



Minnesota Transition Guide
for
Teachers of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing
(D/HH)

Edition
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Various sections of the *Minnesota Transition Guide for Teachers of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing* were informed or inspired by the sources listed below.

- ***Transition Guide for Students Who are Deaf-Blind*** developed by Special Education Programs, South Dakota Department of Education and the Center for Disabilities at The University of South Dakota, Sanford School of Medicine.
- ***Policy Brief on Employment of Minnesotans Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing***, Minnesota Employment Policy Initiative, 2011.
- ***Minnesota Compensatory Skills Checklist for Students with Hearing Loss***, Minnesota Department of Education, updated March 2010.

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Introduction

Information and resources are available on both national and state levels for effective transition services and planning for people with disabilities. When working with a person who is deaf or hard of hearing, however, you may find some unique aspects of their disability that may require additional specialized services and resources. This guide is designed to be a resource for schools and other agencies involved in the lives of transition-aged students in Minnesota who are deaf or hard of hearing. It is intended to be utilized, at the latest, during grade 9 to assist parents and service providers in the **early** planning for transition from school programs to employment or postsecondary education.

What is Secondary Transition?

Secondary Transition planning is a partnership between students with disabilities, their families, the school, higher education, training programs, employers and community service providers. Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Minnesota Statute, transition planning from school to adult life begins, at the latest, during grade 9. Transition areas that must be addressed in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) include: Employment, Postsecondary Education/Training and Independent Living (Home Living, Community Participation, and Recreation/Leisure).

The secondary transition planning process is a part of the student's IEP. The process of secondary transition includes assessments, family and student involvement, interagency collaboration, and providing community experiences. Transition services includes planning for academic and non-academic courses and learning experiences, employment and related training opportunities, and independent living activities. Secondary transition planning should be a bridge from school programs to participation in opportunities of adult life.

Recognition of difficulties, combined with discouraging statistics on the employment rates of people with disabilities, led the federal government to mandate transition planning as part of the IEP. There are currently four federal laws (Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), Rehabilitation Act-Section 504, Americans with Disabilities Amendment Act (ADAA) and the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)) and several state statutes that address students with disabilities transitioning from high school to postsecondary environments of work and/or education.

What is Indicator 13 and Why is it Important?

In 2007, the Office of Special Education Programs required states to develop a comprehensive state plan on 20 specific indicators that measure outcomes. Indicator 13 measures the percent of youth with IEPs aged 16 and above with an IEP that includes appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated and based upon an age-appropriate transition assessment, transition services, including courses of study, that will reasonably enable the student to meet those postsecondary goals, and annual IEP goals related to the student's transition services needs. There also must be evidence that the student was invited to the IEP team meeting where transition services are to be discussed and evidence that, if appropriate, a representative of any participating agency was invited to the IEP team meeting with the prior consent of the parent or student who has reached the age of majority (age 18 in Minnesota). (20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B)).

How is Indicator 13 Measured?

Minnesota uses the National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC) Indicator 13 Checklist Questions to monitor students' IEPs. The questions are as follows:

1. Are there appropriate measurable postsecondary goals in the areas of training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills?
2. Are the postsecondary goals updated annually?
3. Is there evidence that the measurable postsecondary goals were based on age-appropriate transition assessment(s)?
4. Are there transition services in the IEP that will reasonably enable the student to meet his or her postsecondary goals?
5. Do the transition services include courses of study that will reasonably enable the student to meet his or her postsecondary goals?
6. Is (are) there annual IEP goal(s) related to the student's transition services needs?
7. Is there evidence that the student was invited to the IEP team meeting where transition services were discussed?
8. If appropriate, is there evidence that a representative of any participating agency was invited to the IEP team meeting with the prior consent of the parent or student who has reached the age of majority?

Transition Needs of Students Who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing

Students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing (D/HH) are a diverse group whose needs vary from person to person. The most prevalent challenges depend on several factors:

- When the hearing loss was diagnosed
- When education began
- If there are other disabilities
- Communication system or language(s) used at home
- Degree of hearing loss

The primary needs specific to students who are D/HH are the ability to access information and to communicate with others. This can--and does--impact all areas of the student's life, including learning, relationships, recreation, and vocation. There are several modes of communication that can be used with people who have a hearing loss. Schools in Minnesota are able to assist in determining communication needs, providing accommodations, and making modifications to assist the student in learning and developing to his or her greatest potential.

