

High School's Ending..... Now What?

North Santa Cruz County SELPA Transition Handbook

This handbook is intended to be a useful guide of what to expect and how best to assist students with disabilities and their parents as they move into adulthood beyond their high school experience.

Spring 2015

Special thanks to the parents of the Beverly Hills, Culver City and Santa Monica School Districts.



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SPECIAL THANKS

It is with much gratitude and thanks to the diligent work of three parents of students who have recently transitioned out of high school from Beverly Hills High School and Santa Monica High School in southern CA. They have been kind enough to share their hard work with the North Santa Cruz County SELPA in order to make it our own.

PREFACE

The high school years compel parents to confront difficult issues and deal with new challenges. The parents of special education students have the additional anxiety of needing to plan for their child's future after high school and trying to navigate the difficult journey of helping their child find a meaningful place in society. Who better to offer a guide than parents and students who have already traveled the same journey?

We hope that the information in this handbook can be a useful guide of what to expect and how to best help the special education student as she or he moves into adulthood beyond the confines of high school. We welcome your comments and hope that in the future a new set of parents will pick up the mantle and write updated editions of this handbook.

SPECIAL EDUCATION POST-SECONDARY TRANSITION HANDBOOK FOR STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

INTRODUCTION

This handbook is designed to help high school students with disabilities and their families to make important decisions that will shape their futures. It was compiled for students, families and school personnel to assist in all phases of the transition process throughout high school as well as into adult life. It provides general information that can lead to opportunities for future success and independence. References to “you” and “your” refer to students with disabilities and/or their families.

According to special education law, transition services must be in place in all IEPs for students when they reach age 16. They may be included for younger students if deemed appropriate by the IEP team (OSEP Letter to Anonymous, 17 EFLR 842). Preventing school drop-outs is to be a major factor in determining when transition services are needed (OSEP Letter to Bereuter 20 IDELR 536).

The IEP team is required to provide a coordinated set of activities that promote movement from school to post-secondary education, vocational training, employment, adult services, independent living and community participation. It is important to base these activities on the student’s needs, which must include his or her preferences and interests. Transition services must include instruction, community experiences, and development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives. If appropriate, daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation may also be included.

If the IEP team determines that an individual student does not need services in one or more of these areas, the IEP must contain a statement to that effect and the basis upon which the determination is made (OSEP Letter to Cernosia 19 IDELR 933). (Wrightslaw)

Before the student leaves school, the IEP must also contain, if appropriate, a statement of each public agency and each participating agency’s responsibilities or linkages (including financial) for the transition activities (34 CFR 300.346 (d) and comment).

The IEP meeting must include a representative of the public agency providing and supervising the transition activities and, if appropriate, representatives of other participating agencies. In almost all situations the student’s district representative required for all IEP meetings would qualify as this representative. The student should also be there to ensure that her or his needs, preferences, and interests are addressed. If the student cannot attend, or chooses not to attend,

other methods of participating must be used (34 CFR 300.344 (c) (3)). A student who is 18 or older may request in writing to have a parent or third party represent them at the IEP meeting.

The ultimate responsibility for providing transition services rests with the school district (or state education agency, if the district fails) and there is no provision for a waiver of this requirement.

Transition is a mandate of the IDEA 1990 (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and the reauthorizations of IDEA 1997 and 2004. The purpose of legislating transition services is to better prepare youth with disabilities for the workplace and to foster greater independence.

IDEA 2004 (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)

IDEA (2004) requires Transition Services to be “results-oriented” to facilitate the student’s movement from school to post-school activities. The law requires that the IEP Transition Services be in place by (before) the student’s 16th birthday.

IDEA requires the school to provide a “summary of academic achievement and functional performance” when the student graduates from high school with a regular diploma, or “ages out” of special education services at age 22. (Students who do not graduate with a diploma are eligible to continue receiving services until age 22.) The Summary of Performance (SOP) should include recommendations about ways to help meet post-secondary goals.

The SOP **must** be completed during the final year of a student’s high school education or transition program and is most useful when completed that year during the transition IEP process. At that time, the student can actively participate in the development of this SOP.

Transition guidelines summarized at:

www.ncset.org/publications/related/ideatransition.asp

RESOURCES

Wrightslaw

Parents, educators, advocates, and attorneys use Wrightslaw for accurate, reliable information about special education law, education law, and advocacy for children with disabilities. Wrightslaw is an informational website and blog. It covers all aspects of special education in great detail. It includes a step-by-step guide to students' post-secondary transition planning.

TOPICS COVERED BY WRIGHTSLAW

- Advocacy
- ADD/ADHD
- Assistive Technology
- Autism Spectrum
- Behavior & Discipline
- Bullying
- College/Continuing Education
- Damages
- Discrimination
- Due Process
- Early Intervention (Part C)
- Eligibility
- Extended School Year (ESY)
- Evaluations
- Free and Appropriate Education (FAPE)
- Flyers
- Future Planning
- Harassment
- High-Stakes Tests
- Homeless Children
- IDEA 2004
- Identification & Child Find
- Individual Education Plan (IEPs)
- Juvenile Justice
- Law School & Clinics
- Letters & Paper Trails
- Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)/Inclusion
- Mediation
- Military/Department of Defense (DOD)
- No Child Left Behind (NCLB)
- No Child Left Behind Directories
- NCLB Law & Regulations
- Parental Protections
- Physical Education (PE) and Adapted PE
- Privacy & Records
- Procedural Safeguards
- Progress Monitoring
- Reading
- Related Services
- Research Based Instruction
- Response to Intervention (RTI)
- Restraints/Abuse
- Retention
- Retaliation
- School Report Cards
- Section 504
- Self-Advocacy
- Teachers & Principals
- Transition
- Twice Exceptional

Website: www.wrightslaw.org

CalSTAT

The 2007 TRANSITION TO ADULT LIVING: An Information and Resource Guide was prepared by California Services for Technical Assistance and Training (CalSTAT), at the California Institute on Human Services, Sonoma State University. It includes information covering all aspects of transitioning from high school to college, vocational training, and/or independent living and how these pathways are to be covered, in detail, by a student's IEP.

To order free copies of this document, mail your request to CalSTAT:

CalSTAT
California Institute on Human Services
Attn: Transition Guide Request
5789 State Farm Drive, Suite 230
Rohnert Park, CA 94928-6308

This 164-page document may also be downloaded free of charge from the CalSTAT Publications website:
www.calstat.org/info.html

Life after IEPs

This is an excellent website with helpful information, resources and support for parents or mentors of a young person with disabilities. Once on the website, you may click on Transition 101 to start. The site is funded by the Pennsylvania Developmental Disabilities Council.

www.lifeafterieps.com

Other Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) websites with useful information and tools such as assessment:

Ventura County SELPA -
www.venturacountyselpa.com/TransitiontoAdultLife.aspx

LAUSD District Office of Transition Services -
www.dots.lausd.net

Click on Transition Resources

Books:

Like Sound Through Water: A Mother's Journey by Karen J. Foli
Mother's journey through long road to correct diagnosis (central auditory processing disorder) for her son.

Learning Disabilities: A to Z
A Parent's Guide To Learning Disabilities
Corrine Smith, PH.D. and Lisa Strick

Learning Disabilities and Life Stories
Pano Rodis, Andrew Garrod, Mary Lynn Boscardin

My Life in Pictures, 2nd Edition by Temple Grandin
This inspiring book provides a comprehensive discussion on autism and suggestions as to how to provide various approaches to learning for students from someone who has lived it firsthand.

Thinking About You Thinking About Me by Michelle Winner
A book on perspective taking for those with a social cognition disability which includes exercises and social activities to address social thinking.

OVERVIEW

Transition services start with the student and his or her goals. Ask your student the following questions to begin the process in the most student-centered way.

Now that you understand what transition is about, how does it affect you?

Who Are You?

In order to make decisions affecting the future, the student must understand their disability, unique strengths and challenges. This is important in order to effectively communicate one's needs to others who will help you. Answering the following questions will help increase self-knowledge and identify areas of improvement.

