

Disability Rights Nebraska

Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities

Related Services

What are Related Services?

Related services are supportive services given to your child with a disability at no cost to you. These are services that are necessary to help your child to benefit from special education¹. Examples of related services may include, but are not limited to:

- **Speech-language pathology services.** These include identifying children with speech or language impairments. These may also include referring the child for therapy or medical attention; providing speech and language services; and giving counseling to the child, parents, and teachers about speech and language impairments².
- **Audiology services.** These include identifying and serving children who are deaf or hard of hearing, providing habilitative activities, referring children for medical and other professional attention, and selecting and fitting an appropriate hearing aid³.
- **Interpreting services.** These include services (such as transcription services) for children who are deaf or hard of hearing and special interpreting services for children who are deaf-blind⁴.
- **Assistive technology devices or services.** These include services that are used to help a child with a disability to select, acquire, and use an assistive technology device. These services may also include a functional evaluation of a child and his or her need for assistive technology; the purchase, lease, or other acquisition of a device for a child with a disability; and training or technical assistance for a child with a disability and his or her family⁵.
- **Psychological services.** These include conducting psychological and educational tests, interpreting test results, planning and managing psychological services for children and parents, and help in creating behavioral intervention strategies⁶.

¹ 34 CFR 300.34(a); Rule 51 sec. 003.49 (2017)

² 34 CFR 300.34(c)(15) (2016)

³ 34 CFR 300.34(c)(1) (2016)

⁴ 34 CFR 300.34(c)(4) (2016)

⁵ 34 CFR 300.6 (2016); Rule 51 sec. 003.03; sec. 007.07C3d (2017)

⁶ 34 CFR 300.34(c)(10) (2016)

- **Occupational therapy.** This includes services given by a qualified occupational therapist to improve, develop, or restore impaired functions or functions lost through illness, injury, or deprivation. These also include services to improve ability to perform tasks for independent functioning if functions are impaired or lost, and to prevent further impairment or loss of function⁷.
- **Orientation and mobility services.** This includes services given to children who are blind or visually impaired by qualified personnel to allow them to learn safe movement within their environments in school, home, and community. Additional services may include teaching blind or visually impaired children to use the long cane or a service animal⁸.
- **Physical therapy.** This includes services given by a qualified physical therapist⁹.
- **Counseling services.** These include services provided by qualified social workers, psychologists, guidance counselors, or other qualified personnel¹⁰.
- **Parent counseling and training.** This includes helping parents to understand the special needs of their child, supplying information about child development, and assisting parents to develop skills to be able to support their child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)¹¹.
- **Medical services for diagnostic and evaluation purposes.** These include services given by a licensed physician to determine a child's medically related disability that requires special education and related services. These services would be for diagnostic or evaluation purposes¹².
- **School health and school nurse services.** These include health services provided by a qualified school nurse or other qualified person to allow a child with a disability to receive a "free appropriate public education" as listed in the child's Individualized Educational Program¹³.
- **Recreation.** This includes assessments of leisure function, services for therapeutic recreation, recreation programs that are provided both in school and in agencies in the community, and leisure education¹⁴.

⁷ 34 CFR 300.34(c)(6) (2016)

⁸ 34 CFR 300.34(c)(7) (2016)

⁹ 34 CFR 300.34(c)(9) (2016)

¹⁰ 34 CFR 300.34(c)(2) (2016)

¹¹ 34 CFR 300.34(c)(8) (2016)

¹² 34 CFR 300.34(c)(5) (2016); Rule 51 sec. 003.49 (2017)

¹³ 34 CFR 300.34(c)(13) (2016)

¹⁴ 34 CFR 300.34(c)(11) (2016)

- **Transportation.** This includes travel to, from, and between schools, in and around school buildings, and specialized equipment (such as adaptive buses, ramps, and lifts) if appropriate¹⁵.

Who is eligible for related services?

Your child must first be evaluated through the school district's Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) Evaluation or the Independent Educational Evaluation processes (see "Multidisciplinary Team Evaluation" and "Independent Educational Evaluation" materials)¹⁶. The MDT decides whether your child has a disability.

If your child is found to be "a child with a disability" as defined under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), he or she is eligible for an Individual Education Program (IEP)¹⁷.

The IEP Team decides, on a case by case basis, whether related services of an instructional nature are necessary for your child in order to receive a "free appropriate education (FAPE)." The IEP Team must base its decision on documented diagnostic evidence¹⁸. The need for related services must be documented on your child's IEP¹⁹.

Is a school district required to provide related services to my child?

Maybe. If the IEP Team has decided that your child needs specific related services and has included those in the IEP, the school district must provide your child with the related services.²⁰

How do I request related services?

You may want to request an IEP meeting to discuss whether your child needs any related services (see "Individualized Independent Evaluation Program" material). It is a good idea to put all communications regarding your child's special education services that are between you and school administrators and staff in writing. Be sure to write down conversations and events that affect your child's education. Note the date, who was involved, what was said, and the resolution. You may want to create and maintain a file with all of your child's school information such as report cards, evaluation reports, and Individual Education Programs (IEPs).

¹⁵ 34 CFR 300.34(c)(16) (2016); Rule 51 sec. 014 (2017)

¹⁶ Rule 51 sec. 006.02A; 006.07 (2017)

¹⁷ Rule 51 sec. 007.01 (2017)

¹⁸ Rule 51 sec. 007.07C6 (2017)

¹⁹ Rule 51 sec. 007.07C6 (2017)

²⁰ Rule 51 sec. 007.07A5 (2017)

All requests for evaluations or meetings should be made in writing to your child's school principal. You should keep a copy for your own records. Send your written request to the school via certified, return receipt requested mail. Attach the return receipt to your copy of the request and keep this in your file.

Additional resources:

- Multidisciplinary Team Evaluation - Disability Rights Nebraska
- Independent Educational Evaluation - Disability Rights Nebraska
- Individual Education Program - Disability Rights Nebraska
- Center for Parent Information & Resources. This is a resource providing information created by Parent Centers that serve families of children with disabilities.
- IDEA Part B Parents' Rights in Special Education (Age 3-21) - Nebraska Department of Education, Office of Special Education (August 2018)

Sample Letter

You may wish to use similar language when requesting an Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting for your child:

[Principal's Name]
 [School's Name]
 [School Address]
 [City, State, Zip code]

Re: [Your child's name] – Request for an Individualized Education Program meeting

Dear [Principal's Name]:

Please consider this letter as a formal request for an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team meeting for my child, [Your child's name]. It is my understanding that I have a right to request an IEP meeting at any time, pursuant to the provisions of 92 NAC 51 (Nebraska Department of Education, Rule 51). I would like to specifically discuss related services for my child.

To prevent complications with my schedule, please notify me of the date and time of the meeting one week in advance. I appreciate your prompt attention to this request and ask that you respond in writing by [Insert a date two (2) weeks from the time mailed], and that the meeting be held by [Insert a date five-ten days later than the previous date]. Thank you.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]
 [Your Address]
 [Your City, State, Zip]
 [Your Phone Number]