Communication skills for students who are D/HH can range from spoken, written and/or a signed formal language. It is imperative that all forms of communication used by a person who is D/HH are respected and that they are in environments that encourage both their expressive and receptive communication. This standard should also be used when planning for the future. What communication accommodations will provide the richest communication experience? What supports need to be in place to facilitate communication (such as interpreters, assistive listening devices, and other adaptive equipment)?



Self Advocacy and Hearing Loss

The self advocacy skills of students with hearing loss is a fundamental factor in determining success or failure across all educational, community, social, and work settings. Development of these skills should begin early so that students are able to start taking responsibility for their own communication accommodations and assume control over choices that affect their lives. Teachers can have a positive impact in the area of self advocacy by providing opportunities and activities that allow students to be involved in choice-making, decision-making, problem-solving, setting and attaining of goals, and development of self-awareness.

Throughout transition planning, students should continue to increase the following self advocacy skills:

- Ability to describe their own skills and needs
- Ability to set their own goals and create a plan to reach them
- Knowing the how, who, and when to ask for assistance
- Ability to make decisions and take responsibility for the consequences of those decisions

Hearing Loss Advocacy Teacher Resources (PDF):

1. [Hearing Loss Competency Skills Checklist](#)
2. [About My Hearing \(PDF\)](#)
3. [Self-Advocacy and Accommodations for Students with Hearing Loss](#)
4. [Relationship of Hearing Loss to Listening and Learning Needs](#)
5. [411 on Disability Disclosure](#)



Employment

One of the most important goals of transition planning is preparing for future employment and career opportunities. Unfortunately, people who are deaf or hard of hearing experience higher rates of unemployment and underemployment over a lifetime. Employment challenges, usually based on communication issues, can include difficulty obtaining, performing, and retaining a job, as well as advancing in a career. However, much can be done to help youth who are deaf or hard of hearing reach their employment potential while still in middle school or high school.

Searching for a job requires an awareness of a variety of occupations. At the same time, students need to explore their interests, preferences, learning styles, abilities and skills. Through this process, students should identify specific skills they bring to the job market and other skills that may need further education and training. Education is an important predictor of future employment and can be crucial to avoiding underemployment and attaining career advancement opportunities. Today, most jobs require some type of postsecondary education or training. By researching a variety of career possibilities early, students can begin to see the need to develop their academic skills to a level necessary to access postsecondary education options.

Work readiness skills are another important step along the path to successful employment. These are a set of skills and behaviors that are necessary for any job. Work readiness skills are sometimes called soft skills, employability skills, or job readiness skills. These skills include being on time, dressing appropriately, communicating effectively, knowing where to go when a problem arises, asking appropriate questions to clarify intent, and becoming a self-starter. Work readiness skills can be taught and learned both in school and during work experience opportunities. The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) competencies is one list of work readiness skills and can be found in the Employment Teacher Resources section. This list can help teachers focus on some of the work readiness competencies required for all employees. In addition to working on this wide range of work readiness skills, teachers should provide practice activities, as well as instruction, on employment vocabulary, writing a resume, filling out applications and writing cover and thank you letters. Students have an easier time creating a resume and filling out job applications by creating a complete and accurate personal information form. The Teacher Resources section also contains a Personal Information Sheet that can be shared with students for this purpose. In addition to direct instruction, other methods such as role-playing, scenarios, and simulations can be used for practicing job interviews, handling demanding customers, communicating with supervisors, getting along with co-workers, and so forth. Work readiness skills are the first step in preparing youth for high demand, high wage, high skills jobs and careers and should be included in transition planning with each student.

Meaningful employment in high school is one of the most essential factors in long-term employment success. Many students who are D/HH have no idea about what happens in the workplace or the many job occupations in any given career field. Students should talk to a variety of people about what they do at work and how they made their particular career choice. One way for them to do this is to conduct informational interview. Students also need to experience the workplace. Help students participate in informational interviews, job shadowing, unpaid or volunteer work, or internships. Work with families, local businesses and community connections to help students secure summer and after-school employment. Teachers need to help youth and their families see the importance of work experiences during high school and set this as a priority during transition planning.

