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This includes education in a regular classroom with accommodations or in a special education classroom. Q. Someone at our school told me there are specific conditions that qualify a child for an IEP. But I'm wondering about a 504 plan. What is the list of conditions or legal disabilities that qualify a child for a 504 plan?A. This is a bit of a trick question. Unlike for an IEP, there is no list of specific conditions or disabilities that qualify a child for a 504 plan. I know that sounds odd. But it's because eligibility for a 504 plan is very broad. It would be nearly impossible to create a list because there would be too many conditions. What we can do is look at examples of conditions that qualify for a 504 plan. To get a 504 plan, a student must have a "physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity." That's a mouthful. It's from , the law that covers 504 plans. The important thing to know is that many different conditions can be impairments. And most things people do each day — from eating and sleeping to learning and thinking — are major life activities. That's why learning and thinking differences often qualify for a 504 plan. For example, ADHD can be an impairment under the law. It impacts activities like thinking and paying attention. Likewise, dyslexia can be an impairment that impacts reading. Beyond learning differences, many other conditions also qualify. In a typical school, there will be 504 plans for anxiety, food allergies, vision problems, illnesses, and more. There's one last thing to keep in mind. Depending on the impact of their condition, a student might qualify for a 504 plan, an IEP, or neither. For example, if a student has very mild ADHD, it might not impact their life in a way that's a legal disability. So, they don't qualify for any plan. Or the ADHD could create so many challenges that the student is eligible for an IEP.If you found this helpful, you might want to read about: ADHD and IEPs How a 504 plan might cover anxiety 504 Plans Section 504 is a federal statute that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities as defined below. 504 plans are legal documents that provide specific supports and accommodations necessary for a child with a disability to receive a Free and Appropriate Public Education. In order to qualify for a 504 plan, the child must meet the criteria set forth in the federal law for identification as an individual with a disability: Section 504 defines a person with a disability as "any person who:has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities(ii) has a record of such an impairment (or) (iii) is regarded as having such an impairment." Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, 29 U.S.C. 794. Eosinophilic gastrointestinal disorders are considered a disability according to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 under the following guidelines: "The Section 504 regulatory provision at 34 C.F.R. 104.3(j)(2)(i) defines a physical or mental impairment as any physiological disorder or condition… affecting one or more of the following body systems:… [including] digestive." In The Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (Amendments Act), effective January 1, 2009, "Congress provided additional examples of general activities that are major life activities, including eating…" Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, 29 U.S.C. 794. Adapted from Children with EGIDs meet the criteria under Section 504 because a.) EGIDs are a physical digestive impairment limiting the major life activity of eating (and breathing in cases of anaphylactic reactions) and b.) they have a medical diagnosis and are regularly monitored by a team of doctors. Under Section 504, parents are not required to prove that the child's disability adversely impacts educational performance. The process for establishing a 504 plan varies between states and districts. However, the federal guidelines are broad and do not specify that a child must have an educational impact in order to receive support under Section 504. Local policies and procedures should not place further constraints on individuals who are able to be found eligible. Section 504 requires schools to provide a Free and Appropriate Public Education regardless of the nature or severity of the disability. If there is a concern that a local guideline is more restrictive in nature than the federal statutes, a request should be made for written documentation outlining the local school district's 504 policy. It is important for both parents and educators to understand that 504 plans are intended to ensure that accommodations are identified and implemented so that a student can have access to a meaningful and appropriate public education. An educational deficit does not need to be identified for a student to qualify for a 504 plan under federal law. Developing a 504 Plan A committee of individuals including the child's teacher, parent, a school administrator, and the person responsible for 504 oversight in the child's school should meet to determine eligibility and develop a 504 plan. A sample letter to request such a meeting can be found here. The following is a list of recommended topic areas that should be discussed during a meeting for 504 plan development or review. Specific accommodations and sample 504 plans can be found under the specific grade-level tabs on this website. Elementary School: Accommodations and Sample 504 Plan Middle School and High School: Accommodations and Sample 504 Plan Medical accommodations (e.g., medical supplies, administration of dietary supplements, nutrition schedule, responsible parties, training for staff, etc.) Physical classroom and general population environment accommodations for safe academic access and medical needs Communication plan(s) Instructional accommodations Testing accommodations Homework accommodations Absence/Tardy/Homebound accommodations Party, celebration, and reward accommodations Field trip accommodations A 504 plan