

TRANSITION TIMELINE FOR YOUNG ADULTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



Click on any of the logos to advance to the website.



AGE 15-16

- **Fill out an application for a Massachusetts State ID**

Importance: A state ID will be important for when your child becomes an adult and needs to apply for adult services. A non-license state ID will also be important for your child as identification at airports and for other applications.

- **Connect with Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission**

Importance: MRC provides comprehensive services to people living with disabilities that maximize their quality of life and economic self-sufficiency in the community.

- **Apply for Adult Foster Care if needed**

Importance: Apply for Adult foster care program or Personal Care Assistant if you receive Mass health, and your child is over 16 years old and needs assistance with activities of daily living. Adult foster care will allow you to get paid to provide services to your child. A personal care assistant allows you to hire someone to help care for your young adult.



AGE 17

- **Consider filling out a guardianship application**

Importance: Guardianship will allow you to make health care and financial decisions for a young adult over 18 who may not be capable of making these decisions. Your child will need a psychology evaluation within 6 months of the application submission by someone who is certified. Ask your school if they can do this evaluation because it can take a while to get a non-school appointment. You will also need a physician and social worker to fill out part of the guardianship application, and a lawyer to speak on your behalf in court. MA courts can offer a free court-appointed council for biological parents during guardianship proceedings. Ask your lawyer to include a statement ensuring your young adult has the ability to vote.

*Note: People being paid for adult foster care cannot become a guardian.



AGE 18

- **Chapter 688 Referral**

Importance: Allows the school to plan ahead to provide adult services to students with disabilities. This documentation also alerts other transition agencies, such as DDS and MRC, about the future needs of these students. This document is filled out by your child's school 2 years before graduation.

- **Make a bank account in your child's name**

Importance: This will be a place for your child's SSI cash benefits to be stored. You, as guardian may need to become the representative payee to receive the SSI payment. You should let the bank know this will be for SS payments.

- **Register for Selective Services if your young adult is male**

Importance: It is the law and your child will need this to apply for financial aid for college.

- **Apply to MassHealth**

Importance: MassHealth offers benefits for your child by paying all or part of their health insurance premiums. As a disabled individual your child may be eligible for additional MassHealth programs. People with disabilities living at home (children as well as adults) who need more help than family members can give, may be able to get certain long-term-care services to help them remain at home.

- **Apply for HUD's Section 8 housing list**

Importance: The wait for housing can be very long so it is important to add your child's name early. HUD's Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program helps people with disabilities afford rental housing in the private market.

- **Reapply to DDS as an adult**

Importance: DDS can provide your child with support and enhancement opportunities so your child can become more engaged in the community.

- **Apply for SNAP benefits**

Importance: As your child becomes an adult and receives SSI he or she can use this as an income to apply for food benefits. Your young adult may now apply for supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP).

- **Register to vote**

Importance: It is important for your child to have a voice in the society they live in, so registering them to vote is the best way to ensure their voice can be heard. As a voter, your child can also appoint someone to assist them during the voting process.



AGE 19- 22

- **Start transition process to an adult care provider**

Importance: As youth get older, they become legally in charge of their own care and may be ready to transition into adult care. BMC's goal is to transition all patients at around the age of 23 to an adult care provider who can care for your child for the remainder of their adult life. Got Transitions is a website that can provide you with helpful information on the transition process.



- **Establish long-term dental care facility**

Importance: Adult members who are Department of Developmental Services (DDS) clients receive a different dental benefit package that includes more services than adults who are not DDS clients.



SENIOR YEAR



- **Fill out a FAFSA application for your child**

Importance: Federal Student Aid can provide your child with low-cost loans, grants, or work study in order to help finance your child's future education if they plan on attending college.



- **Learn about college disability services**

Importance: Many colleges offer special programs for children with disabilities and different schools will offer different support. It is important to learn about the disability services at the schools your child is applying to and make sure they will be accommodated.

FAMILIES TO DO ANYTIME:



- **Apply for SSI if your child does not already receive social security benefits**

Importance: The Social Security and Supplemental Security Income disability programs are the largest of several Federal programs that provide assistance to people with disabilities. If your child qualifies for SSI he/she will receive a monthly check from federal and state government and will also qualify for Mass Health insurance.



- **Have a future plan in place in case you are no longer able to care for your child**

Importance: Having a will is important to ensure that your child is taken care of and protected in case of any unforeseen circumstances. It is important to assign a guardian for your child and to have a written plan in place in case you are no longer able to care for your child.



- **Create an Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) account**

Importance: The ABLE account allows qualified individuals with disabilities to save money in a tax-exempt account that allows you to put in money for your child that won't be used against them with the SSI application at age 18. Your child cannot have more than \$2,000 in his/her name to qualify for SSI.

- **Make sure your current living situation is ADA compliant**

Importance: As your child gets older he or she may need adaptive equipment such as a fitted wheelchair, shower chair, ramp, car seat, walker and/or more, so it is important to make sure your home environment is compatible. Spaulding Wheelchair and Seating Clinic may be able to help find the best fit equipment for your child.



- **Create a fax sheet with allergies and medications for your child in case of an emergency**

- **Learn about sexual education for a better understanding of your child's sexual well-being**

Importance: Talking openly about sexual health with your child is an important part of your child's development into adulthood. Youth who understand their own bodies, rights, and experiences find it easier to communicate their sexual needs to you. All youth deserve the sexual education and parental support to get a better understanding, attitude, and skills in order to obtain healthy relationships and avoid abuse.



- **Apply for The Ride for your child's transportation needs**

Importance: The RIDE is the MBTA's door-to-door, shared-ride service in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This service will allow your child to access transportation to appointments, future jobs, and more.



TRANSITION TIMELINE FOR TEENS



Click on any of the logos to advance to the website.



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REGISTRY OF MOTOR VEHICLES



AGE 14-16

- **Fill out an application for a Massachusetts State ID**
Importance: Having a state ID can help give you a sense of responsibility and maturity and can also be useful if planning to work without a driver's license.
- **Begin driver's education**
Importance: 3 months before turning 16 you may begin the classroom portion of driver's education. When you turn 16, you may apply for a learner's permit. Fill out a learner's permit application and bring this and the required identification to a full service RMV office.
- **Fill out an employment permit if planning to start work**
Importance: All teens under the age of 18 are required by Massachusetts' state law to get a work permit before starting a job. Teens must first have a job in place to apply for an employment permit.

AGE 17

- **Start looking at colleges on CollegeBoard**
Importance: Finding the right school for you can be very stressful, so looking early can help ease the application process. It is important to know what you are looking for in a college, whether it is location, major, ranking, or more, and you can talk to your school's guidance counselor for additional help.
- **Look into Job Corps if planning on going directly into the work force**
Importance: Job Corps offers free education and vocational training for youth ages 16-24. Apply to Job Corps to begin your career path including options in health care, finance, automotive, and more.



AGE 18

- **Make a bank account**
Importance: This will be a safe place for you to store and access your money.
- **Register for Selective Services (Young Men)**
Importance: It is the law and you will need this to apply for financial aid for college.
- **Apply to MassHealth**
Importance: If desirable you may apply for MassHealth independently, although you may remain on your parents' insurance until the age of 26.
- **Register to vote**
Importance: Voting gives you a voice in the society you live in and allows you to select a candidate to represent you as a citizen.



SENIOR YEAR

- **Fill out a FAFSA application if planning to attend college**
Importance: Federal Student Aid can provide you with low-cost loans, grants, or work study in order to help finance your future education.



AGE 19-23

- **Start transition process to an adult care provider**
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