1. What are your interests?
2. What are your strengths?
3. What types of activities frustrate you and how do you deal with your frustrations?
4. Do you know the name of your disability and can you explain how it affects your learning and your needs in the classroom?
5. Do you ask for help when learning something new?
6. What are your goals for high school and beyond?
7. Have you mapped out a plan to meet your goals?
8. Do you have good study and work habits?
9. Do you organize your time and maintain a balance between work and recreation?

Why Transition?

Prior to entering the workplace or post-secondary activities, students with disabilities must learn about themselves. It is critical for students with disabilities to know what challenges they may face and how to advocate for themselves. In addition, they must be able to identify the types of services, accommodations and/or supports, they require in order to be successful in school and work settings.

The following are a list of definitions that may be useful to describe this process.

Accommodations - changes to the environment or curriculum that enables the student or worker to have equal access to the educational program or training (e.g. seating, test taking, and assistive technology.) An accommodation does not fundamentally alter the course content.

Challenge - an obstacle that one encounters in life, which interferes with achieving goals.

Disability - a term often used to describe mental or physical impairment that restricts one's ability to function.

EDD - Employment Development Department is a state agency that provides numerous services, such as job listings, resume writing assistance and the like.

Extracurricular Activities - activities outside the scope of the core curriculum such as team sports, drama, music, clubs or service organizations.

IDEIA - Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act is a legal mandate that provides for a free and appropriate public education for all students identified with special needs.

Job Shadowing – the process of students following an employee at a worksite to learn about job duties in a particular occupation.

Learning Style - how one best learns or processes information.

Modifications – changes to high school curriculum that alters the course content and may result in no college credit for the class.

Other Resources – may be individuals, including family, friends, teachers; and community based entities such as the Department of Rehabilitation, Goodwill Industries, Regional Centers and city recreational programs.

Resume - a written document which outlines the student's education, skills, and experience so an employer can see how that student can contribute to the employer's workplace.

ROP - Regional Occupational Program offers job skills classes

Teaching Style – the style in the delivery of instruction.

How Parents Can Support Their Child throughout the Transition Planning Process

Grades 8-9

At School

- Actively participate in their child's IEP meetings & ITP (Individual Transition Plan) development
- Identify the transitioning student's interests
- Identify opportunities
- Discuss long-range career plans
- Know high school graduation and college course requirements
- Know the meaning of test scores discussed in the IEP meeting
- Understand the consequences of tardiness, grading policies, and support regular attendance
- Reinforce the connection between school and workplace expectations for behavior and performance
- Maintain contact with teachers, counselors and other school staff

At Home

- Encourage child's hopes, dreams and goals
- Identify responsibilities at home
- Encourage good study habits
- Talk with child about what academic skills they will need for their preferred job
- Praise efforts toward work and accomplishments outside of school
- Encourage exploration of career options and interests
- Encourage service learning tasks and volunteer work experiences
- Encourage child to read daily

Grades 10-12

At School

- Actively participate in student's IEP meetings & Individual Transition Plan (ITP) development
- Make sure your child participates in the development of their IEP and ITP by attending those meetings
- Attend career and college fairs with student
- Know the requirements of postsecondary education and training opportunities
- Stress the necessity of earning a high school diploma or certificate of completion
- Understand and become familiar with community resources
- Know requirements to qualify for public agency services or college support services

At Home

- Provide money management and budgeting opportunities
- Emphasize interpersonal skills development
- Review and research long-term career plans with child
- Meet deadlines for school applications and financial aid
- Require child to perform independent living skills at home
- Encourage enrollment in career technical classes
- Help child assume responsibility for keeping appointments & meetings.

What You Need To Know About Accommodations

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 states that reasonable accommodations must be made for those with disabilities in both the school and work settings. But what are reasonable accommodations? In a school setting, they are things the school or a teacher can do help the student to access their education. Teachers can adapt or adjust what the student is learning or how they teach. Many high school students with disabilities have the use of accommodations, which may include:

- Note taking accommodations
- Test taking accommodations
- Restroom accommodations for medical needs
- Extended time to take the tests
- Additional time to get from class to class

While some students receive these accommodations through a “504 Plan,” other students have IEPs that specify needed accommodations. Ultimately accommodations enable access, but do not change or alter the course content.

Verification of Disability

If the student is considering college, high school students frequently think they are automatically eligible for disability support services at the college level. It is important to understand that this is not true. Under section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the student must verify the disability and justify the accommodation. According to federal laws, the student must be able to identify the reasonable accommodations they want to request from the college.

Verification is written proof that a current disability exists. Verification of the disability is the responsibility of each student seeking accommodations and services. The verification must be provided by a licensed professional in the disability-related field. Services and accommodations are authorized after the formal verification of a current disability.

Verification involves the following steps:

1. Complete an application for services.
2. Formally disclose and name their disability.
3. Provide current written verification that:
 - a) names the disability
 - b) identifies educational limitations that the disability causes
 - c) identifies reasonable accommodations
4. Provide recent documentation from a professional verifying the disability:
 - a) physical, health and psychological disabilities require documentation from an appropriate professional.
 - b) learning disabilities and speech & language disabilities require a recent assessment.

It is recommended that the student or their parent contact the disability support office at their college of interest or other post-secondary program for assistance with this process.

SELF-ADVOCACY

To be a successful self-advocate a student should be able to...

- Understand their rights and responsibilities
- Express themselves and their ideas (verbally or in writing)
- State their needs to others (verbally or in writing)
- Know where to go for help and support (resources)

Steps to Self-Advocacy

For students:

Self-Advocacy is the ability of the student to identify and explain their needs as follows.

Step 1 - Say to yourself, "I am the one who is responsible for my success or failure."

Step 2 - Ask yourself, "How does my disability affect me as a student? How do I explain my disability to others? What are my abilities and how can I use them to lead me to success?"

Step 3 - Develop good communication skills to request accommodations and services. Successful students plan ahead and prepare so they can effectively explain their needs.

Step 4 - Recognize when you need help and ask for it.

CAREERS

Selecting a career is one of the most significant choices a young adult can make. To assist students with special needs, the high school should have a variety of resources to facilitate this process. This is particularly helpful for juniors and seniors who have completed many of the classes required for graduation. Once the student turns 16, or will soon, they may already be a licensed driver. They may want to find a job. Whatever the student's plans, this is a good time to enroll in vocational classes. Check the high school handbook or speak with the counselor or case manager for a list of the current vocational classes being offered. These classes can introduce possible future career choices, and help improve the skills and attitudes essential to getting along in the adult world.

- Students should make an appointment with their counselor to find out if they passed the *California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE)* (This exam can be taken several times, so it is in the student's best interest to begin taking it as early as sophomore year).
- Juniors and seniors can enroll in *Regional Occupational Program (ROP)* classes when available, some of which meet after regular school hours. You can earn credit towards graduation through the ROP classes. For additional information about the ROP program, speak with the high school counselor
- If the student is working at least 10 hours a week, and is enrolled in the ROP class, they may be able to earn additional credits towards graduation.
- If the student wants to work and is having trouble finding a job on his or her own, ask to speak with staff from the *Workability Program* (a federally funded program offered through some local school districts), if available. This program provides pre-employment training, job placement services, and ongoing counseling & support for students with an active IEP.
- Join a club or organization -- there are many available in school and through the city's Parks and Recreation Department programs -- or volunteer for community service. Any of these options will help the student network with people who may be able to help them reach their goals.

Santa Cruz County Office of Education Regional Occupational Programs (ROP)

The **Santa Cruz County Regional Occupational Program (ROP)** provides students with the opportunity to acquire career training and technical skills that prepare them for success in a changing workplace and continuing education. ROP, a Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) accredited program of the Santa Cruz County Office of Education offered in cooperation with county high school districts and the local business community provides job training for youth 16 years of age and older. They also offer two successful adult programs in Medical and Dental Assisting. ROP works closely with local employers and many courses offer work-based learning (internship) opportunities. While there is no formal placement process, follow-up studies of our students indicate program completers have a high rate of job placement.