is a fluid document that is implemented for one year from the date of development until it is determined that the child no longer needs support from accommodations. Here is a sample 504 planning document. It is the responsibility of the child's teacher to implement and provide access to the accommodations outlined in a 504 plan. Therefore, it is critical that the teacher is an active participant in the development of what the accommodations are, why they are in place, and how they should be implemented in the school setting. There is typically no formal progress monitoring or data collection associated with a 504 plan outside of standard distribution of progress reports and end of term grades in accordance with individual school policy. It is recommended that frequent meetings or status updates occur at least every 9 weeks to review the appropriateness of the accommodations and to clarify or modify any portions of the 504 plan that need revision. If you are told that your child does not qualify for a 504 plan, request a formal written letter, also known as Prior Written Notice, which outlines the reasons why your child does not qualify. Additionally, request a written copy of the district's Section 504 policy and implementation guidelines. If you feel your child has been wrongly denied support or if your child has a 504 plan but accommodations are not being implemented, write a letter to the principal expressing your concerns. You may also consider filing a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights. Complaints must be filed within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory act. Additional information on OCR complaints can be found at: Next: IEP Eligibility Authored by Jennifer Cardenas, The Right to Learn, ©2012, The American Partnership for Eosinophilic Disorders. What is a 504 Plan? @site-logo/Untitled design (15).png PDF Version: What is a 504 Plan? PDF Version: Full Guide of all 30+ Flyers (Compiled as a Booklet) Versión en Español en Formato PDF: ¿Qué es una Plan 504? A 504 plan is a plan for students with disabilities. It helps them get what they need in school by providing additions or changes to the learning environment to accommodate your child's disability. It is provided at no cost to families. A 504 Plan should not be provided instead of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) when a student is eligible for Special Education. 504 plans come from Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act. This is a civil rights law. It protects students from discrimination. In order to qualify for a 504 plan an individual needs to have a documented disability or health concern that substantially limits one or more life activities, such as learning. Some students with disabilities are not eligible for an IEP but still need accommodations. In these cases, the student with a disability may be eligible for a 504 plan. How is a 504 plan different than an IEP? IEPs come from the IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act). The IDEA gives students with disabilities the right to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). IEPs are a plan to meet a child's needs at school. Every child with a disability is not eligible for an IEP. However, 504 plans are similar to IEPs. Like IEPs, the school has to follow what is in the 504 plan. Unlike an IEP, it may or may not be a written plan. However, it is a good idea to have a written plan. As a parent, you should ask for the 504 plan to be in writing. This will help you and the teachers follow the plan. A 504 plan includes additions or modifications that the school must provide to accommodate your child's disability.If the school does not follow the 504 plan, it can be difficult for your child to succeed. If you think the school is not following the 504 plan, you should ask for a meeting with the school to go over your concerns. You can also invite the Special Education Coordinator for the District to try and find a solution. Here are some ways 504 plans are different than IEPs. If your child has a 504 plan: • There does not have to be a meeting to change your child's placement, although it is still required that you are notified of any change.• You do not have to receive prior written notices of any changes to the 504 plan. • You do not have the same list of parental rights. You do not have the right to a due process hearing if you disagree with the school about something. You can however participate in mediation, have an impartial hearing, and file a complaint with the federal Office for Civil Rights (OCR) in the U.S. Department of Education. Your child can still be suspended or expelled for behaviors related to their disability.• The school does not have to give your student an education while they are suspended or expelled. I think my child could benefit from a 504 plan. How do I know if they are eligible? Both physical and mental impairments could make your child eligible for a 504 plan. Physical impairments affect the body or organs. Mental impairments include mental illnesses, intellectual/developmental disabilities, traumatic brain injury, learning disabilities, etc. Full definitions can be found in the federal regulation CFR 104.3 (j) (i). These definitions don't include specific diseases, but that doesn't mean that your child's condition would not qualify them for a 504 plan. Your child should qualify for a 504 plan if they have a documented disability or health concern that substantially limits one or more life activities, such as learning disability. How do I request a 504 plan for my child? First, the school needs to decide if your child should have a 504 plan. They do this by conducting an evaluation. For a 504 Plan, the evaluation needs to show that their disability limits one or more major life activities. This might be walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, writing, doing math calculations, working, caring for oneself, or doing manual tasks. You can request an evaluation for a 504 plan in the same way that you request an