Both communication skills and access to communication are critical to success in employment settings for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. Learning communication strategies that will lead to successful interactions and exchanges of information with coworkers and supervisors is an important skill that needs to be developed during the transition years. Transition aged students should have a good understanding of their hearing loss and be able to explain its impact to an employer or co-workers. Other communication skills include: sharing communication strategies that were previously successful in other settings, showing employer inexpensive options for making environmental cues visible, asking school transition specialist or Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) counselor to offer deaf awareness training for employers, and knowing about and communicating workplace accommodations.

Learning about workplace accommodations is essential knowledge for students transitioning to the world of work. Individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing can be affected by a number of environmental issues such as background noise, visual obstructions and distractions, acoustics, lighting, seating arrangements, and others. Knowing ways to overcome these obstacles, learning about laws that cover workers with disabilities, such as the American with Disabilities Act, discussing disability disclosure and determining when job accommodations are needed to complete your work and communicating these ideas to supervisors are all topics students need to know about before entering the world of work. The Job Accommodations Network (JAN) has

great resources on its website, <http://askjan.org>. In addition, a D/HH Workplace Accommodations Checklist, which incorporates many ideas of the JAN website, can be found in the Teacher Resources of this document.

Students who are deaf or hard of hearing may qualify for help with employment through Minnesota's Vocational Rehabilitation Services. D/HH teachers need to be familiar with these services and help students and their families contact the agency for more information, or to be included in transition IEP meetings. D/HH teachers may want to arrange for VRS counselors to come and talk to students and parents about their services as early as freshman year, although most VRS referrals won't begin before junior year. Once a D/HH student has graduated from high school or a school transition program, the young adult may continue working with a VRS counselor in order to move forward with their employment plan. For many VRS clients who are D/HH, an employment goal can prepare them for a competitive job with no need for ongoing worksite supports.

If a D/HH student has any additional disabilities and is likely to need significant, permanent worksite supports beyond the first few months on the job, they may require supported employment. This ongoing support service is funded through counties. Qualifying for these services varies greatly and is based on individual needs and qualifications by each county. If you think that a student may need supported employment services in order to work competitively, speak to the student's IEP team to consider whether that student should apply for county services and/or VRS services. More information about VRS is located in the Additional Considerations section of this document.

Employment Teacher Resources (PDF):

1. [Employment Competency Skills Checklist](#)
2. [Personal Information Sheet \(for job applications\) \(PDF\)](#)
3. [D/HH Workplace Accommodations Checklist \(PDF\)](#)
4. [Work Readiness Skills-SCANS \(PDF\)](#)



Postsecondary Education and Training

Postsecondary education and training is a very critical area of transition. Frequently, people think automatically of college when considering this transition area. However, it is important to think about what postsecondary really means. "Post" means after and "secondary" means high school, so think about this transition area not only as college, but rather as education and training after high school. All students should be encouraged to pursue education and training beyond high school. These plans should be discussed in IEP meetings even before a student enters high school. For students with hearing loss who wants to attend college, it is important that the IEP team makes class selections that will ensure a student has the necessary academic skills and coursework to apply and be accepted into higher education.

Postsecondary schools can include vocational and career schools, community and technical colleges, and four-year colleges or universities. Other types of educational training include military training, short-term vocational schools, on-the-job training, apprenticeships, Adult Basic Education (ABE), or community education classes. IEP teams should be prepared to discuss how a student's academic skills and coursework may impact enrollment in college or other training.

If students are not academically ready for college but desire postsecondary education in the future, teams should discuss the option of Adult Basic Education programs as a way to continue to build academic skills after high school. A wide range of course offerings can be found in adult education programs. Adult/continuing education programs appeal to a variety of learners: those who are studying to take the GED Test; those who need to improve basic academic skills; and those who wish to take a course for self-enrichment. ABE programs provide free instruction in reading, writing, math, and thinking skills to adult learners with deficits in basic academic skills who wish to improve them, whether for functional application or to prepare for college entrance. Some ABE locations have also started offering career-specific pre-occupational training, as well as short-term training for certificates or licenses (for example, boiler's license or commercial driver's license).

In addition to meeting academic requirements, students need to have strong self-advocacy, time-management, money management, and independent living skills in order to be successful in postsecondary settings. By using the Postsecondary Competency Skills Checklist, IEP teams can help the students evaluate their readiness for postsecondary settings.

