

Related Services

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) defines related services

Related services means transportation and any other developmental, corrective or other supportive services that a child needs to benefit from special education. Some children need related services in order to meet the goals in their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Related services may include:

- Transportation
- Early identification and assessment of disabilities in children
- Speech-language pathology and audiology services
- Parent counseling and training
- Interpreting services
- Psychological services
- Physical and occupational therapy
- Recreation, including therapeutic recreation
- Social work services
- School health services
- School nurse services
- Counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling
- Orientation and mobility services
- Medical services (only to diagnose or evaluate a child's disability)

Related services are not limited to the ones outlined above. If a service is necessary for the child to benefit from his or her special education program, the service must be provided, even if it is not included in this list.

Who provides related services?

Qualified professionals may provide related services in the area of their expertise. Paraprofessionals and assistants who are trained and supervised in accordance with state law or policy may also assist in providing related services.

Who decides which related services are right for a child?

A child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team decides which related services are necessary. Parents are important members of the IEP team. Qualified related service providers may also be members of the IEP team.

The team gathers information from an evaluation and uses this information to determine a child's needs. The IEP team will discuss the child's needs and decide whether a related service is needed to help the child accomplish an instructional goal on the IEP.

How are related services written into the IEP?

The IEP will include written statements saying which related services would be provided. Some statements may be written as goals for a related service, such as occupational therapy. Other statements, such as those about transportation or audiology services, may be written in the services and modifications section of the IEP. The IEP will describe:

- the type of related service that will be provided, and
- how often, how long and where that service will be delivered

Related services may be provided in group or individual settings, depending on a child's needs. They may be provided in all education settings including the regular education classroom or in a separate setting.

Who pays for related services?

Related services must be provided at no cost to a child's family. The school may ask for parent consent to bill other *private agencies*, such as a parent's private insurance, for related services. However, the school needs the written consent of parents to do this. The child must receive the related services in his or her IEP, whether or not parents give consent to use their private benefits.



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If parents agree to use their private insurance, schools may not require them to incur any out-of-pocket expense, such as a deductible or co-payment.

The school may bill Medicaid or other public insurance for the related services a child receives in school. The school district needs parental consent to release any personally identifiable information from the child's educational record. This includes information about the types of services the child receives in school.

Schools may not require parents to enroll in a public benefits or insurance program in order to receive related services. Schools may not use a child's benefits under a public benefit or insurance program if it would:

- decrease the child's lifetime coverage;
- result in the family paying for services that would otherwise be covered;
- increase premiums; or
- lead to discontinuation of coverage or risk loss of disability for Medicaid home and community-based waiver programs.

For more information about schools billing insurance companies to pay for related services, contact your local Parent Training and Information Center or Community Parent Resource Center. You can locate them at www.parentcenternetwork.org.

What if the related services in a child's IEP are not being provided because there are staff shortages?

The school district must provide the related services in the child's IEP. The district may contract with providers outside the school district if there are personnel shortages in the school.

Contact your local Parent Center: