

# Transition Planning Handbook

A Checklist for Parents of  
Children with Disabilities



INDIANA  
PROTECTION  
AND ADVOCACY  
SERVICES

**IPAS**

TO PROTECT AND PROMOTE  
THE RIGHTS OF INDIVIDUALS  
WITH DISABILITIES, THROUGH  
EMPOWERMENT AND ADVOCACY

*Member: National Disability Rights Network  
The Protection and Advocacy System for Indiana*

# Indiana Protection and Advocacy Services Commission

## Mission Statement

To protect and promote the rights of individuals with disabilities,  
through empowerment and advocacy.

IPAS was created in 1977 by state law (IC. 12-28-1-6 as amended) to protect and advocate the rights of people with disabilities and is Indiana's federally designated Protection and Advocacy (P&A) system and client assistance program.

Indiana Protection and Advocacy Services Commission

Voice: 317-722-5555 or 800-622-4845

TTY: 317-722-5563 or 800-838-1131

Fax: 317-722-5564

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*These contents are solely the responsibility of the grantee and do not necessarily represent the official views of any federal or state agency.*

*While this publication is intended to provide basic information, it is not legal advice. While attempts were made to ensure its accuracy, the reader should direct their questions concerning their specific situations to the legal aid society or private attorney of their choice.*

*Revised October 2009*

*Additional copies may be obtained at [www.ipas.in.gov](http://www.ipas.in.gov)*

## Dear Parent, Guardian, or Student,

You are receiving this brochure because the local special education cooperative has identified your son, daughter, or you as being near the completion of educational services. You may or may not have already begun the process of identifying those transition services that your son or daughter or you will need after leaving the school setting.

Within this brochure please find information about several services that may be of benefit as you transition from school to the work world. This **Transition Brochure** provides you with the state contact information for the **Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VR)**. **VR** is a federal agency that serves individuals with disabilities who need vocational and rehabilitation services. **VR** can become involved with a student as early as age 14 years although such involvement usually begins during the junior year of high school. **VR** services can include anything from on the job training, job coaching services, assistive technology, to additional schooling and training beyond high school. Services through **VR** are free and of no charge to the client.

Indiana Protection and Advocacy Services administers the **Client Assistance Program (CAP)** which can assist you or your son or daughter while attempting to receive and utilize services via **VR**. **CAP** can assist you in understanding your rights as you go through the **VR** process from application to receipt of services. **CAP** can also assist you in negotiating with **VR** to assure that your chosen vocational services are delivered to you in an appropriate and timely manner.

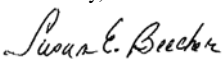
The brochure also lists the contact information for the **Social Security Administration** office. Social Security sponsors the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999 that sets up the **Ticket to Work Program**. The **Ticket to Work Program** is an attempt to provide the training and support for individuals with disabilities who receive Social Security benefits and who are aged 18-64 years to find meaningful employment while maintaining their Social Security benefits. Services such as training, education, and job placement can be provided to a beneficiary free of charge leading to full-time employment and less need for Social Security benefits. You can contact the Social Security Administration for additional information on the **Ticket to Work** program.

You may also contact **Indiana Protection and Advocacy Services (IPAS)** at 1-800-622-4845 to receive additional information on the **Ticket to Work** program. **IPAS** administers the **Protection and Advocacy Services for Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS)** program as part of the **Ticket to Work** program. **PABSS** investigates complaints on the part of beneficiaries who are attempting to use their tickets to gain services from **VR** or other agencies called "employment networks". **PABSS** also provides information about the **Ticket to Work** program to beneficiaries. Again these services are at no cost to you.

**You will also find important information about "Indiana Works," benefits planning assistance and outreach agency for beneficiaries of Social Security. "Indiana Works" provides free services to individuals who currently receive Social Security benefits and information to them about how working and earning income will affect their benefits over time. This information contains the toll free numbers to be used in contacting "Indiana Works" to receive this free, valuable service.**

I hope this information will be helpful to you as you transition your son, daughter, or yourself from school to work. Please feel free to contact our agency, **Indiana Protection and Advocacy Services Commission**; at 1-800-622-4845 should you need further information on this or other disability related issues!

Sincerely,



Sue Beecher, *Assistant Director for Client Services*  
Indiana Protection and Advocacy Services Commission  
4701 N. Keystone Avenue, Suite 222  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46205  
1-800-622-4845 (Toll free voice)  
1-800-838-1131 (Toll free TTY)  
317-722-5564 (Fax)

# Introduction

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This handbook has been prepared by as a guide to assist you in identifying the various options that are available for your student. It will also be a tool in developing your student's Individualized Education and Transition Plans (IEP and ITP).