Learning style preference

Based on different learning styles, the tables below show examples of accommodations that may be well-suited for some individuals.

"What are you going to do with your life?" That is a question many high school students hear often, especially as they approach graduation. Whether planning to attend college, a trade school, or jump into the workforce right away, the internet can help the student investigate jobs and career fields of interest. Based on the student's learning style and strengths, look for careers where these strengths are utilized. For example:

VISUAL

STRENGTH	STRATEGY
Remembers from seeing	Uses graphic organizers
Likes to doodle	Takes notes
Likes to read	Uses notebook, note cards
Likes to observe	Color codes information
Notices details	Uses charts, graphs, maps
Memorizes with graphics, draws or uses pictures	Uses visual charts, graphic organizers
Has difficulty remembering verbal directions	Uses written instructions

AUDITORY

SELSTRENGTH	STRATEGY
Remembers from hearing; reads out loud	Books on tape, audio-taped lectures
Listens rather than reads	Repeats things orally
Enjoys music	Studies with soft music
Easily distracted	Studies in quiet room
Enjoys talking	Talks to self
Has difficulty with written directions	Uses oral directions
Outgoing by nature	Uses discussion/ role play
Remembers faces	Uses video games

KINESTHETIC

STRENGTH	STRATEGY
Rather 'do' than read	Learning activity over lecture
Hard time sitting still	Activities with movement
Enjoys handling objects	Demonstration of tasks
Uses hands while talking	Take notes when listening
Enjoys projects	Project in lieu of assignment
Moves while studying	Frequent study breaks
Poor speller	Job with minimal writing needed
Enjoys sports	Pace while studying
Outgoing by nature	Match feelings with concept

Internet resources to help students with career planning and exploring post high school options

The internet is a useful tool that can help you find answers to tough career questions. The following websites may assist you in making career decisions:

Occupational Outlook Handbook

Produced by the U.S. Department of Labor, this website has information on virtually every type of occupation available in the United States. Visitors can search by keyword or scan the immense index to find data on any occupation, from agriculture to zookeeper. The online handbook describes working conditions, necessary training and degrees, and typical earnings offered. www.bls.gov/oco

My Future

This website provides find many informative articles on maintaining personal finances, finding financial aid for college, or finding a career after high school. Students can learn how to create a resume and prepare for a job interview. This site also includes details about the military as a career. Students can take the *Work Interest Quiz* in the Discover Your Work section to learn more about their aptitudes and interests, and view a list of jobs that involve activities they might enjoy. www.myfuture.com

WOW Careers

WOW Careers aims to educate kids about a wide range of career options. Careers are listed by category, and each job is described by someone who works at that occupation. www.wowcareers.com

Career Magazine

At this website you can select a career channel to research industry information, search jobs and build your portfolio. www.careermag.com

Career Builder

Career Builder is the largest on-line job site in the world: linking prospective employees with employers looking for talent. It works with over 300,000 employers worldwide including 92% of the Fortune 1000. www.careerbuilder.com

Job Star

This group of websites is packed with information about planning a career. What kind of training or education is required? What can you earn? What kind of environment will you work in? What's hot? What's not?

Some sites include personal stories from individuals working in the field: how did they moved (or stumbled) into their current work situation? What advice would they give newcomers? www.jobstar.org/tools/career/spec-car.php

Employment Development Home Page

This is a direct link to job placement and referrals, unemployment insurance, disability insurance, employment and training, labor market information, payroll taxes, and other general employment information. www.edd.ca.gov

COLLEGES

The following section discusses considerations for students with special needs and their parents when the student is planning on attending college. Some high schools have a college handbook which could contain sections like these as well:

- Evaluating one’s readiness for college
- California educational opportunities after high school
- Financial aid, scholarships
- Preparation for college
- Protecting one’s rights as a college student
- Accommodations questionnaire
- “So you are thinking about Community College...”
- Be your own advocate

Here is a link to a website from the University of Massachusetts – Think College! It has many additional resources. www.thinkcollege.net/

Evaluating your readiness for college

College involves many new responsibilities, so students should begin to develop skills for success. How prepared are you? A student beginning the transition process should complete this checklist:

READINESS CHARACTERISTIC	YES	NO
1. I am self-motivated to study.		
2. I do not hesitate to ask questions in class.		
3. I complete assignments on time.		
4. My class notes are organized and complete.		
5. I pay attention even if a class is not interesting.		
6. I study for my classes, whether I like them or not.		
7. I practice time management.		

8. I recognize that success is up to me.		
9. I have good computer word processing skills.		
10. I accept that my disability poses challenges, but I seek opportunities to overcome them.		
11. I need someone to motivate me to study.		
12. I hesitate to ask questions in class.		
13. I put off assignments and do not complete them on time.		
14. My class notes do not make sense when I review them.		
15. I frequently tune-out when a class is not interesting.		
16. I avoid studying subjects do not like.		
17. I frequently don't plan my time and end up not finishing tasks.		
18. I believe success is a matter of luck.		
19. My computer/word processing skills are weak.		
20. I focus on my disability limitations and avoid challenges.		

Check your responses.

- Responses 1-10 reflect important steps you have already taken toward success.
- Responses 11-20 indicate areas you need to improve.

Highlight those that need improvement and start making changes today toward a successful college career.

Here are some helpful hints for students once they begin attending college:

- Discuss and arrange disability services and accommodations with the College's disability support office, the counselor, and individual instructors at the beginning of each semester.
- Schedule the school day so that there is at least an hour between classes to allow extra time for test-taking, if that is one of the accommodations needed.

Review a copy of the accommodations and modifications your high school made available before deciding what accommodations or modifications to request.

Remember to advocate in advance for what's needed, so that accommodations/modifications can be arranged before problems arise.

Take a moment to think about explaining your disability and related needs to a professor college counselor. What would you say? Fill in the blanks below:

- Because of my disability, I have difficulty: (e.g., taking notes, finishing tests in the usual amount of time, seeing the board, etc.)

- To alleviate these problems, I would like: (List the accommodations requested. e.g., note taker, enlarged print tests, verbal/written directions, hands-on training)

This section should be read with your high school's College Handbook because it does not duplicate information. For example, the school's college handbook likely contains the following college-related topics:

- Getting started and how to track the college admission process
 - Overview of types of colleges
 - How to start the process, along with myths about college admissions
 - Determining where to apply
 - How to apply to college
 - Preparing a resume
 - Financial aid considerations
 - Information for students with learning differences and/or ADHD
 - Various checklists, lists of suggested colleges and online resources
- Most post high school educational opportunities are listed below.

California educational options after high school

PROGRAMS	DESCRIPTION
Bachelor's Degree University of California, California State Universities, and private colleges and universities	Consists of general education courses and courses for the major, working toward a four-year Bachelor's Degree. Student may enter from high school or transfer from Community College.
Associate Degree (Community Colleges)	The Associate Degree consists of two components: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. courses of general education 2. courses toward the major
College Certificate (Community Colleges)	College certificate programs are designed to provide employment skills and open vocational opportunities. A college certificate is available upon completion of required courses.
Personal Enrichment (Community Colleges) (Continuing Education)	Community Colleges and continuing education programs offer courses that match your personal interests; e.g. career exploration; study skills, computer skills, art, music.
Vocational & Skills Training	Classes are designed to prepare students for particular trades and other occupations
Continuing Education/ Adult Education	Classes are designed to improve basic skills or for personal growth. Examples include Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language (ESL), and GED/HS diploma.
Regional Occupational Program (ROP)	ROP courses are vocational and designed to prepare for employment

Students with Disabilities and the College Entrance Exams

Students who plan to attend a four-year college directly from high school must take a college entrance exam, such as the SAT or ACT. These exams are given by the College Board. It is recommended that students take these tests starting at the end

of eleventh grade or first semester of their senior year. (There are some colleges and universities that do not require students to provide SAT/ACT scores. Review a general college guidebook for this information.)