Students with hearing loss who know their rights and responsibilities are much better equipped to succeed in postsecondary settings. Hard of hearing students who may have had limited accommodations in high school often find they need additional accommodations in post high school settings. It is important for these students to develop and practice self-advocacy skills in high school as they will be expected to independently negotiate for needed services and accommodations after high school. This requires knowledge about Section 504, ADA, reasonable accommodations, providing needed documentation when requesting services and accessing the disability service office on campus.

ADA mandates documentation of a disability. For hearing loss, this is verified by a recent audiological evaluation. In some situations, documentation may also include a medical doctor's diagnosis. When there is a secondary disability, such as vision loss, cognitive processing disorder, psychological disorder, etc., specific evaluations, such as medical, psychological or specialist examinations need to be obtained.

Support services personnel for students with disabilities on college campuses have different titles and work out of different offices from campus to campus. Students should ask for the Office for Disability Services or Office for Special Needs. Students should bring a list of questions when meeting with the disability specialist. The Postsecondary Accommodations Checklist in the Teacher Resources section lists accommodations that might be available through a program's support services.

The determination and responsibility for provision of reasonable accommodations and aids is considered on an individual basis through collaboration between the student, the postsecondary institution's Disability Services provider, service agency(s), faculty and administration when necessary. The following definitions relate to the educational supports provided in the postsecondary setting:

Modifications (usually NOT made at the postsecondary level) - A change in rigor of content

Accommodation - Allows access to the learning environment

Auxiliary Aid - Necessary to ensure effective participation.

Assistive Technology - Computer software and/or adapted equipment.

Attending college can be an exciting and enriching experience. It can also be a costly one. In addition to tuition, fees, books, and supplies, other expenses to think about include room and board, health insurance, transportation, and spending money. Financial aid is available to help

students and their families pay for or supplement payment of educational expenses after high school. Common forms of financial aid include grants, loans, work-study, and scholarships. Students with disabilities may also be eligible for disability-related federal and state programs that offer financial support. Many students use a combination of these financial aid resources. In addition, D/HH students can apply for tuition assistance under Minnesota's Higher Education Finance Bill Section 4 (135A.165) (Deaf Students; Tuition Assistance) if they: attend a Minnesota state college or university or the University of Minnesota; qualify for a state grant or federal Pell grant; and "depend primarily on visual communication". Students should check with their college's financial aid office for further information.

It is imperative to remember that financial aid results in a partnership of the student, parents, postsecondary educational institutions, state and federal governments, and/or private organizations. Such a partnership requires cooperation, communication, and an understanding by each of their responsibilities within the financial aid process. The financial aid office at the school you plan to attend is a good place to begin your search for financial aid information. The financial aid administrator can tell you about student aid available from your state, the school itself, and other sources. An important first step in acquiring financial aid is filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) the year before enrollment. The form is located on this government website: www.fafsa.ed.gov.

Postsecondary Education Teacher Resources (PDF):

1. [Postsecondary Competency Skills Checklist](#)
2. [Postsecondary Accommodations Checklist \(PDF\)](#)
3. [Talking to my Professors \(PDF\)](#)
4. [High School vs. College \(PDF\)](#)

Independent Living

Independent Living covers a broad range of skills and needs related to adult living, from housing and skills at home to participating in and accessing community resources. The three areas of home living, community participation, and recreation/leisure together comprise the larger transition area called Independent Living. For deaf and hard of hearing students, additional considerations in the area of Independent Living should be made as related to accommodations as well as health care related to the hearing loss.

Considerations for Independent Living include housing arrangements for students in the future, whether this be on their own in an apartment, living with parents, or in a supported housing arrangement. All skills related to life at home also fall within this area: planning and preparing meals, grocery shopping, paying bills, budgeting and managing money, laundry and cleaning, and basic home care.

Evaluating and planning for needs related to community participation is also important. How will the student get around in the community? Does the student know how to access important community resources? This would include the grocery store, doctor/dentist's office, ENT/audiologist, post office, and a variety of other necessary places. Does the student display characteristics of a good citizen? This is not limited to participating in elections, but in the broader sense of having civic pride--showing respect for the community, participating in groups or organizations, and generally being involved and connected to groups and people beyond the immediate family.

IEP teams should consider whether or not development of goals and objectives related to social skills are necessary for D/HH students. These could include development of social skills, forming friendships, developing healthy relationships, involvement with D/HH groups/organizations/activities, use of social media, and other goals aimed at helping students maintain connection with others and to avoid social isolation. The State of Minnesota's Deaf/Hard of Hearing Services regional offices and website can also be of assistance in locating resources and services for individuals who are D/HH.