evaluation for an IEP. One easy way to request an evaluation is to write a letter or email to your child's teacher, principal, counselor, and/or a social worker. See more: Who can make a referral for an evaluation to determine if my child needs Special Education services? Can my child have a behavior management plan with their 504 plan? Yes. Any child with a disability whose behaviors affect their educational opportunities at school should have a behavioral intervention plan (BIP). You can request this from the school in writing. Sources & Additional Resources: Kansas Special Education Process Handbook, Chapter 6. Kansas State Department of Education. Disclaimer: This fact sheet is not intended to provide specific legal advice. If you need legal advice, please contact an attorney. Only an attorney can give you specific legal advice based on your particular situation. We try to update our materials regularly, but the law can change frequently. This publication is based on the law at the time that it was written. Future changes in the law could make information in this fact sheet inaccurate. Updated on: April 15, 2025 / 4:44 PM CDT / CBS Texas CBS News Texas is dedicated to keeping you informed on the current state of education in Texas with a new segment called "The Learning Curve." You can watch "The Learning Curve" every weekday morning during CBS News Texas Mornings at 6 a.m. If you have something education related you would like us to look into, send us an email at texaseducation@cbs.com.There is no "one size fits all" way to learning. So for kids who may need extra support, help is available through what's known as a 504 plan, or 504 accommodations. The number refers to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, a civil rights law making sure students with disabilities have help if they attend a school that receives federal funding.Examples of qualifying disabilities include: Visual impairmentHearing impairmentMobility issues Chronic illnesses ADHDDyslexiaAnxietyEmotional disordersAccommodations include sitting at a specialized desk with adaptations that help students focus. It allows extra time for assignments or test taking, fidget items during instructional time and the use of speech-to-text technology and modified textbooks. After the dismantling of the Department of Education, the Department of Health and Human Services will oversee special needs programs like the 504 plan.The Texas Education Agency said it does not anticipate any changes in services for students who receive these accommodations. To get a 504 plan, parents should contact their child's school and request an evaluation. In: Disabilities Texas Education Lacey Beasley Lacey Beasley is an award-winning journalist with CBS News Texas. You can find her on-air every weekday morning. © 2025 CBS Broadcasting Inc. All Rights Reserved. A 504 plan is part of an antidiscrimination law in the United States. It helps provide resources for children with disabilities. Students with a mental health or physical disability that impacts their ability to carry out activities of daily living can qualify for this plan. It is provided at no extra cost to families. The plan covers accommodations or services the school can offer to help remove barriers so the child can continue going to school. Examples of accommodations include a health plan from the school nurse, modified textbooks, an adjusted class schedule, ramps or elevators, and more. This article reviews who qualifies for a 504, how it is developed, what it covers, and what to expect. 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This includes education in a regular classroom with accommodations or in a special education classroom. Learn more about Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education. Office of Communications and Outreach (OCO)Page Last Reviewed: January 27, 2025 A 504 plan is part of an antidiscrimination law in the United States. It helps provide resources for children with disabilities. Students with a mental health or physical disability that impacts their ability to carry out activities of daily living can qualify for this plan. It is provided at no extra cost to families. The plan covers accommodations or services the school can offer to help remove barriers so the child can continue going to school. 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This includes education in a regular classroom with accommodations or in a special education classroom. This resource from Children's Hospital of Philadelphia provides information on 504 plans, which ensure reasonable accommodations for children who qualify.What is a 504 Plan?A 504 Plan is also known as "Section 504 Plan" of the Americans with Disabilities Act. It is a formal agreement between the family and the school ensuring that proper accommodations are made for children with medical or psychiatric conditions, allowing the children to receive education.What is the purpose of a 504 Plan?A 504 Plan ensures that students with a disability are allowed to participate in academic, nonacademic and extracurricular activities. Students with disabilities are also guaranteed a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).What is the difference between a 504 Plan and an IEP?An Individual Education Plan (IEP) falls under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and addresses instructional needs for learning differences. Students who already have an IEP may have accommodations for their diagnosis placed in the IEP section termed "other health impairment".How do we request a 504 Plan for our child?Make your request either in writing or verbally to the school counselor, director of special education, school nurse or the head of the Child Study Team at your child's school. If these staff are not available, the request can be made directly to the principal.What are some of the benefits of a 504 Plan?All teachers and school staff are notified of the 504 Plan.Accommodations for standardized testing are easier to put in place.The plan highlights what is fair and