- Students often choose to take the PSAT as a practice test, prior to taking the SAT. This test is offered in October and it is recommended that students take it in their sophomore or junior year.
- If students have test accommodations (e.g., extended time) stated on their IEP, the **students must complete an application that is sent to the College Board in order to be approved for accommodations on College Board exams.** Applications are available at the high school. After the student and family complete the first pages, a school representative (e.g., school psychologist) will complete the last two pages documenting the needed accommodations and will submit the application. Students may begin completing the application *the year prior* to taking the exam.
- The application for students with disabilities must be received by the College Board prior to the standard registration deadline for a specific testing date. The College Board will review the application/information and determine if accommodations are approved.
- Additional information is available at the following website: www.collegeboard.com/ssd

Financial Aid/Scholarships

Financial Aid

If the student will be attending college or a vocational training program after high school and will need financial assistance, it is recommended that they obtain a Federal Application for Financial Student Aid (FAFSA) and GPA Verification form from the high school guidance office or College/Career Center. Both are available in December and should be submitted by the March deadline of their senior year. In December, the College/Career Center may conduct a program to assist families with completing the FAFSA. www.fafsa.gov

California Scholarship Federation (C.S.F.)

Juniors and seniors may obtain an application for the C.S.F. from their high school's guidance office. A copy of the school transcript must accompany the application. Applications for students planning to enter college in the spring semester are due by the end of October. www.csf-cjsf.org

Preparation for college

Checklist for College Disability Services

The disability support center is the campus office responsible for determining and providing appropriate academic accommodations for students with disabilities. In order for the disability support center to determine a student's eligibility for services and to provide services, the following steps are recommended.

Apply to the College

Fill out a college application for admission and return it to the school's admissions office.

Apply For Financial Aid if Needed

Obtain a financial aid packet from the high school counselor's office or contact the financial aid office early to apply for financial aid (see FAFSA and CSF above). If planning to attend a community college, investigate the Board of Governors Fee Waiver (BOGFW).

Apply for Disability Office Services

The following are needed to apply for disability Offices services/accommodations:

1. Current IEP or 504 Plan
2. Current psycho-educational report and/or medical verification of disability
3. Most recent assessments performed either by your high school or a licensed independent consultant.

Be sure to obtain the above documents prior to leaving high school.

Take the College Math and English Assessment Tests as Appropriate

Sign up to take the college placement tests. Prior to testing, contact the disability support office for disability-related accommodations on the college assessment tests.

You can practice taking the college entrance exam or placement tests at home.

Sign up For an Orientation via the College and/or Disability Support Office

Tour the campus. If possible, arrange to visit a few college classes.

Make an Appointment with a Counselor/Learning Specialist

Make an appointment to meet with the disability support office counselor/learning specialist to complete intake procedures, discuss accommodations, and plan classes.

Learn About College Options

Ask about academic and transfer courses and programs, skill-building courses, and professional-technical education (PTE) programs or courses.

Register for Classes

Instructions and schedule of classes are usually available on the school's website. Be prepared to pay fees when registering. When the Department of Rehabilitation pays the tuition, documentation from the Department of Rehabilitation is required at registration.

Buy Textbooks

Books are expensive. Visit the campus bookstore for specific prices. If the Department of Rehabilitation pays for books, contact the California Department of Rehabilitation (DR) counselor for the correct form and procedure. Often textbooks can be purchased used or rented from the school's bookstore.

Protecting your rights as a college student

Legal Rights for Adults with Disabilities

Protection of rights for individuals with disabilities began with the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Since then, two important laws, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, have been enacted. What do these laws provide to you as a college student?

- Both laws prohibit discrimination solely on the basis of a disability.
- Both laws require a college to provide *reasonable accommodations* so that a student with a disability has *equal opportunity* to take part in a college's programs, activities and courses.

Student Responsibilities

Students with a disability are required to:

- Identify your disability and present verification from a qualified professional to either the disability support office or professor.

- Request the accommodations wanted from the professor and give reasonable time to arrange them.
- Comply with the student code of conduct adopted by the college and all other applicable statutes and regulations related to student conduct.
- Monitor grades in classes and ask for help at the first sign of problems

Institutional Responsibilities

The college or university:

- Must provide reasonable accommodations based on the limitations the disability causes. The institution may not discriminate on the basis of disability.
- Is not required to provide the specific accommodations requested. The institution does have to negotiate reasonable accommodations. The accommodation may not cause an undue financial burden to the institution.
- Is not required to alter admissions or graduation requirements, or change the basic fundamental elements of an individual course. This policy is specifically defined in both Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

ACCOMMODATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire looks at which services or accommodations might be needed because of a learning disability when entering college or a trade/technical school.

When extra help is needed in class, the following accommodations may be helpful. Check the boxes that shows how likely you are to use each of the following accommodations:

	Not likely	Somewhat likely	Very likely
Taped lectures			
Extra time on assignments			
Class notes provided			
Taped textbooks			
Using a word processor			
Alternative tests & assignments			
Asking questions during lectures			
Joining a study group			

When preparing for a test or exam, the following accommodations may help:

	Not likely	Somewhat likely	Very likely
Prior access to videos without closed captions			
Asking for extra time			
Asking to take exam in another room			
Asking to have the test read to you			
Asking for writing assistance			
Asking to read answers into a tape recorder			

Keep this information to share with staff at the college or trade/technical school.

SO YOU'RE THINKING ABOUT COMMUNITY COLLEGE

To attend community college, one must

- have a high school diploma,
- have a certificate of completion, or
- be at least 18 years of age and able to benefit from the instruction offered.

Most community colleges offer adult basic educational courses to complete high school diploma requirements if needed.

In most cases, students can enroll online from the community college website, or in person through Enrollment Services. Financial assistance may be available for students who need help in meeting their educational costs. Usually, students can also apply for grants and scholarships online through the community college website.

CABRILLO COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Each community college provides assistance for students with disabilities, often through a department called Disabled Students Programs & Services. At Cabrillo College, the Accessibility Support Center (ASC) is where students can receive services such as classroom accommodations, tutoring, and assistive technology. The same accommodations provided while in high school may not be available in the

community college, so it is important to contact the ASC to speak with a counselor. Provide the following documents when meeting with a counselor in the ASC:

1. The most current psychological and academic testing, including the assessment reports completed during your most recent triennial review IEP and any assessments performed by independent licensed consultants
2. The most current Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan
3. Any other documents which help to describe the disability.

Cabrillo College offers academic programs whose primary objective is an Associate Degree and preparation for transfer to a four-year college. These include Anthropology, Botany, Chinese History, and Women's Studies, to name a few.

Career Technical Education (CTE) encompasses a range of course and programs. These courses and programs will prepare you for immediate employment or job advancement.

- With CTE, you can be working in a new career within as little as six months, depending on your program of study.
- As a CTE graduate, you can typically earn an average of 58% more than in your previous job, giving you a lifelong financial advantage.
- CTE programs allow flexible scheduling, so you can balance your home-school-work responsibilities. And financial aid can help you pay for your education.

Through our CTE programs, you can work toward:

- **Skills Certificates**, which are awarded after completing one or more courses, as specified in the course catalog that help you to develop a set of career relevant skills.
- **Certificates of Proficiency**, which allow you to pursue a concentrated course of study in a particular career area. A 2.0 grade point average is required.
- **Associate in Science degrees**, based on a 2.0 grade point average for coursework of at least 60 units.
- **Associate of Arts degrees**, based on a 2.0 grade point average for coursework of 58-60 units depending upon your major.
- <http://www.cabrillo.edu/services/careered/>

Community College Application Information

If the student plans to attend a community college, visit those campuses of interest to you. Community colleges require incoming students to take the English and math placement exams prior to enrolling. Make an appointment with the assessment office and bring the exit IEP to the appointment. Cabrillo's ASC offers educational plan workshops for high school students following application, orientation, and assessment.

Cabrillo Community College website: <http://www.cabrillo.edu/home/about.html>
Cabrillo's Accessibility Support Center: <http://www.cabrillo.edu/services/dsps/>

A complete list of community college websites can be found at
www.californiacolleges.edu

SO YOU'RE THINKING ABOUT A FOUR YEAR COLLEGE – WHAT ARE YOUR LOCAL OPTIONS?

