

What is Section 504?

Section 504 is a civil rights law that protects the rights of people with disabilities who are in programs funded by the federal government. This includes public schools. Section 504 makes sure that children with disabilities have the same access to programs as children without disabilities. It allows the school to make small changes to how a child learns. These changes are written in a 504 plan.

Who can get a 504 plan?

Children must be found to have a physical or mental disability in order to get a 504 plan. To qualify, they must meet the following criteria:

- Have a disability that limits major-life activities. This includes learning, walking, or thinking.
- The disability is documented by a professional.
- The disability is long-term and not temporary.

How does a child get a 504 plan?

If you feel your child may qualify for a 504 plan they need to be evaluated by their school. A parent, school teacher, or medical professional can make a referral for a 504 plan evaluation. They do this through the 504 plan coordinator at the child's school or school district. Once the school has gathered all the data needed to complete the evaluation, a team meeting will be held at the school. The team may include the parent or guardian, school nurse, school psychologist, social worker, and teacher. Together, the team decides if the child qualifies for a 504 plan.

What is in a 504 plan?

The team will discuss what extra help is needed for the child in school. This may include:

- Extra breaks during the school day
- Use of technology
- Seating in the front of the room
- More time to turn in homework

The services the child needs will be written in the 504 plan. The plan will also name the people who will provide these services. The plan will be reviewed every year by the team to make changes as needed.

Where can I get more information?

[Understood.org](https://www.understood.org). Free information on how to best support your child in school.

This sheet was created to help you care for your child or family member. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment and follow-up.