appropriate for the individual student.What if a school says that a 504 Plan is not necessary for my child?The 504 plan is a legal document. Public schools that receive any form of funding from the federal government must honor the family's request for a 504 Plan.My child attends a private school. Do private schools have to honor a 504 Plan?Private schools that receive federal funding may not exclude an individual student with a disability or medical condition if the school can provide an appropriate education to that student. If a private school does not receive federal funding, they are not required to have a formal 504 Plan but may have their own version or a different health plan.Where can I find more information?View a sample Section 504 plan for a patient with diabetes developed by the American Diabetes Association (ADA) and the Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund, Inc. (DREDF). Visit www.diabetes.org for more information about the Safe at Schools campaign and legislation. Ever wonder what "504 disability" actually stands for? It's not just a random term. This special kind of disability gets its protection under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This federal law throws a big no-no at discrimination because of a disability.Understanding what qualifies as a 504 disability can be a bit tricky. It's not as clear-cut as you might think. It's about more than just having a physical or mental impairment. The disability must also substantially limit one or more major life activities, like walking, seeing, hearing, or learning.So, let's dive in and unpack this complex topic. We'll explore the ins and outs of 504 disabilities, helping you to better understand the criteria and how it applies to real-world situations. It's essential knowledge, whether you're an educator, a parent, or just someone looking to expand your understanding of disability rights. A 504 disability, protected under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, refers to physical or mental impairments that substantially limit one or more major life activities such as walking, seeing, hearing, or learning.The term 'substantially limit' is individualistic, taking into account the nature, severity, duration, and the long-term impact of the person's impairment.An individual can qualify as a 504 disability even if not considered 'disabled' under other laws such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).Major life activities, as defined by Section 504, include everyday tasks but also incorporate physical and mental aspects of day-to-day life such as caring for oneself, seeing, hearing, eating, learning, and more.Section 504 protects those who are currently impacted but also those with a record of impairment or who are perceived to have such an impairment.In real-world applications, implementations of accommodations for 504 disabilities range from academic and behavioral adjustments in schools to adaptive workspace changes in offices.The recognition of 504 disabilities is crucial in fostering inclusivity in society, preventing discrimination, and ensuring individuals with disabilities can reach their full potential.So, you may ask, "what exactly is qualifying as a 504 disability?" Well, it's not just having physical or mental impairments. In fact, it's more nuanced.As per the guidelines under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, a significant requirement should be met: the disability must substantially limit major life activities. These life activities commonly include walking, speaking, learning, working, breathing, caring for oneself, seeing, and hearing among other activities. A handy list to remember.Now you may wonder, "how is 'substantially limit' defined?" Well, it's quite subjective and individualistic. It involves considering the nature and severity of the person's impairment, the duration or expected duration of the impairment, and the permanent or long-term impact of the impairment. There's no one-size-fits-all definition; each case is evaluated individually. Your takeaway from this should be an appreciation for the complexity and depth required in qualifying a 504 disability. And it's important to note, the person does not have to be classified as 'disabled' under other laws. Yes, you read that right. For instance, someone with a learning difficulty such as dyslexia can be 'non-disabled' under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), but they may qualify under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. You might want to underline this fact, considering its significance.Knowing these criteria rightly clarifies the understanding around 504 disabilities. As you delve deeper into this topic, with a focus on knowing more about disability rights, discovering real-world applications and anomalies becomes inevitable. Needless to say, this knowledge can empower educators, parents, and individuals seeking to better support individuals with disabilities. Remember the tagline – knowledge is power.When considering whether an individual qualifies as a 504 disability, it's not a one-size-fits-all approach. The criteria are subjective and may depend significantly on the individual's context. The disability should substantially limit a major life activity. This broad umbrella phrase includes day-to-day tasks such as walking, talking, learning, or even digesting food.To help you understand better, let's examine each component of the definition more closely.Major Life Activity: The Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights defines major life activities to include caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working.Substantially Limit: This is a subjective term that varies from case to case. It regards the nature of the disability, the duration, and the impact it has on the individual's life. It's not about the recognition of the disability but the significant effect it might have on a major life activity. For instance, a hearing impairment that mildly affects an individual's ability to discern