



Students with Disabilities: College or Trade School

In college or trade school, students make their own choices about things like classes, friends, and what career they want. If you have a disability, it's important to know what helps you learn and how to ask for support before you start.

Colleges and trade schools don't have special education programs or Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). However, there are laws like the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that help make sure people with disabilities are treated fairly and get the help they need.

If you have a disability and want to go to college or trade school, here are some steps to help you get ready.

Talk to your guidance counselor and IEP team

- ✓ Ask about the application process. Ask which schools might work well for you.
- ✓ Find out about admission requirements, such as minimum grade point average (GPA), tests you need to take, and essays to write. Some programs may not require a diploma.
- ✓ Sign up for entrance exams, such as the SAT, ACT, or the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) for a military career. Your guidance counselor can help you request test accommodations.

Visit colleges or trade schools that you might like.

- ✓ If you can, talk to a current student about what they like and don't like about the college.

Apply to colleges or trade schools.

- ✓ Work with your IEP team to fill out and submit your applications.

Meet with a vocational counselor.

- ✓ Contact Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) at 1-800-605-6722, or the Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP) at 1-800-292-4200, depending on your needs.
- ✓ If you qualify for services, work with your counselor to create an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). This plan should include your higher education goals and costs.

Make an appointment with a financial aid counselor after admission.

- ✓ Ask about scholarships and grants for students with disabilities, like the [Michigan Achievement Scholarship](#).
- ✓ Fill out the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#) online.

Make an appointment with the Disability Resource Office.

- ✓ After you've been accepted, meet with the school's Disability Resource Office to share your disability officially.
- ✓ You can request the same accommodations that you had in high school, but those accommodations may appear different in college.
- ✓ Bring a copy of your most recent IEP or 504 Plan from high school.
- ✓ Bring copies of medical documentation of your disability.
- ✓ From Understood.org: [7 things to know about college disability services](#)

At college or trade school, you have to share your disability, so that you can ask for help.