It is also important for the IEP team to evaluate and consider if the student has needs related to time management and self-direction: Can the student make and keep his/her own appointments? Does the student use a calendar/datebook to keep track of appointments and schedules? Does the student keep important papers and documents organized? Does the student come to school/work/community activities prepared? Does the student carry proper identification? Does the student carry a purse or wallet? For deaf and hard of hearing students, this also includes carrying pen and paper for writing notes, as well as carrying the orange or yellow D/HH identification card.

Independent Living Teacher Resources:

1. [Independent Living Competency Skills Checklist](#)
2. [DHHS Resource Guide](#)



Transition Timeline

The following is a list of possible transition activities to consider when preparing transition plans with the student's IEP team. Each student's skills and interests will determine relevant items on the checklist. Use this to decide which transition issues to address at IEP meetings. Responsibility for carrying out specific transition activities should be determined at the IEP meeting.

How to use this timeline: This timeline is intended to be a guide for students and their IEP teams as they develop transition goals. It is not an exhaustive list, nor will all items apply to all students. Transition is not a stand-alone content area and many of the activities on this list can be incorporated into content area classes and activities.

Four to Five Years before Leaving School

- Identify personal learning styles and the necessary accommodations to be a successful learner and worker.
- Identify career interests and skills, complete interest and career inventories and identify additional education or training requirements.
- Explore options for postsecondary education and admission criteria.
- Identify interests and options for future living arrangements, including support services.
- Learn to communicate effectively your interests, preferences, and needs.

- Be able to explain your disability and the accommodations you need.
- Learn and practice informed decision making skills.
- Investigate assistive technology tools that can increase community involvement and employment opportunities.
- Broaden your experiences with community activities and expand your friendships.
- Pursue and use local transportation options *outside of family*.
- Investigate money management and identify necessary skills.
- Acquire identification card and the ability to communicate personal information.
- Identify and begin learning skills necessary for independent living.
- Learn and practice personal health care.
- Attend and be involved in IEP meetings with parents, teachers and special education personnel.

Two to Three Years Before Leaving School

- Identify community support services and programs (Vocational Rehabilitation, County Services, Centers for Independent Living, etc.)
- Invite adult service providers, peers, and others to the IEP transition meeting.
- Match career interests and skills with vocational course work and community work experiences.
- Gather more information on post secondary programs and the support services offered
- Make arrangements for accommodations to take college entrance exams (ACT, SAT, and Accuplacer). Many accommodation requests need to be made at least 2 months in advance.
- Learn more about the differences between accommodations in college and high school.
- Identify health care providers and become informed about individual health issues.
- Begin to take responsibility for health care needs, making appointments, filling and taking prescriptions, requesting interpreters, etc..
- Determine the need for financial support (Supplemental Security Income, state financial supplemental programs, Medicare).

- Learn and practice appropriate interpersonal, communication, and social skills for different settings (employment, school, recreation, with peers, etc.).
- Explore legal status with regards to decision making prior to age of majority (age 18 for Minnesota).
- Get involved with a variety of community-based work experiences, summer employment, internships, and volunteer opportunities.
- Begin a resume and update as needed.
- Continue attending IEP meetings and become more involved in the decisions made.
- Practice independent living skills, e.g., budgeting, shopping, cooking, and housekeeping.

One Year Before Leaving School

- Connect with support programs and services if needed. (Supplemental Security Income, Independent Living Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, county case management, counseling, etc.).
- Identify the postsecondary school you plan to attend and arrange for accommodations.
- Practice effective communication by developing interview skills, asking for help, and identifying necessary accommodations for postsecondary, work, and community environments.
- Specify desired job and obtain paid employment with supports as needed.
- Take responsibility for arriving on time to school, work, appointments, and social activities.
- Register to vote and for selective service (if a male).
- Lead your IEP meeting by stating your plans for the future, asking for support where needed and taking a lead in the decision making.
- Explore legal status about decision-making prior to the age of majority. Investigate/consider guardianship, power of attorney, conservatorship, etc.
- Begin to utilize academic accommodations that are more in line with what is used in college.
- Consider possible living situations (family, independent, supported living agencies)
- Create a file for important documents and papers (see page 13: Records to Keep)

Adapted from the National Transition Network's Transition Checklist. The National Transition Network is a collaboration of the Colorado State University; University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign; University of Minnesota; PACER Center; and the University of Vermont. The National Transition Network (NTN) was funded by the US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs until September 30, 2001. Its offices were located at the Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota.



