

Frequently Asked Questions

My student has a 504 Plan from a different school district or from a local charter or private school. Now that my student attends a DCPS school, will DCPS implement the old 504 Plan?

No. Different school districts have different facilities, schedules, curricula, and expectations. The accommodations and related services in the old 504 Plan may not be appropriate in the DCPS school. You should contact your student's school to refer your student to the 504 process. Please provide the school with any supporting information that you have so that a 504 meeting can be held as soon as possible.

Is Section 504 the same thing as special education or an IEP?

No. Not all students with disabilities are eligible for special education. Section 504 protects eligible students with disabilities even when they are not eligible for special education. Section 504 ensures that these students are able to access the general education curriculum and are not subject to discrimination because of their disability.

My student has suffered a temporary injury. Can we develop a 504 Plan until the injury heals?

No. Section 504 is a federal civil rights law that protects students with disabilities, not temporary injuries. In general, if a condition will resolve in six months or less, then the student is injured and not disabled, and therefore is not eligible for a 504 Plan.

Additional Resources

For more information about the law, visit the U.S. Department of Education's website:

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/504faq.html>

If you believe that your student has been subjected to discrimination or if you believe that the 504 process has not occurred properly, you may file a grievance:

<https://dcps.dc.gov/page/studentparentvisitor-grievance-process>

You may also file a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights:

Office for Civil Rights/DC Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20202
Phone: (202) 453-6320
Email: OCR.DC@ed.gov
Website: www.ed.gov/OCR

Section 504 and Student Accommodations Team
Office of Equity

Phone: (202) 442-5471
E-mail: 504@dc.gov
Website: <https://dcps.dc.gov/page/section-504>



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Section 504 Program: Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Information for Parents/ Guardians and Students

504@dc.gov
(202) 442-5471
<https://dcps.dc.gov/page/section-504>

What is Section 504?

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a federal law that requires public schools to **provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities so that these students can access the school's general education curriculum** and learning opportunities.

Because it is an antidiscrimination law, Section 504 is focused on ensuring that students with disabilities are able to access the same DCPS curriculum and learning opportunities available to all students. Unlike special education, Section 504 does not provide specialized instruction or a different curriculum for eligible students. Instead, the Section 504 Program ensures that eligible students with disabilities receive the reasonable accommodations and/or related services that they need in order to access the DCPS curriculum and learning opportunities.

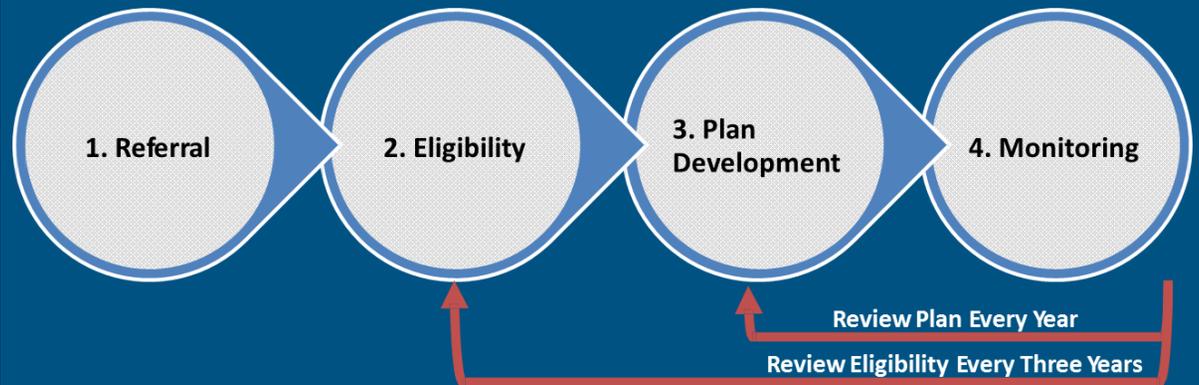
Examples of physical impairments that *may* qualify a student for Section 504:

- Diabetes
- Severe Asthma
- Juvenile Arthritis
- Sickle Cell Disease
- Mobility difficulties due to an anatomical difference or loss

Examples of mental impairments that *may* qualify a student for Section 504:

- Anxiety Disorder
- Depression
- Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

The Section 504 Process in DCPS:



1. Referral:

Parents/Guardians are invited to refer their student to the 504 process if they believe that their student has a physical or mental impairment that could make their student eligible for Section 504. Each school has a 504 Coordinator who will facilitate the process. Other individuals may also make referrals, such as health care professionals, teachers, and other school staff members.

2. Eligibility Determination:

Once the referral has been received by the school, the 504 Coordinator will ask the parent/guardian to provide any medical documentation or additional information and invite the parent/guardian to attend a 504 eligibility determination meeting. At this meeting, the team will review all available information and determine whether the student is eligible for Section 504.

3. Plan Development:

If the student is determined to be eligible, then the 504 team will write a 504 Plan for the student, describing the accommodations and services that the student needs in order to access the general education curriculum at the school.

4. Monitoring:

The 504 Team will meet annually to review the student's 504 Plan and to determine whether any changes are needed. Parents/Guardians can also request a meeting if they think that the 504 Plan needs to be reviewed or updated. In addition to reviewing the student's 504 Plan each year, the 504 Team will also review the student's eligibility for Section 504 every three years.

All decisions are made by the 504 team at the school. The team includes:

1. Someone knowledgeable about the student
2. Someone knowledgeable about the evaluation data.
3. Someone knowledgeable about the accommodations and curriculum.