The **University of California – Santa Cruz** campus (USCS) has a Disability Resource Center. It exists to assist the UCSC campus with equal educational access for students with disabilities. Our goal is to:

- support **retention and graduation** of students with disabilities
- **collaborate** with students, faculty, staff and community resources to provide **effective academic services**.
- promote a **non-discriminatory campus** environment and encourage **student development and independence**.

We serve about 900 students a year with various **permanent disabilities**, including: learning disabilities, Attention Deficit Disorder, visual, mobility and hearing impairments, psychological disabilities, and chronic systemic disorders (e.g. lupus, multiple sclerosis, diabetes, etc.).

We also serve students with **temporary medical conditions** such as those with broken bones or repetitive stress injuries. Accommodations and support are tailored to each student's disability-related needs. We can provide a variety of services to assist a student in his/her educational experience.

Some commonly used accommodations are:

- Advising and support
- Test accommodations
- Note-taking assistance
- Alternate media (e.g. audio books)
- Housing accommodation recommendations
- Transportation accommodation authorizations
- Sign Language Interpreting and Real-time Captioning
- Part-time status enrollment
- Consideration for special tutoring needs
- Liaison between students and faculty/staff
- LD & ADHD Evaluation referrals

Disability Resource Center

UC Santa Cruz

<http://drc.ucsc.edu/about/index.html>

1156 High Street

University of California

Monday-Friday

Santa Cruz, CA 95064-1077

Office Hours: 9 AM to 5 PM

Email: drc@ucsc.edu

Phone Hours: 9 AM to 5 PM

Phone: (831) 459-2089

Fax: (831) 459-5064

The **California State University - Monterey Bay** campus (CSUMB) has a Student Disability Resources (SDR) which provide personal support services for students with disabilities so that they can be successful at CSUMB. Some students with disabilities may require special accommodations must submit a special petition letter to Student Housing & Residential Life as well as a copy of the petition to Student Disability Resources (SDR).

SDR OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Friday, 8:00am – 5:00pm or later by appointment
(Except Holidays and campus closures)

DROP-IN SDR ADVISING HOURS

Tuesdays: 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Wednesdays: 8:30 AM - 10:30 AM

Fridays: 12:30 PM - 2:30 PM

RESIDENTIAL HOUSING APPLICATION PROCESS

Students with disabilities that may require special accommodations must indicate accommodation needs on the housing application. Students are also encouraged to contact a member of the housing staff to discuss housing options and modifications. To aid the process of accommodating special requests, application information should include the following:

- A clear description of the desired housing adaptation or accommodation
- An explanation of how the request relates to the impact of the disability
- An indication of the level of need for the requested adaptation or accommodation
- Possible alternatives if the requested adaptation or accommodation is not possible

Student Housing & Residential Life will consult with Student Disability Resources staff to verify any requested adaptations or accommodations.

BE YOUR OWN ADVOCATE!

The following section is directed at the student and suggests what may be needed to ensure receipt of appropriate services and accommodations.

In high school you may have had teachers or counselors who advocated for your educational needs. In college, you must be your own advocate. As a student with a learning disability you have the right to accommodations in college which will help you to access your education. Section 504 assumes that the student is best qualified to identify and assess their own needs and to request accommodations. Self-identification and accommodations are ***options*** in post-secondary education settings, not ***requirements***. Students who chose not to identify themselves as having a disability are not eligible for support services. Each student with a disability is expected to work with staff from the college's disability support office to determine what accommodations are appropriate to compensate for their disability.

Colleges must provide these accommodations - **BUT ONLY IF YOU ASK**

It's important to:

- Understand your abilities and your needs.
- Contact a learning disabilities or disabled students' specialist at the college and provide the documentation required for eligibility for services. Do this as soon as you begin school. Do not wait until you discover you may be failing!
- Seek the help of your specialist to learn what services are available and make the arrangements necessary to receive the services you need. You may be able to receive priority enrollment each fall and spring, test proctoring, tutoring, books on tape, help with advanced technology or other accommodations, depending on your specific needs.
- Plan on spending two to three hours of studying for every hour in class.
- Determine the class load you can handle. ***In most colleges, your specialist can provide you with a letter for insurance purposes or financial aid which identifies you as a "full-time student with less than the usual 12 units."***
- Take advantage of strategy/organizational/counseling classes that can help you to study well and stay organized. These types of courses may have different names at each school.
- See a counselor for academic planning. There are specialized counselors available in your college's disabled students' center, or you may consult regular academic counselors.

Success in post-secondary settings can be enhanced when students use the following:

- Basic time management and organizational skills
- Note-taking skills
- Test taking skills

When selecting a college, students should keep in mind that colleges vary greatly in services for students with disabilities. Some provide basic 504/ADA counseling while others provide formal assessment and tutoring services. It is the student's responsibility to provide documentation of their disability to the college. The college in turn establishes their guidelines for verification of the need for specific accommodations. The responsibility for obtaining an assessment to establish eligibility for services rests with the student, NOT with the college.

VOCATIONAL & SKILLS TRAINING

Vocational Training Centers

The following are examples of vocational training centers available in the community. Expanded information on some of these options follows.

1. Trade specific – see local apprenticeship training programs below
2. Community college – refer to preceding chapter
3. Private trade schools – included in links below
4. Skills Centers – included below
5. Continuing Adult Education – included below

Vocational Training Programs

One alternative to a two or four year college is vocational education. This section summarizes and provides links and phone numbers to a variety of sources for vocational training, both at schools (including some community colleges) and at union-sponsored apprenticeship programs. Finally there is a brief discussion of the services offered and a link to the California Department of Rehabilitation below.

SKILLS CENTERS

Shoreline Workforce Development Services is the education, training and employment division of Goodwill Industries of Santa Cruz, Monterey and San Luis Obispo Counties. They provide workforce development services designed to assist people with barriers to employment as they maximize the use of their abilities in the competitive labor market. They also assist people who may be vocationally disadvantaged due to changes in the labor market, job loss, etc. Their services

include evaluation, situational assessment, vocational exploration, classroom and on-the-job training programs, placement assistance and supported employment. The goals are to work with participants' abilities rather than their barriers to employment. They provide a positive learning environment to assist people to acquire skills for competitive employment. They appreciate the opportunity to work with you in obtaining your vocational plan goals.

Shoreline is approved by the Institution, and its services are accredited by CARF, an accreditation commission. At Shoreline, the goal of our education and job training services is to assist people in securing career track employment in the competitive labor market. This intent makes us uniquely different from most community college vocational preparation programs in two significant ways.

First, we measure our success not by how many people have completed our training programs, but by how many people go to work upon graduation. Second, people enrolled in our job training programs learn what they need to get and retain a job. We work with employers to identify the skills, behaviors and traits critical for success. We work with students to achieve a high level of performance, including near perfect attendance and a strong work ethic, practices that will place them firmly on a successful career track. We provide an intensified learning environment with a great deal of applicable knowledge and support.

<http://www.shorelineworks.org/index.html>

Santa Cruz Neighborhood Career Center

Located at the Goodwill Main office, 350 Encinal St. operates Monday-Friday 9am-1:00pm. Free and open to the public. Computers, internet, fax, phones, job board, vocational counselors, resume help and more. This career center is a WIA Title I-financially assisted program. Employers are also encouraged to contact the center for candidates or to share openings: 831-332-3638.

JOB CORPS

Job Corps is a no-cost education and vocational training program administered by the U.S. Department of Labor that helps young adults ages 16 through 24 improve the quality of their lives through vocational and academic training. Funded by Congress, Job Corps has been training young adults for meaningful careers since 1964. Job Corps is committed to offering all students a safe, drug-free environment where they can take advantage of the resources provided. Job Corps' mission is to attract eligible young adults, teach them the skills they need to become employable and independent, and place them in meaningful jobs or further education.

