Student: _____ Date form completed: _____

ACTION PLAN

The ACTION PLAN should outline how the student can develop self-determination skills and be prepared both academically and functionally to transition to post-school activities in order to achieve his/her post-secondary vision. Indicate how Special Education/General Education, family members, adult service providers or others in the community will help the student develop the necessary skills. Disability related needs must also be stated on page 1.

Develop the ACTION PLAN needed to achieve the POST-SECONDARY VISION by outlining the skills the student needs to develop and the courses, training, and activities in which the student will participate. Include information on who will help the student implement specific steps listed below in the Action Plan.

- **Instruction:** Is there a course of study or specific courses needed that will help the student reach his/her post-secondary vision? Consider the learning opportunities or skills that the student may need. This could include specific general education courses and/or special education instruction, career and technical education, and/or preparation for post-secondary outcomes such as vocational training or community college.
- **Employment:** Are there employment opportunities and/or specific skills that will help the student reach his/her post-secondary vision? Consider options such as part-time employment, supported job placement, service learning projects, participation in work experience program, job shadowing, internships, practice in resume writing/ interviewing skills, the use of a one-stop resource center and job specific skills in areas such as customer service, technology, etc.
- **Community Experiences/ Post School Adult Living:** Are there certain types of community and/or adult living experiences that will help the student reach his/her post-secondary vision? Consider options such as participation in community based experiences, learning how to independently access community resources, building social relationships, managing money, understanding health care needs, utilizing transportation options and organizational skills.

Transition Timeline

Age 15 or
9th Grade

- If the student is re-evaluated this year, administer the Transition Planning Inventory (TPI) as Part of the Re-evaluation.
- Recommend that student take Career Explorations as a 10th grader.

Age 16 or
10th Grade

- If the student is re-evaluated this year, administer the Transition Planning Inventory (TPI) as Part of the Re-evaluation.
- Most students will take Career Explorations or Exploratory Program at Career Tech.
- Section 504/ College Accommodations will be discussed in Career Exploration.
- Complete the Transition Planning Chart at the IEP meeting.
- Notice parents regarding procedures for requesting accommodations for SAT testing.

Age 17 or
11th Grade

- If the student is re-evaluated this year, administer the Transition Planning Inventory (TPI) as Part of the Re-evaluation.
- Take Career Explorations, Exploratory Program at Career Tech, (if not already completed) or similar course.
- Review Transition Planning Chart.
- Discuss and document student decision regarding transfer of rights.
- Discuss college guidance counseling.
- Discuss job coaching/internship experiences as appropriate.
- Prepare a Chapter 688 referral if the student is likely to require services from an adult service agency.

Age 18 or
12th Grade

- Prepare Summary of Student Performance.
- Review Transition Planning Chart.
- Discuss job coaching/internship experiences as appropriate.



- › Special Education Home
- › Technical Assistance
 - Training
 - Documents
 - Grants
 - IDEA 2004
- › IEP Process, Forms and Notices
- › Policy and Guidance
- › Parent Information
- › Complaints & Compliance
- › Special Education Appeals
- › MCAS
- › MCAS Alternate Assessment
- › Laws and Related Documents
- › General Information
- › Links and Resources
- › Contact Us

Family & Community › Special Communities

Special Education

Chapter 688 Human Service Agency Information

Please send information to the Chapter 688 Coordinator at the appropriate Human Service Agency.

1. **Bureau of Transitional Planning**

Executive Office of Health and Human Services
 1 Ashburton Place, Room 1109
 Boston, MA 02108
 Phone: 617-573-1600

2. **Department of Mental Health**

Central Office
 25 Staniford Street
 Boston, MA 02114
 Phone: 617-626-8000
 TTY: 617-727-9842

DMH - Central Area Office
 Worcester State Hospital
 305 Belmont Street
 Worcester, MA 01604
 Phone (508) 368-3838
 TTY (508) 752-0127

DMH - Metro Area Office
 85 East Newton Street
 Boston, MA 02118
 Phone (617) 626-9200
 TTY (617) 626-9257

DMH - Northeast Area Office
 P.O. Box 387
 Tewksbury, MA 01876-0387
 Phone (978) 863-5000
 TTY (978) 640-1193

DMH - Southeast Area Office
 165 Quincy Street
 Brockton, MA 02302
 Phone (508) 897-2000
 TTY (508) 897-2224

DMH - Western Area Office
 P.O.Box 389
 Northampton, MA 01061-0389
 Phone (413) 587-6200
 TTY (413) 586-6592