sounds may not qualify, but if it significantly hinders their ability to communicate or learn, it might meet the criteria for a 504 disability. It's important to note that to fall under a 504, the disability does not need to be of a permanent nature. Temporary impairments, if substantial enough, could fit the 504 auspices. An example could be a broken leg inhibiting the ability to walk for an extended period or a severe allergic reaction that impacts the ability to eat certain foods.And remember, individuals may be eligible for a 504 plan even if they do not qualify under other laws, like the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (or IDEA). You could have a 504 disability that doesn't align with IDEA's guidelines, but it doesn't mean you're without support or options.Understanding these criteria is just the first step in successfully navigating the application and identification process for a 504 plan—we'll move on to the actual implementation processes in the next section.For better comprehension, let's now get into defining major life activities. Section 504 identifies these as functions or tasks vital to your everyday existence. It's not just about the fundamentals of being a functioning human, like walking or talking. Major life activities integrate both physical and mental facets of your daily life.These activities encompass but are not limited to: seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working. Tasks linked to normal bodily functions also count, such as functions of the immune system, cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions.Yes, you heard it right. The scope of major life activities is quite expansive under the purview of section 504. There's a significant emphasis on the inclusive nature of this definition. The exhaustive list ensures the broad cover of all possible scenarios where an individual might find themselves substantially limited due to their disability. So, you might be wondering: what does "substantially limit" mean here? Well, this terminology is purposefully subjective in nature. It takes into account the severity, duration, and impact of the impairment. A temporary impairment doesn't necessarily disqualify you from getting a 504 plan. In fact, if the impairment substantially limits your major life activity for a considerable duration, you are on the right track for a 504 plan.Just keep in mind: Section 504 not only covers those who are currently impacted but also those with a record of such an impairment or who are perceived as having such an impairment. Remember, it's all about ensuring that you receive the support you deserve and not letting a disability limit you from leading a full and accomplished life.Consider this: a student struggles with reading, writing, or math due to a learning disability. He does not have an IEP under IDEA but still requires academic and behavioral accommodations to level the playing field. This student would be covered by Section 504.Similarly, a worker with arthritis struggling to type on a computer keyboard, even though it's a fundamental part of their job, may take advantage of the safeguards provided by Section 504. Adaptations like voice-recognition software or an ergonomic keyboard can be considered reasonable accommodations under this act.Now picture a lady with diabetes whose condition significantly limits her endocrine functions. With a 504 plan, she could obtain necessary workplace modifications like allowed breaks to check her blood sugar levels.You could also think about recovering cancer patients, many of whom are considered as having a 504 disability due to the likelihood of their medical condition coming back. Reasonable accommodations such as flexible work schedules are possible to cater to their need for regular check-ups or therapies. In all these scenarios, Section 504 provides a critical support system, creating a more balanced and inclusive environment for those with disabilities. Whether it's in the classroom or workplace, such protections ensure fair treatment, equipping individuals with the tools and accommodations they need to thrive.Experiences of disabilities vary greatly, as do the accommodations under a 504 plan. It's a flexible, adaptable approach that addresses the unique needs of each individual. We've just covered a slice of the possibilities, but the approaches under Section 504 are as diverse as the people it serves.Understanding the concept of 504 disabilities plays a pivotal role in creating an inclusive society. By neglecting to recognize these disabilities, we miss opportunities to help individuals reach their full potential. Society benefits from the talents and skills of all people. Thus, this recognition directly contributes to overall societal progress.Recall that the spectrum of 504 disabilities varies and can include learning difficulties, physical impairments, mental health conditions, and chronic illnesses. A key to unlocking the potential of those living with these disabilities lies in respecting the diversity of human experiences and acknowledging their unique needs.Moreover, spreading awareness about 504 disabilities promotes empathy and understanding among the general public. It dispels misconceptions which often lead to stigmatization and discrimination against individuals with disabilities. By providing a fair understanding, society can work towards a more equitable and accessible environment for everyone.Never underestimate the value of comprehensive knowledge and awareness about these disabilities. Through this awareness, proper accommodations can be provided to those who need them, contributing significantly to their quality of life.Finally, promoting the recognition of these disabilities also ensures compliance with the law. Section 504 is more than just a guideline—it's a legally-bound mandate that all educational and professional entities must adhere to.The flexibility and diverse scope of the Section 504 program open up a world of possibilities. They create a flexible framework to cater to the unique experi