Program Design

Through a nationwide network of campuses, Job Corps offers a comprehensive

array of career development services to at-risk young women and men, to prepare them for successful careers. Job Corps employs a holistic career development training approach, which integrates the teaching of academic, vocational, employability skills and social competencies through a combination of classroom and practical learning experiences to prepare youth for stable, long term, high paying jobs.

The Job Corps design is based on the principles of quality services and individualized instruction to meet the needs of each student. Training approaches and methods of implementation vary to allow tailoring of service components and delivery methods, effectively use resources and meet individual student and employer needs.

San Jose Job Corps Center

3485 East Hills Drive
San Jose, CA 95127-2970
Tel: (408) 254-5627
Fax: (408) 254-5663
<http://sanjose.jobcorps.gov>

If you are interested in the Job Corps program and would like more information on how to start your application process, please contact Senior Admissions Counselor, Leslie Duldulao at (408) 937-3257 or duldulao.leslie@jobcorps.org

Job Corps Career Areas

In addition to academic training, Job Corps provides career technical training in several vocational trades. Not every center offers each of these career technical areas.

Accounting Clerk	Electronics Technician
Auto Body Repair *	Emergency Medical Technician
Auto Brake Technician *	Facilities Maintenance *
Auto Mechanic *	Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning *
Auto Repair Technician *	Home Health Aide
Auto Suspension Technician *	Medical Office Assistant
Auto Tune-Up *	Mobile Electronics
Child Care/Special Education	Office Assistant
Clinical Medical Assistant	Networking/Programming
Computer Repair	Nurse Assistant
Dental Assistant	TV/VCR Repair
Desktop Publishing	Vocational Nurse
Drafting	Welding *
Electrical Power Line Mechanic	X-Ray Technician
Electrician *	

* These career areas offer training in the latest green technology and industry-based practices to prepare graduates for careers in the green economy.

It takes about a year to gain the knowledge and skills needed to start a career and a new life. The most successful students stay in the program between one and two years.

Students can also call (800) 733-JOBS (5627) to learn what the Job Corps center nearest them offers. Students may be asked to leave their name/number and a counselor will return the call.

*All Job Corps information has been obtained directly from the Job Corps website:
recruiting.jobcorps.gov
mifuturo.jobcorps.gov (espanol)

LOCAL APPRENTICESHIP PREPARATION PROGRAMS

California Apprenticeship Coordinators Association
www.calapprenticeship.org/

The California Apprenticeship Association website offers a wide variety of union apprenticeship programs, offering career opportunities available in California. Over 45 individual occupations are listed. To explore opportunities for a career as a tradesperson, use the State map on the site to select the part of California of interest. Review the numerous apprenticeship programs and learn about various careers. Use the quick view links and to learn more about the background of apprenticeship application process and the requirements needed to participate in each of the apprenticeship programs.

Some individual apprenticeship programs are listed below. Contact each to determine what accommodations, if any, they make for apprentices with disabilities:

Air Conditioning/ Refrigeration
Brick Masons
Carpenters
Painters

CONTINUING ADULT EDUCATION

www.californiaadultschools.org

Sponsored by the California Department of Education, Santa Cruz City High School District is part of a statewide program designed to develop skilled workers, strong

families and successful communities by offering opportunities to learn at every stage of life.

- **Diploma:** Students who have received an incomplete as a senior in high school classes have one year to retake the class/classes in order to receive a diploma from the high school. A copy of the transcript and grades of completed classes is sent from the adult education center to the student and their high school. The high school then sends a diploma to the student. It is wise to advise the high school (once the transcript is complete) that the student has finished class/classes and awaits their diploma.
- **GED:** Students not eligible to receive a diploma from their high school can study to take the GED (General Education Development) test, and receive a certificate of high school equivalency.

All Continuing Adult Education opportunities are available without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex or disability.

Check the respective school websites for information regarding fees, if any.

Area Adult Schools:

Santa Cruz City Adult School

319 La Fonda Avenue

Santa Cruz, CA 95062

831-429-3966

Monday – Thursday 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. – 7 p.m.

<http://www.adulted.santacruz.k12.ca.us/>

Santa Cruz Adult School offers lifelong learning services for adult students. Our most popular classes are GED/High School Diploma, English as a Second Language (ESL), U.S. Citizenship, and Community Education.

Watsonville Aptos Adult Education 294 Green Valley Road

Watsonville, CA 95076

831-786-2160

<https://waae-pajaro-ca.schoolloop.com/>

The mission of WAAE is to advance our community's academic achievement, language development, vocational skills and employability by preparing adult learners to become productive, responsible individuals.

Additional Vocational Training Resources

- California Career Resource Network (CalCRN)
1430 N Street, Suite 4202,
Sacramento, CA 95814-5901
916-323-6544
<http://www.californiacareers.info/>
- Employment and Training Administration, US Dept. of Labor
www.doleta.gov/
- Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills
- <http://wdr.doleta.gov/SCANS/whatwork/>
- National Center on Research in Career and Technical Education
<http://www.nrccte.org/>
- Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities
<http://www.acces.nysed.gov/vr/>

REGIONAL CENTER SYSTEM

The California State Department of Developmental Services funds by contract, 21 private, nonprofit corporations around the state who try to ensure that persons with development disabilities achieve the greatest possible enrichment and fulfillment in their lives.

Services are available to individuals and their families and include intake, assessment and diagnosis, case management, community information, counseling, vocational programs referrals, family support groups, training workshops, respite and much more. Regional Centers also advocate for legal protections for all persons with disabilities.

To become a Regional Center Client contact a local regional center in your area
San Andreas Regional Center
1110 Main Street, Suite 8
Watsonville, CA 95076
Phone: 831-728-1781
FAX: 831-728-5514
www.sarc.org

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION

The California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) is a California state vocational agency. DOR works in partnership with consumers and other stakeholders to provide

services and advocacy resulting in employment, independent living and equality for individuals with disabilities.

The vocational agency is available to help individuals with disabilities fulfill their employment goals and achieve independence. Department of Rehabilitation programs are tailored to meet the needs and goals of each individual.

Local office contact information:

Santa Cruz County 1350 41st Avenue, Suite 101

Capitola, CA 95010

831-465-7100

Fax: 831-465-7126

TDD: 831-465-7125

www.rehab.cahwnet.gov

Who should apply: An individual with a disability (working age) who would like to be employed, but is having trouble getting or keeping a job because of their disability.

Assessment Process: A student should request services from their post-secondary school (special services department), visit their nearest DOR office or download an application from their website (www.dor.ca.gov). Out of school youth should contact the local DOR office or apply on-line. Individuals applying for services will be asked to provide information that will help the agency begin an assessment process to determine eligibility and priority for services. A counselor will meet with the applicant to learn more about their eligibility and their vocational needs through the assessment process.

Information and Services: Once an individual has applied for services, completed the assessment process and been found eligible, the next step for the DOR client is developing an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). The IPE is a written plan to find and maintain employment. A counselor will give the client information throughout the IPE process so that meaningful choices about the client's plan can be made. The counselor and client will discuss the individual's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities and interests to help develop a plan.

POST SECONDARY SELF ACVOCACY RESOURCE

Per their Mission Statement, "The Westside Family Resource and Empowerment Center (WFREC) is dedicated to building a strong community that provides information, resources and support to parents, families, professionals and members of the community leading them to create successful partnerships that enhance the lives of infants, children, youth and adults with special needs." WFREC staff are

experienced parents and family members of individuals with special needs.
www.wfrec.org

CENTRAL COAST CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING **(CCCIL)**

318 Cayuga Street, Suite 208 Salinas, CA 93901 831-747-2968 Or from Santa Cruz
831-462-8720
FAX: 831-757-5549 www.cccil.org.

CCCIL is a non-residential center dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for people with all kinds of disabilities. The goal of the peer-led programs and services is the elimination of economic, social, attitudinal and environmental barriers.

CCCIL's mission: "The Central Coast Center for Independent Living (CCCIL) promotes the independence of people with disabilities by supporting their equal and full participation in community life. CCCIL provides advocacy, education and support to all people with disabilities, their families, and the community."