3. **Department of Mental Retardation**

Central Office
 500 Harrison Avenue
 Boston, MA 02118
 Phone: (617) 727-5608
 TTY: (617) 624-7783

DMR Central West Region

171 State Avenue
Palmer, MA 01069
Phone (413) 284-1500
TTY: (413) 284-1554

DMR Northeast Region

Hogan Regional Center
PO Box A
Hathorne, MA 01937
Phone (978) 774-5000

DMR Metro Region

200 Trapelo Road
Waltham, MA 02452
Phone (781) 314-7501

DMR Southeast Region

68 North Main Street
Carver, MA 02330
(508) 866-5000

4. Massachusetts Department of Social Services

24 Farnsworth Street
Boston, MA 02210
Phone (617) 748-2000

DSS Regional Office - Greater Boston

Esquire Building
50b Park Street
Dorchester, MA 02122
Phone (617) 822-4840

DSS Regional Office - Metro

30 Mystic Street
Arlington, MA 02474
(781) 641-8200

DSS Regional Office - Northeast

Everett Mills
15 Union Street, 2nd Floor
Lawrence, MA 01840
Phone (978) 557-2700

DSS Regional Office - Southeast

141 Main Street
Brockton, MA 02401
Phone (508) 894-3700

DSS Regional Office - Central

25 Winthrop Street
Suite 300
Worcester, MA 01604
Phone (508) 929-2130

DSS Regional Office

1537 Main Street, 2nd Floor
Springfield, MA 01103
Phone (413) 452-3350

5. Department of Youth Services

Tower Point
27 Wormwood Street, Suite 400
Boston, MA 02210-1613
Phone (617) 727-7575

DYS Central Regional Office

Sharp Building - 288 Lyman Street - P.O. Box 1380

Westboro, MA 01581
Phone (508) 792-7611

DYS Metropolitan Regional Office
425 Harvard Street
Dorchester, MA 02124
Phone (617) 740-0100

DYS Northeast Regional Office
360 Merrimack Street, Building 9
Lawrence, MA 01843
Phone (978) -686-4014, ext.400

DYS Southeast Regional Office
Murray Building - 60 Hodges Ave
Taunton, MA 02780
Phone (508) 824-1484

DYS Western Regional Office
280 Tinkham Road
Springfield, MA 01129
Phone (413) 783-0781

6. Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing- Executive Office
150 Mount Vernon Street, Fifth Floor
Dorchester, MA. 02125

MCDHH - Southeastern Massachusetts Regional Office
61 Industrial Park Road
Plymouth, MA 02360

MCDHH - Western Massachusetts Regional Office
Springfield State Office Building
436 Dwight Street, Suite 204
Springfield, MA 01103

MCDHH - Central Massachusetts Regional Office
340 Main Street, Suite 700
Worcester, MA 01608

7. Massachusetts Commission for the Blind

Boston Office
48 Boylston Street
Boston Ma 02116-4718
Phone: (617) 727-5550 VOICE
TDD (617) 626-7685

MCB Worcester Office
390 Main Street
Suite 620
Worcester, Ma 01608-2111
Phone (508) 754-1148

MCB Springfield Office
436 Dwight Street
Room 109
Springfield, Ma 01103
Phone (413) 781-1290

MCB New Bedford Office
800 Purchase Street
Suite 290
New Bedford, Ma. 02740-6344
Phone (508) 993-6140

8. The Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission

Administrative Offices
27 Wormwood Street

Boston, MA 02210-1616

MRC Main Information numbers: 1-800-245-6543 (Voice/TDD) or (617) 204-3600

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[Search](#) · [Site Index](#) · [Policies](#) · [Site Info](#) · [Contact ESE](#)



- › Special Education Home
- › Technical Assistance
 - Training
 - Documents
 - Grants
 - IDEA 2004
- › IEP Process, Forms and Notices
- › Policy and Guidance
- › Parent Information
- › Complaints & Compliance
- › Special Education Appeals
- › MCAS
- › MCAS Alternate Assessment
- › Laws and Related Documents
- › General Information
- › Links and Resources
- › Contact Us

Family & Community › Special Communities

Special Education

Transition from School to Adult Life

[information](#) | [links and resources](#)

Realizing successful post-secondary outcomes is a goal we have for all students. Depending on the disability and the support services required in adult life, successful transition from high school to adult life may require that planning activities begin in elementary school with students exploring their interests in middle school. Starting the process early prepares students with disabilities to think about what they want to be able to do in adult life. High school transition planning includes exploring post-secondary opportunities and employment options and may include connecting with the adult service agencies that may provide the student with services when he or she graduates or turn 22 years of age.