Records to Keep

In addition to the forms contained in the Minnesota Transition Guide for Teachers of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing and those listed in the “Additional Things to Consider” section of this guide, there are certain records that may be kept in a transition portfolio or other file/storage system. Possible records to keep include:

- Individualized Education Program (IEP) and other official school service plans.
- Evaluation Summary Report (ESR) and audiogram.
- Medical records related to the person’s disability.
- Report cards and progress reports.
- Standardized test scores.
- School transcript.
- List of school and community activities.
- Awards, Certificates of Achievement, Honors.
- Social Security documentation/correspondence.
- Employment history.
- Resume and letters of recommendation.
- Minnesota ID card or driver’s license.
- Birth certificate.
- Passport and Permanent Resident Card (if applicable).
- Insurance cards.
- Bank account information.
- Summary of Performance.
- Employment documents: W-2, W-4, I-9, pay stubs, etc.
- Copies of tax returns.

Additional Considerations

What: Certified Copy of Birth Certificate

Why: A certified copy of a birth certificate can provide proof of identity and age and is required to receive some programs/services.

How: You may request a birth certificate in person - same day service - from any [local issuance office](#) in the state, regardless of your county of birth.

When: Available upon birth. Copies may be requested at any time.

Who: The person applying for a certified copy of a birth certificate can apply for him/herself. If the person applying for a certified copy of a birth certificate is under the age of 18 years, their parent or legally appointed representative can apply for the certified copy of a birth certificate

Cost: Check with your local Register of Deeds or Health Department. Fees vary by county.

Who Can Help: To find the Register of Deeds in your county, look in your local phone book under the name of your county. More information is available at: www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/osr/birth.html.

What: Guardianship

Why: Establishment of guardianship insures that decisions made regarding the affairs of a person with a disability are made with informed consent. A guardian can make decisions for the person with a disability who is not able to make decisions for him/herself.

How: An attorney must petition the court system for a guardianship order.

When: Guardianship can be applied for three months prior to the person with a disability turning 18 or at any time after.

Who: The person wishing to be appointed guardian should contact an attorney who can help file the petition.

Cost: The cost of filing for guardianship is dependent on the rates charged by the attorney, usually \$500 and up.

Who Can Help: In Minnesota, see online at www.mncourts.gov/forms for more information.

What: Housing Assistance

Why: To receive assistance with housing costs.

How: There are several agencies that can provide housing assistance. Each agency will have its own application process and eligibility requirements.

When: People must be over the age of 18 years to apply. Some agencies may have waiting lists from 6 months up to 3 years. Contact the agency for more information.

Who: The person applying for housing assistance can apply for him/herself or have their legal representative apply. If the person applying for housing assistance is under the age of 18 years, their parent or legally appointed representative can apply.

Cost: There is no cost to apply for housing assistance.

Who Can Help: Check out http://minnesotahelp.info/Public/topic_search.aspx?st=dlink for information on housing assistance.

What: Selective Service Registration

Why: All males, even those with disabilities, must register with Selective Service. Failure to register is punishable by law. Men must register prior to receiving student financial aid or for federal training and employment.

How: Register online at www.sss.gov , at your local post office, at your high school, or by returning a card you might receive in the mail.

Who: All males ages 18-26 years. Anyone can assist someone with their registration.

Cost: There is no cost to register.

What: Social Security Administration Benefits

Why: Provides financial support, medical benefits and expedites eligibility for some programs/services.

Details: Must meet eligibility requirements to receive these benefits. The Social Security Administration provides many types of benefits including Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Records will be requested showing income and resources of everyone in the household.

How: File an application through your local Social Security office. To locate the office nearest you, call 1-800-772-1213 or 1-800-325-0778 (TTY), go online to www.ssa.gov , or look in your local phone book under "Federal Government."

When: Anytime. Adult benefits can be applied for when the person reaches age 18 years. When applying for adult benefits begin gathering the required documentation 3 months before the person's 18th birthday. If applying for benefits in person, contact your local Social Security office to make an appointment.

Who: If applying for benefits before the person is 18 years of age, parents or legally appointed representatives may apply for benefits. If the person is over 18 years of age, the person with a disability, their parent, or their legally appointed representative may apply for benefits.