Centers for independent living (CILs) are private, non-profit corporations that provide services to maximize the independence of individuals with disabilities, and the accessibility of the communities in which they live. Centers are funded in part by the Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Independent Living Branch, to provide, among other things, several core services, including: individuals and systems change advocacy, independent living skills, information and referrals, and peer counseling.

In California, Centers also provide housing assistance, personal assistant and assistive technology services.

CILs are *not* residential centers. CILs cannot own, operate or manage housing for people with disabilities. CILs do assist people in finding housing and with other issues related to housing.

Here is a sample list of services offered by CCCIL:

- Assistive Technology Services
- Benefits Counseling and Advocacy
- Housing Services
- Independent Living skills
- Peer Counseling
- Personal Assistance Services

Review the Center's website for a complete listing.

ARMED SERVICES

Selective Service

Male US citizens are required to register with the Selective Service System within 30 days of their 18th birthday. Although there is currently no military draft, males are still required to register. For details, visit the Selective Service website www.sss.gov.

Military Service

There are 5 branches of the US military:

- Air Force
- Army
- Coast Guard
- Marine Corps
- Navy

Be aware that anyone who enlists may be called to serve in a combat zone.

These organizations offer over 4,000 different job opportunities, many of which are directly transferrable to the civilian economy. There is a battery of tests to take based on skills and abilities, that helps assess an individual's choices in the military. To register, you must be at least 17 years old and a US citizen or green card holder, a fluent English speaker and a high school graduate. New recruits receive 6-13 weeks of basic training and the potential for a job posting anywhere in the world. Each of the websites below has detailed recruiting information.

For specific recruiting standards:

1. Go to www.usmilitary.about.com
2. Select the enlistment tab near the top of the page
3. Go to the qualifying section of the webpage
4. Select medical standards

There you will find detailed medical standards for potential recruits.

Examples of conditions which *may* disqualify a recruit include:

- Having a history of psychotic disorder or severe mental illness
- History of anti-social behavior
- ADD/ADHD is disqualifying unless applicant can demonstrate passing academic performance and no use of medications during the previous 12 months.

Refer to the website above for more detailed information. Below are addresses and phone numbers of local offices for each service.

Department of the Army

www.af.mil

or

www.army.mil

Department of the Navy

www.navy.mil

Department of the Marine Corps

www.marines.mil

United States Coast Guard

www.uscg.mil

California National Guard

800-TO-GO-ANG (800.864.6864)

www.calguard.ca.gov

REGISTERING TO VOTE

Santa Cruz County residents can register to vote with the Santa Cruz County Registrar/Recorder up until 15 days before any election. Anyone can vote either in person or by absentee ballot. In order to register one must be:

1. A US citizen
2. 18 years or older by the next election
3. Not currently in prison or on parole for a felony conviction

The Registrar/Recorder provides forms in the following multiple.

Anyone can register in person by visiting one of the Registrar/Recorder's offices or by mailing a completed form to the Registrar/Recorder's office.

Forms are available on-line or by visiting many governmental offices, such as post offices and libraries.

For more information, go to; click the ***Voting and Elections*** button and the ***Voter Registration Information*** button on the left side of the page, or call

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

AGE OF MAJORITY

Changes in Legal Status

The *age of majority* is a term used to describe the time in life after which a person is legally no longer considered a child and acquires the legal status of an adult. As a matter of law, this occurs at age 18 in California.

Families should be aware of changes in legal status for purposes of banking, contracts, credit, employment, military service, jury duty and voting. In the eyes of the law, penalties regarding hate crimes, sex crimes, alcohol or drug use among other crimes are much different. The child's consent may be required before the release to parents of records or other information about the child. The teenager at 18 is deemed an adult in the eyes of the law, and is able to enter into binding contracts, credit agreements, property purchases, law suits, marriage, medical care and military service without parental consent.

There are also additional responsibilities: Males must register for military service within 6 months of turning 18 – see Selective Service, above. Male students applying for financial aid for college must have previously registered with Selective Service. At 18, teens generally become legally responsible for their own support, debt, taxes, some insurance, lawsuits, or criminal charges against them, and can end up in jail for something that, at a younger age, might have resulted in no more than a ride home in a police car. Use or possession of alcohol or drugs may be subject to even stricter criminal penalties.

The California State Bar's consumer education series pamphlet, *When You Become 18*, addresses a number of issues important to young adults, including information about laws related to:

1. alcohol
2. banking
3. contracts
4. credit
5. employment
6. hate crimes
7. jury duty
8. military service
9. voting

The pamphlet may be viewed online at <http://www.calbar.ca.gov/Public/Pamphlets/WhenYouTurn18.aspx> .

To order hard copies of *When You Become 18*, send an e-mail to 18@calbar.ca.gov. Provide your name, complete mailing address (orders over 20 copies cannot be sent to P.O. boxes), the number of copies desired and a daytime phone number.

Written requests should provide the information above in writing to:

The State Bar of California
Attn: When You Become 18
180 Howard St.
San Francisco, CA 94105-1639

GUARDIANSHIP, CONSERVATORSHIP AND SPECIAL NEEDS TRUSTS

This section *is not intended to provide legal advice*. It will give parents an overview of the subject of Guardianship, Conservatorships and Special Needs Trusts.

Guardianship

A guardianship applies **only** to a minor (someone under the age of 18 years old). Its principal purpose is to provide protection to a child who has no parent. If a child with disabilities has a parent, a guardian is not required. (In the California a Conservatorship is not required because a minor a child parents are his/her natural guardians. This can be different in other states.)

Conservatorship

As a conservator you are provided the authority to speak on behalf of the conservatee. If you have a child that is in their seventeenth year and you have determined that they will need assistance in activities of daily living like eating and dressing, banking, socializing with appropriate individuals, voting, marrying or whether to have children, then you should start the conservatorship process about six (6) months before their eighteenth (18th) birthday. That way, you can speak in behalf of your soon-to-be adult child. If you wait too long and your child reaches the age of majority, then they will become emancipated from parental control. If you wait until after your child turns 18, you will either need your now-adult child's permission to be his/her conservator or a court will have to declare your adult child incompetent and then appoint you as the conservator.

There are two types of conservatorships. A "Conservator of the Person" is responsible for ensuring that the Conservatee is properly feed, clothed and sheltered. A "Conservator of the Estate" is responsible for ensuring that the conservatee's money

and other property is well cared for and managed in the best interest of the conservatee. Either of these types of Conservatorship can be limited or general

“General Conservatorship” is established when a developmentally disabled adult lacks the capacity to perform all the tasks necessary to provide for their own personal needs like physical health, food, clothing, shelter or to manage their financial resources.

“Limited Conservatorship” is appropriate where the court finds that the proposed conservatee lacks the capacity to perform some, but not all, of the above tasks. It is designed to encourage and promote the development of self –reliance and independence.

A court will not grant a petition for appointment of a conservator of the person unless a showing is properly made that an individual is unable to provide for their physical health, food, clothing and shelter. A conservator of the estate would be appointed for someone who is unable to manage their own financial resources, is vulnerable to fraud or the undue influence of others.

To begin the conservatorship process, file a Petition for Appointment of Conservator (of the Person or Estate) with the proper Superior Court. The closest superior court, in the county where the potential conservatee resides, is the proper court.

If you have the resources to hire an attorney, the attorney can file all the required documents for you and walk you through each stage of the process. Your local Regional Center or families who have been through a conservatorship can recommend an attorney. A private attorney may charge \$2,500 or more to handle this process.

If you do not have the resources to hire an attorney, you may attend a self-help legal clinic available in County. If you do not have the resources to hire an attorney and if your soon-to-be-adult is currently getting Medical or SSI, the fees will be waived.

The Superior Court of California – County of Santa Cruz – Self Help Center

The Santa Cruz Superior Court offers a free Self Help Center (SHC) to assist self-represented customers with a variety of basic legal issues. The SHC includes the services of the Family Law Facilitator and the Small Claims Advisor. Below you will find a list of legal issues the SHC can assist you with. This page also provides other internet and community legal resources that may be helpful to you.