Statement of Needed Transition Services - *beginning no later than the first IEP developed when the eligible student is 14.*



Recognizing the need for students with disabilities to engage in effective transition planning, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that transition planning be part of the Individualized Education Program (IEP). Beginning no later than the first IEP developed when the eligible student is 14, the Team considers the student's need for transition services and documents this discussion. If appropriate, the IEP includes a statement of needed transition services. The school district understands that it must maintain documentation of a full discussion of the student's transition needs, whether or not such discussion identifies needed transition services for the IEP. Such documentation must be reviewed and updated annually thereafter. Students must be invited to all educational meetings and allowed to participate actively when transition planning is discussed.

Linkages to Post School Options - *beginning no later than the first IEP developed when the eligible student is 14 and update annually.*

Beginning no later than the first IEP developed when the eligible student is 14, the IEP's of students should include a post school vision statement as well as identify the transition services necessary to support the vision. IDEA 2004 defines transition services as a coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability that -

- A. Is designed to be within a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the student with a disability to facilitate the student's movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation;
- B. Is based on individual strengths, preferences and interest; and
- C. 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 vocational evaluation. (P.L. 108-446, Sec 603 (34))

Transition Planning Form

Effective immediately, please begin using the newly developed Transition Planning Form (TPF) 28M/9   for all students with disabilities who are over 14 years of age. This form has been developed for transition planning that occurs either prior to or at the time of the annual development of the IEP. The TPF (28M/9) is a mandated form that is maintained with the IEP. As a mandated form, districts must use this format to document that transition planning has occurred. *Only* those aspects of this planning that translate to elements of the IEP are "mandated" to occur. We have deliberately designed the planning process to be more than what is required by special education in order to have a coherent and inclusive plan of action to help to prepare youth for adult life. This inclusive planning process does not require that all identified actions will be the responsibility of the school's special education program, but rather that parents, the student, general

education services, other agencies, community partners, and special education services should all work together to assist the student in making a smooth transition to adult life.

This form will help districts meet the requirements of transition planning in IDEA 2004 and will be the required document for districts to demonstrate compliance with the transition requirements associated with Indicator 13 of the State Performance Plan for Special Education. The Department will begin monitoring use of the TPF (28M/9) during its Coordinated Program Reviews in the 2007–2008 school year.

The two-page TPF (28M/9) guides and documents the transition planning discussion. Page one features two sections:

- The post-secondary vision, which should correspond with the vision statement on IEP 1; and
- Disability related needs. The disability related needs section documents skills that require IEP goals and/or related services.

Page two of the TPF (28M/9) is the action plan for the student:

- It outlines how the student can develop self-determination skills, and
- Be prepared both academically and functionally to transition to post-school activities in order to achieve his/her post-secondary vision.
- The role and actions of school personnel (in general education and special education), family members, adult service providers and others in the community should be documented in this section.

A guiding question is provided for each transition field as part of the action plan, along with considerations for each transition field that will assist in guiding the transition planning discussion.

There is no required order to complete the various sections of the TPF (28M/9). After considering the student's post-secondary vision, some Teams will find it helpful to complete the action plan section and then the disability related needs section. Others may choose to consider the disability related needs section and then complete the action plan. The goal should be to document a thoughtful and reasonable transition planning discussion.

The following completed sample forms are provided as examples:



Age of Majority - transfer of parental rights to student at age 18

In Massachusetts, regardless of the severity of their disability, students are considered adults and competent to make their own decisions at age 18 (Age of Majority). Unless there is a court appointed guardian or the student has chosen to share decision making with his or her parent, the school district must seek the consent of the student to continue the special education program. Students at age 18 have the right to make their own educational and medical decisions and must sign all consent forms. Parents and students must be notified about the transfer of parental rights to the student at least 1 year before the student turns 18 years of age.

Interagency Collaboration - develop supports and services necessary for adult life

The adult service system is complex and understanding it is essential for effective transition planning. When students with disabilities graduate from school or turn 22 years of age, they move from an entitlement to a non-entitlement system. While in school students receive services and supports mandated by federal and state law. As adults, while they may be eligible for services from adult service agencies, these services are not an entitlement which means they are not guaranteed. Consequently, it is essential that educators, parents and students understand the adult service system years before adult services need to be accessed. It is a sound practice to invite adult service agencies to speak to groups of students and individuals who live with and work with students with disabilities in order to understand the eligibility processes specific to each agency as well as the services that are available to adults with disabilities.