Cost: There is no cost to apply for Social Security Benefits.

What: Social Security Card

Why: A Social Security card allows a person to show proof of identity and citizenship when conducting personal business such as employment, taxes and banking.

How: Apply for a card at your local Social Security office. To locate the office nearest you, call 1-800-772-1213 or 1-800-325-0778 (TTY), go online to www.ssa.gov or look in your local phone book under "Federal Government."

When: Social Security cards are available upon birth. Cards can be reissued if they are lost or if your name has changed.

Who: The person applying for a Social Security card can apply for him/herself. If the person applying for a Social Security card is under the age of 18 years, their parent or legally appointed representative can apply for the card.

Cost: There is no fee to obtain a Social Security card.

What: Specialized Transportation

Why: People with disabilities may be unable to use the fixed route public transit system due to functional limitations. They may require accessible vehicles which may include a vehicle equipped with a lift.

How: Some public transit systems have accessible vehicles which can be requested to provide transportation. There are also private providers who have accessible vehicles.

When: Public transit systems requires an application to access their accessible vehicles. Apply as soon as possible. Private providers do not use an application system but are subject to availability.

Who: The person applying for accessible public transit can apply for him/herself. If the person applying for accessible public transportation is under the age of 18 years, their parent or legally appointed representative can complete the application process for them.

Cost: Costs vary from provider to provider. Public transit systems prices are often in the \$2 per one-way ride range but may be higher in some areas. Private provider costs will vary from provider to provider. Contact the private providers for information on rates.

What: State Identification Card

Why: A state identification card allows a person to show proof of identity and age when conducting personal business, establishing employment eligibility, voting, banking, etc.

How: State identification cards can be obtained at your local driver's license office. In order to obtain a state identification card, a person must show their certified birth certificate and Social Security card. If the person applying for a state identification card is less than 18 years of age, their parent or legal representative must accompany them. Check this link for types of documentation needed: https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/dvs/forms-documents/Documents/IdentificationRequirements_English.pdf

When: There is no age restriction for obtaining a state identification card. The card will need to be renewed prior to the expiration date.

Who: The person applying for a state identification card can apply for him/herself. If the person applying for a state identification card is under the age of 18, a parent or legally appointed representative can apply for the card.

Cost: Check your local DVS office. Varies by county.

Who Can Help: In Minnesota see <https://dps.mn.gov/Pages/default.aspx> for more information.

What: Summary of Performance Document

Why: This summary of academic achievement and functional performance contains valuable information. It may also include recommendations for an adult service provider.

How: The Summary of Performance is a document that school personnel are required to complete. It is meant to be given to the adult service provider who will assist the student with a disability in meeting their post-school goals.

When: This document should be completed one month prior to exit from school.

Who: School personnel complete the document and give a copy to the student and their parents or legal representatives. This form is a part of the school district's due process paperwork. Various names are used such as Graduate Summary of Performance.

Cost: There is no cost for this document.

What: Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Why: Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) assists people with significant disabilities prepare for, obtain and maintain employment in competitive careers. VRS services are individualized for each student. VRS counselors help students set employment goals and identify the steps and services necessary for achieving their goals. Developing an employment goal can include services such as interest and ability testing, informational interviewing, or career exploration services. Once an employment plan is developed which includes the steps and services needed to reach that employment. These services may include training, job placement, assistive technology, job seeking skills training and job placement.

How: To apply, contact the VR counselor assigned to your school by calling 1-800-328-9095 or by logging on to www.deed.state.mn.us/rehab/transition.

When: The best time to refer a student with a significant disability to VRS is approximately two years before graduation, typically near the beginning of the junior year. If a student with a disability is planning to leave school before graduating – or has dropped out – an immediate referral to the school’s VR counselor makes good sense.

Who: Young adults who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing can apply and complete the application process for vocational rehabilitation by themselves, or with the assistance of their parent or legal guardian if under the age of 18 years of age. A student is eligible for VRS if they have (1) documentation of a physical or mental condition that causes a substantial impediment to employment, (2) evidence that the individual requires VR services in order to prepare for, secure, obtain, or retain employment, (3) and the presumption that the individual is able to benefit from VR services.

Cost: There is no charge for counseling, job placement, and many other VR services. For some services, a consumer financial participation ratio based on family income is utilized. A family whose income is higher than the guidelines may be asked to pay part or all of the cost.