The Self Help Center can provide court forms and legal information for the following legal issues:

- Family Law: Including, but not limited to, divorce, child support, child custody
- Evictions (residential)

- Name Change/Gender Change
- Emancipation
- Guardianship of the person
- Restraining Orders: Domestic Violence, Civil Harassment, Elder Abuse
- Small Claims: Limited hours and Workshop - see below
- Limited Civil (contract cases): Limited hours and Workshop - see below
- Limited Conservatorship
- Probate Conservatorship: Workshop only - see below
- Provide community and legal resources

A conservatorship can generally be completed in about 6 months. On your first visit to the clinic you will need to provide clinic staff with information necessary to complete the forms which must be filed with the court. Before going to the clinic, confirm with the staff what information you should bring. Clinic staff will likely request:

1. Birth date and Social Security Number of the soon-to-be-adult conservatee.
2. The names, addresses and phone numbers of all the medical professionals who currently provide services to the proposed conservatee (e.g., primary care physician, developmental pediatrician, psychologist or psychiatrist). One or all of them might be asked to complete a “capacity declaration” regarding your child.
3. Name, address and phone number of Regional Center Service Coordinator of the proposed conservatee (the local regional center is required, by law, to provide the court a recommendation regarding the appropriateness of the proposed conservatorship).
4. Names and addresses of close family members who the court may wish to inform regarding the proposed conservatorship hearing (adult siblings and grandparents, etc.).

A second appointment will be scheduled at which the clinic staff will provide all the completed documents to be reviewed and signed. At that second meeting, you will need to return the doctor-signed capacity declaration and be asked to sign a document which will allow the probation department to conduct a criminal background check on the proposed conservators and a limited investigation regarding the appropriateness of the conservatorship. If there is any reason for you to suspect that the appointment of the conservator will be questioned (e.g. prior record of something) be prepared to discuss the situation fully and bring documentation of how it was resolved.

Once the conservatorship documents are finalized, signed and then filed with the court, a court hearing will be set for approximately a month later.

At the hearing, you as the parent/proposed conservator will be in *Pro Per*, which means you will represent yourself. The court will have an attorney appointed for the

conservatee and you can ask that the court waive the appointed attorney's fees when it comes up at the hearing. The clinic's staff has a very good record of having their documents approved by the court, but sometimes a further investigation is asked for, and you should cooperate with any additional investigation.

Once the court approves the conservatorship, it will issue an "Order" and "Letters of Conservatorship." This usually takes a few weeks. You must obtain certified copies of both from the court and give a copy of the certified Order and Letters to those individuals and agencies that ask for them. Some doctors, insurance companies, and all governmental agencies will ask for originals with the certification on them. Others may be satisfied with just copies. Agencies can ask that you give them a newly certified original every year.

Limited conservatorships are generally reviewed by the probate office of the court on a yearly basis. This usually involves an interview by a probation investigator who makes an appointment to come to the conservatee's home to conduct the interview. Their report is then filed with the court.

If the conservatorship includes estate or financial management, an accounting must be filed with the court at the end of each year. So keep good records of what you do and how you've spent money or managed property.

For an excellent review source, see:

***Conservatorship, Trusts and Wills For People with Developmental or Other Disabilities – A Guide for Families*, Sterling L. Ross, Jr. Attorney at Law**

Commissioned by The Association for Retarded Citizens-California 6TH Edition
Revised in part and printed by Disability Rights California

Conservatorship, A Booklet for Lanterman Regional Center Families
http://lanterman.org/publications/conservatorship_a_booklet_for_lanterman_regional_center_families#.VQyV3I7F98E

Special Needs Trusts

Although not directly related to a student's transition from high school, a Special Needs Trust (SNT) can be an important planning tool for the future. SNT's are created to ensure that beneficiaries who are disabled or mentally ill can enjoy the use of property which is intended to be held for their benefit. In addition to personal planning reasons for such a trust (the beneficiary may lack the mental capacity to handle their financial affairs) there may be fiscal advantages to the use of such a trust. Such trusts may also avoid beneficiaries losing access to essential government benefits like Medi-Cal or Medicaid.

Once the trust has been established, all family members and friends should be instructed to make inheritances or gifts in the name of the SNT and not to the disabled family member.

WEBSITE YOU MIGHT FIND INFORMATIVE

<http://trusts-estates.lawyers.com/trust-planning/a-special-needs-trust-can-help-you-qualify-for-other-benefits.html>

SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME (SSI) BENEFITS

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Benefits are available to children from birth to age 18 and adults (18 or over) disabled since childhood who are otherwise eligible. SSI benefits are also available to persons who become disabled in adulthood who have not worked enough to be eligible for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI).

To qualify for SSI, the applicant must be a U.S. citizen or national and live in the U.S. or the Northern Mariana Islands. In some cases, non-citizen residents can qualify. Individuals can apply for benefits through the Social Security Administration (SSA).

A qualifying child must have a physical or mental condition(s) that very seriously limits his or her activities **and** the condition must have lasted or be expected to last at least a year or result in death (www.ssa.gov). An adult must be blind, disabled since childhood or have become disabled since turning 18 years of age. Upon turning 18 or completing high school, a child receiving SSI benefits must reapply and be reassessed in order to continue receiving benefits as an adult.

A state agency will review all the information given to the Social Security Administration including medical and school records and will make the disability decision. A written application and additional records will also be requested.

<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/disabilityssi/ssi.html>

If you or your child is not approved the first time, file an appeal immediately. SSA can provide a list of attorneys to assist you in your appeal. Legal fees for SSI appeals are restricted to 25% of your recovery and the attorney will be paid directly by SSA.

Once you are approved for SSI, you must set up an account to receive the SSI payments electronically. Payments can be done by direct deposit, the Direct Express or card program, or by electronic transfer account.

MEDI-CAL OR MEDICAID

When you are approved for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) you can also receive Medicaid/Medi-Cal. Medicaid is a federal healthcare program. In California the Medicaid program is call Medi-Cal. The program is supported by federal and state taxes. Medi-Cal will help you (or your qualifying child) pay for a variety of your medical expenses. Children and adults who qualify for SSI are eligible for Medi-Cal.

Once you are approved for SSI benefits, your Social Security Administration Office will automatically set up Medi-Cal for you. No separate application is needed and you will receive your Medi-Cal Card in the mail.

As long as the requirements of SSI eligibility are met, you (or your qualifying child) will continue to get Medi-Cal.

Even if you never qualify for SSI you can still get Medi-Cal If you live in California, have a low income and limited resources.

CLOSING NOTE

The very nature of a resource guide such as this one is that information in it will eventually become out-of-date. Understanding our limits, we chose to include as many specific details as possible, knowing that those details would have a limited shelf-life. We ask, as you use this document, that if you find a broken link or incorrect contact information you contact the North Santa Cruz County SELPA at (831) 466-5700.

We hope that this manual has provided you and your family with information, and perhaps even a vision of what your child's future will be. May it be a bright one!

APPENDIX

Glossary

<u>Acronym</u>	<u>Expanded Form</u>
ADA	Americans with disabilities
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
AFOC	Abram Friedman Occupational Center
CALSTAT	California Services for Technical Assistance and Training
CIL	Center for Independent Living
DOR	California Department of Rehabilitation
EDD	California Employment Development Department
FAFSA	Free Application for Federal Student Aid
GED	General Educational Development
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IDEIA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act
IEP	Individual Education Program
IPE	Individualized Plan for Employment
IPP	Individual Program Plan
ITP	Individual Transition Plan
LACOE	Los Angeles County Office of Education
LATC	Los Angeles Technology Center
LAUSD	Los Angeles Unified School District
PASS	Plan to Achieve Self Support
PTE	Professional-Technical Education
PTOA	Public Television Outreach Alliance
ROP	Regional Occupational Program
SCROC	Southern California Regional Occupation Center
SELPA	Special Education Local Plan Area
SNT	Special Needs Trust
SOP	Summary of Performance
SSA	US Social Security Administration
SSI	Supplemental Security Income
TIL	Transition to Independent Living Program
WCIL	Westside Center for Independent Living