



Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act Fact Sheet

Getting your child set up on a 504 Plan can seem like a big struggle! The good news is that you will not have to do this on your own. The school is there to help you navigate this task. In fact, the school will be the one that gathers additional information and schedules these meetings. Parents, you are responsible for giving them a copy of your child's test results and asking for that initial committee meeting. The following information has answers to common misconceptions related to 504 Plan:

- 1) A 504 Plan is the same as an Individualized Education Program (IEP). **FALSE:** A 504 Plan gives your child extra accommodations and supports. It does not make changes to the academic curriculum, which falls under an IEP.
- 2) A 504 Plan is legally binding. **TRUE:** A 504 Plan is a legally binding document between families/students and the schools. Think of a 504 Plan as a legal agreement that informs all entities of their rights and responsibilities.
- 3) My child does not need a 504 Plan to get accommodations: **TRUE:** Some schools and individual teachers may provide your child with accommodations, such as front row seating, without a formal 504 Plan. However, it is strongly recommended that the family set up a 504 Plan to guarantee that the child's needs are met from year to year.
- 4) Help for dyslexia requires an Individualized Education Program (IEP). **FALSE:** A child can receive certified dyslexia intervention with a 504 Plan. Many children's academic needs can be met without an IEP, and your school will help make that decision.
- 5) I am responsible for giving a copy of testing to the school. **TRUE:** It will be up to parents to share that information with the child's school.
- 6) The school must do everything I want them to do. **FALSE:** The school is your and your child's partner during the 504 Plan process. They will most likely be able to meet reasonable expectations and accommodations. However, you may not get everything you want on your child's 504 Plan.

- 7) A 504 Plan means my child receives special education. **FALSE:** Children who have a 504 Plan continue to stay in a typical classroom setting and receive the regular educational curriculum.
- 8) Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) qualifies for a 504 Plan. **TRUE:** There are many diagnoses that qualify a child for accommodations. ADHD is one of those qualifying conditions. Some schools, however, may require the child's pediatrician to write a script confirming the ADHD diagnosis.
- 9) The school writes my child's 504 Plan. **FALSE:** You, as the child's parent, will have an important part to play in creating the 504 Plan. Creating a 504 Plan is a partnership, and your input is very important! The school will most likely ask for your feedback.
- 10) A 504 Plan can change. **TRUE:** The school and you will review the child's 504 Plan periodically to help determine what is working and areas that continue to need support.
- 11) My college-aged child cannot get supports and accommodations. **FALSE:** Students may continue to receive services once they start college. Therefore, it is important that you follow any school recommendations regarding getting updated testing from time to time.
- 12) The 504 Plan is too big for me to do on my own. **FALSE:** While an important part of getting your child the supports and accommodations they need can seem overwhelming, you can do it! Remember that you're not in it alone, and the school will help walk you through the process. If you run into problems that cannot be solved, however, the examiner recommends reaching out to The Center for Exceptional Families (Toll-free: 888-360-9654) in the state of Arkansas. This agency may be able to help by sending someone to advocate for the family/student at no cost to the family.

While the above information may not answer all of your questions, I hope that it does clear up some common myths and misconceptions about the 504 Plan process. Please feel free to call or email your child's current examiner with any other questions. Thank you and remember that you are your child's greatest advocate!