Between the ages of 18-21 years, young adults with disabilities and their families must exchange the security of the school environment for a complex system of adult service programs. The federal, state and local agencies that support adults with disabilities each have very different sets of rules and requirements and, unlike the schools, are not mandated to serve all citizens. It is important to remember that while all students are entitled to a free appropriate education, access to adult services is based on eligibility and availability of funds.

## Definitions

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**IEP**—*Individualized Education Plan*. Developed each year in the Case Review conference with parents, teachers, and student. This plan outlines your student's goals and objectives for the upcoming school year.

**ITP**—*Individualized Transition Plan*. A part of the IEP, developed annually once the student turns the age of 14. It guides the development of the special education and related services; the student will pursue a diploma or certificate of graduation.

**Guardianship**—When a student turns 18, he/she becomes his/her own legal guardian, unless a court determines otherwise. You should seek legal advice if you have questions.

**BDDS**—*Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services*. The BDDS assists eligible developmentally delayed individuals to receive the community and residential support needed for success. Contact your local office for eligibility requirements and do so early as there is a long waiting list.

**VR**—*Vocational Rehabilitation*. VR works with eligible individuals with disabilities to achieve their employment goals. Applicants must have a mental or physical impairment that substantially interferes with their ability to work. Students should apply to VR during their final two years of high school.

**Medicaid**—Provides coverage for persons of limited income and resources that require ongoing medical assistance.

# Transition Planning Timeline

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## **Early Childhood:**

- Enroll in First Steps program (0-3 years)
- Help develop your student's first IEP (3 years +)
- Look into Social Security, Medicaid, and Respite Programs
- Develop behavior management strategies
- Create a file for medical information
- Get your student involved in the community
- Contact BDDS to get your student's name on waiver waiting lists. It can take up to 10 years for services
- Explore what options are available for your student's education: inclusion, resource, or combination

## **Elementary:**

- Continue above list
- **Attend every IEP meeting! This is where you will plan for your student's future.**
- Explore residential options. Where will your student live after graduation?
- Introduce the concept of work into everyday activities
- Use routines at home for self-care and daily living skills
- Make your child a productive part of the household by introducing chores and allowance
- Help student develop friendships and social skills at home
- Explore available opportunities at the upper grade levels and beyond
- Support the introduction of in-class jobs at school
- Get involved in after-school programs

## **Middle School:**

- Continue above lists
- **Attend every IEP meeting!**
- Begin career exploration in school and in community. Job shadow, volunteer and participate in community service projects
- Support teachers' efforts to provide job training as part of the school program, including jobs at schools
- Explore what options are available for your student's education: inclusion, resource, or combinations
- Explore student's community recreation and leisure interests. Get involved!

# Transition Planning Timeline (cont.)

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## **Age 14:**

- Continue above lists
- **Attend every IEP meeting. Transition planning begins. Help develop the ITP!**
- Research how funding sources can benefit your student (SSI, Medicaid, etc.)
- Find out about graduation requirements (ISTEP/Pathways, Certificate)
- Decide if student is on diploma or certificate track for high school graduation
- Expand career exploration

## **Age 15:**

- Continue above lists
- **Attend every IEP meeting and continue to develop ITP!**
- Be sure class choices are appropriate; explore vocational training program
- Attend Transition Fairs with your child and other educational opportunities that offer information about future planning needs such as residential, guardianship, employment, and recreational activities
- Continue to maintain medical and updated school psychological testing records

## **Age 16:**

- Continue above lists
- **Attend every IEP meeting and continue to develop ITP!**
- Find and hold a part-time paid or volunteer job in the community
- Discuss how long the student will attend high school (4 or more years through age 21)
- Attend information meetings about future planning
- Make sure finances are in order
- Obtain Indiana State ID card at local License Branch
- Take Driver's Education when appropriate
- Investigate guardianship or power of attorney procedures and determine student's best interest

# Transition Planning Timeline (cont.)

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## **Age 17/Junior Year:**

- Continue above lists
- **Attend every IEP meeting and continue to develop ITP!**
- Enroll in vocational classes if appropriate
- Establish graduation date
- Investigate post-secondary education options
- Discuss age of majority and transfer of rights to student at age 18
- Investigate guardianship procedures and determine student's best interest
- Refer student to Vocational Rehabilitation Services. Sign a Release of Information Form
- Investigate post high school living arrangements

## **Age 18/Senior Year**

- Continue above lists
- Make necessary applications to colleges and other post-secondary institutions
- Re-apply for SSI and Medicaid
- Register to vote. Ask the school about the appropriateness of an educational surrogate
- Transfer of rights to the student
- Establish legal guardianship or power of attorney, if necessary
- Review health insurance coverage; inform insurance carrier of student's disability and investigate rider of continued eligibility
- Make sure school psychological testing is up to date

## **Age 19-21**

- Continue above lists
- Monitor Vocational Education
- Make contact with post-secondary personnel
- Continue close contact with Adult Service Providers
- Ensure all necessary support services are ready to be provided

# Transition Planning Timeline (cont.)

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immediately after graduation

## **Prior to Graduation/Secondary Education**

- Make sure school psychological testing is up to date
- Obtain any special testing records
- Make contact with VR
- Consult with High School Guidance Counselor to get a thorough understanding how much support is necessary for success
- Make certain the college or vocational school you are interested in has support services
- Investigate post-high school living arrangements



# Indiana Works

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## **Individual Benefits Planning for SSI and SSDI recipients Entering or re-entering Employment**

### **What is Indiana Works?**

Indiana Works is a free and confidential service funded by the Social Security Administration. Specially trained benefit counselors assist individuals who receive either SSI and/or SSDI benefits to understand the impact of wages on their disability benefits. Indiana Works is part of a national service of benefits counseling. Nation-wide, nearly 115,000 individuals receiving disability benefits have received benefit counseling.

### **Who is eligible for benefit counseling?**

Any person with a disability who receives Supplemental Security Income or Social Security Disability Insurance and who is either employed or thinking of becoming employed should call for benefit counseling.

### **Why do I need benefit counseling?**

The fear of losing cash benefits often scares people from trying to work and moving ahead with employment options. Benefits counseling can reduce this fear by giving accurate and up-to-date information on the impact of wages on disability benefits and on other programs from which a person may receive assistance (e.g. Food Stamps, housing). Benefit counselors can also help you understand the impact of wages on your health insurance, such as Medicaid.

### **What services does Indiana Works not provide?**

The benefit counselors of Indiana Works do not determine eligibility for any public assistance program. The counselors cannot provide assistance on Social Security Administration overpayment situations, nor do they determine eligibility for any Social Security Administration work incentive. Their role is to help individuals understand the rules and provide information on work incentives that may be applicable to a beneficiary's individual circumstance.

# Indiana Works (cont.)

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## **How can I contact Indiana Works?**

*The toll free number for the northern team of Indiana Works is 1.866.646.8161.  
The toll free number for the southern team of Indiana Works is 1.800.206.6610.*

When you call our number, a member of our support team will take your name, phone number and other important information. The benefit counselor assigned to your county will then contact you. Because of the large number of information requests, it may take a few weeks before your benefit counselor is in contact with you. Please be patient.

*The northern team of Indiana Works is employed by the Center for Mental Health, Anderson, IN. The Southern Indiana Resource Solutions employs the southern team.*

# Indiana Statewide Disability Information Numbers

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## **About Special Kids (formerly IPIN)**

A “parent-to-parent” organization that answers questions and provides support, information and resources to Indiana families with children with special needs.

Web: [www.aboutspecialkids.org](http://www.aboutspecialkids.org)

Local: (317) 257-8683

Toll Free: (800) 964-4746

## **ADA Center (Great Lakes)**

The Great Lakes ADA Center answers questions regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act and provides technical assistance and training to people with disabilities and businesses.

Web: [www.adagreatlakes.org](http://www.adagreatlakes.org)

Toll Free: (800) 949-4232

## **The Arc of Indiana**

Advocates for people with intellectual and related developmental disabilities and their families. TheArcLink provides resources and advice on home and community-based services with detailed information on service providers via the Web site.

Web: [www.arcind.org](http://www.arcind.org) or

[www.TheArcLink.org](http://www.TheArcLink.org)

Local: (317) 977-2375

Toll Free: (800) 382-9100

## **Area Agencies on Aging (and Disability)**

Provides a broad range of in-home and community-based services to eligible older adults and persons of all ages with disabilities. This toll-free number will connect you to your local office.

Web: [www.iaaaa.org](http://www.iaaaa.org)

Toll Free: (800) 986-3505

## **Breaking New Ground (BNG)**

Provides information and resources for people with disabilities working in agriculture and rural families in Indiana who have been impacted by disabilities.

Web: [www.breakingnewground.info](http://www.breakingnewground.info)

Local: (765) 494-5088

Toll Free: (800) 825-4264

## **Bureau of Developmental Disabilities**

Provides services to individuals with developmental disabilities, enabling them to live as independently as possible. Assists individuals in receiving community support and residential services.

Web: [www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs/2639.htm](http://www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs/2639.htm)

Toll Free: (800) 545-7763

# Indiana Statewide Disability Information Numbers (cont.)

## **Center for Disability Information & Referral**

Statewide referral services on disability, including providers, support groups, educational and residential facilities. Lends books and videos (part of the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community).

Web: [www.iidc.indiana.edu/cedir](http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/cedir)

Local: (812) 855-9396

Toll Free: (800) 437-7924

## **Children's Special Health Care Services**

Helps eligible families with children's medical expenses related to a disability or chronic health condition.

Web: [www.in.gov/isdh/19613.htm](http://www.in.gov/isdh/19613.htm)

Toll Free: (800) 475-1355

## **Civil Rights Commission**

Enforces Indiana civil rights laws, prohibiting discrimination in employment, housing, education, public accommodation and credit. This includes Fair Housing and many ADA provisions.

Web: [www.in.gov/icrc](http://www.in.gov/icrc)

Local: (317) 232-2600

Toll Free: (800) 628-2909

## **Disability, Aging and Rehabilitative Services**

The part of state government that assists eligible people with disabilities with a broad range of services, including residential and in-home services, vocational rehabilitation, employment, deaf and hard of hearing, blind and visually impaired, independent living, developmental disability programs and more.

Web: [www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs](http://www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs)

Toll Free: (800) 545-7763

## **Division of Exceptional Learners – Department of Education**

Provides information on special education services and issues for individuals from ages 3-22.

Web: [www.doe.state.in.us/exceptional](http://www.doe.state.in.us/exceptional)

Local: (317) 232-0570

Toll Free: (877) 851-4106

## **Family Helpline**

Telephone hotline through the Indiana State Department of Health. Responds to all categories of calls for assistance.

Toll Free: (800) 433-0746

# Indiana Statewide Disability Information Numbers (cont.)

## **First Steps Early Intervention System**

Refers families to community early intervention programs for children from birth through age 3, who are developmentally delayed or are at risk.

Web: [www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs/4968.htm](http://www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs/4968.htm)

Local: (317) 232-1144

Toll Free: (800) 441-7837

## **Hoosier Healthwise Hotline**

Assists lower-income residents of Indiana by providing insurance coverage for health care services, including Hoosier Healthwise for Children.

Web: [www.healthcareforhoosiers.com](http://www.healthcareforhoosiers.com)

Toll Free: (800) 889-9949

## **INDATA (Assistive Technology)**

Promotes access to technology-related services, through information and referral, training, advocacy on funding issues, and device loan and demonstration.

Web: [www.eastersealstech.com](http://www.eastersealstech.com)

Local: (317) 466-2013

Toll Free: (888) 466-1314

## **Indiana Institute on Disability and Community**

Provides training, advocacy and research to support inclusive education; community living/ membership; integrated employment; and choice for people with disabilities and families.

Web: [www.iidc.indiana.edu](http://www.iidc.indiana.edu)

Local: (812) 855-6508

Toll Free: (800) 825-4733

## **IN\*SOURCE (Resource Center for Families with Special Needs)**

Provides families with information/ training to help assure effective educational programs and appropriate services for children and young adults with disabilities. Links families with parents in their community who have been trained to help resolve special education issues and concerns.

Web: [www.insource.org](http://www.insource.org)

Local: (219) 234-7101

Toll Free: (800) 332-4433

## **NAMI Indiana (National Alliance for the Mentally Ill)**

Provides family and consumer support and public education about people with psychiatric disabilities.

Web: [www.namiindiana.org](http://www.namiindiana.org)

Local: (317) 925-9399

Toll Free: (800) 677-6442

## **Protection and Advocacy Services (Indiana)**

Assists people with disabilities to resolve disability-related problems including problems with services and access discrimination issues.

Web: [www.in.gov/ipas/](http://www.in.gov/ipas/)

Local: (317) 722-5555

Toll Free: (800) 622-4845

# Indiana Statewide Disability Information Numbers (cont.)

## **Social Security Administration**

Provides information on retirement, disability and survivors' benefits for qualifying individuals.

Also provides Supplemental Security Income to blind and disabled persons.

Web: [www.ssa.gov/](http://www.ssa.gov/)

Toll Free: (800) 772-1213

TDD: (800) 325-0778

## **State Information Center**

Provides general information and referral for all state government services, permits, licenses, etc. The Web site provides common links and an online listing of state agency telephone numbers.

Web: [www.help.in.gov](http://www.help.in.gov)

Local: (317) 233-0800

Toll Free: (800) 457-8283

## **United Cerebral Palsy Association of Greater Indiana**

Provides information, referral, advocacy, diagnostic and treatment clinics, equipment funding and support services to people with cerebral palsy and their families throughout Indiana.

Local: (317) 632-3561

Toll Free: (800) 723-7620

## **Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)**

Provides education, training, assistive technology, placement and other services to help people with disabilities find employment.

Will refer individuals to their local VR office.

Web: [www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs/4938.htm](http://www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs/4938.htm)

Local: (317) 232-1319

Toll Free: (800) 545-7763 ext. 1319