Adult Services - make Chapter 688 Referrals and general referrals

For students with severe disabilities, a Chapter 688 referral should be made to ensure that students who will require ongoing supports and services from one or more public agency are part of the eligibility process for receiving services and supports as adults. For other students who require fewer supports and services and may not meet the eligibility requirements for Chapter 688, a general referral for services can be made to

adult service agencies.

[Chapter 688](#)

Appeals

Appeals can be made to the Bureau of Transitional Planning (BTP) relative to decisions about eligibility and the ITP. For more information call BTP at 617-573-1722.

Transition Links And Resources

[Council for Exceptional Children \(Division on Career Development and Transition\)](#)

DCDT focuses on the career development of children, youth and adults of all ages and exceptionalities, including transitions and career development of exceptional children.

[The National Center on Secondary Education and Transition \(NCSET\)](#)

The National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET) coordinates national resources, offers technical assistance, and disseminates information related to secondary education and transition for youth with disabilities in order to create opportunities for youth to achieve successful futures.

[National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth \(NCWD/Youth\)](#)

The National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth (NCWD/Youth) assists state and local workforce development systems to better serve youth with disabilities. The NCWD/Youth is composed of partners with expertise in disability, education, employment, and workforce development issues. NCWD/Youth is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP).

[Office of Disability Employment Policy \(ODEP\)](#)

Through the Department of Labor (DOL) The Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) provides national leadership by developing and influencing disability-related employment policy as well as practice affecting the employment of people with disabilities.

[School-to-Work Outreach Project](#)

STWOP was a nationwide, three-year project funded by the U.S. Department of Education to improve school-to-work activities including students with disabilities by identifying and sharing school-to-work models/practices/strategies that work, encouraging others to adopt or replicate those models.

[Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities](#)

The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) in the U.S. Department of Education is providing the information in this pamphlet to explain the rights and responsibilities of students with disabilities who are preparing to attend postsecondary schools.

[National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center \(NSTTAC\)](#)

NSTTAC assists states in building capacity to support and improve transition planning, services, and outcomes for youth with disabilities.

[information](#) | [links and resources](#)

last updated: August 25, 2008

[E-mail this page](#) | [Print View](#) | [Print Pdf](#)

TRANSITION PLANNING FORM (TPF)

Massachusetts requires that beginning when the eligible student is 14 for the IEP developed that year, the school district must plan for the student's need for transition services and the school district must document this discussion annually. This form is to be maintained with the IEP and revisited each year.

Student:	SASID:	Age:
Date form completed:		
Anticipated date of graduation:	Current IEP dates from: _____	to: _____
Anticipated date of 688 referral, if applicable:		

POST-SECONDARY VISION

Write the student's **POST-SECONDARY VISION** in the box below. In collaboration with the family, consider the student's preferences and interests, and the desired outcomes for post-secondary education/ training, employment, and adult living. This section should correspond with the vision statement on IEP 1.

DISABILITY RELATED NEEDS

Write the skills (disability related) that require IEP goals and/or related services in the box below. Consider all skills (disability related) necessary for the student to achieve his/her post-secondary vision.

Student: _____ Date form completed: _____

ACTION PLAN

The **ACTION PLAN** should outline how the student can develop self-determination skills and be prepared both academically and functionally to transition to post-school activities in order to achieve his/her post-secondary vision. Indicate how Special Education/General Education, family members, adult service providers or others in the community will help the student develop the necessary skills. **Disability related needs must also be stated on page 1.**

Develop the **ACTION PLAN** needed to achieve the **POST-SECONDARY VISION** by outlining the skills the student needs to develop and the courses, training, and activities in which the student will participate. Include information on who will help the student implement specific steps listed below in the Action Plan.

- **Instruction: Is there a course of study or specific courses needed that will help the student reach his/her post-secondary vision?** Consider the learning opportunities or skills that the student may need. This could include specific general education courses and/or special education instruction, career and technical education, and/or preparation for post-secondary outcomes such as vocational training or community college.
- **Employment: Are there employment opportunities and/or specific skills that will help the student reach his/her post-secondary vision?** Consider options such as part-time employment, supported job placement, service learning projects, participation in work experience program, job shadowing, internships, practice in resume writing/interviewing skills, the use of a one-stop resource center and job specific skills in areas such as customer service, technology, etc.
- **Community Experiences/ Post School Adult Living: Are there certain types of community and/or adult living experiences that will help the student reach his/her post-secondary vision?** Consider options such as participation in community based experiences, learning how to independently access community resources, building social relationships, managing money, understanding health care needs, utilizing transportation options and organizational skills.