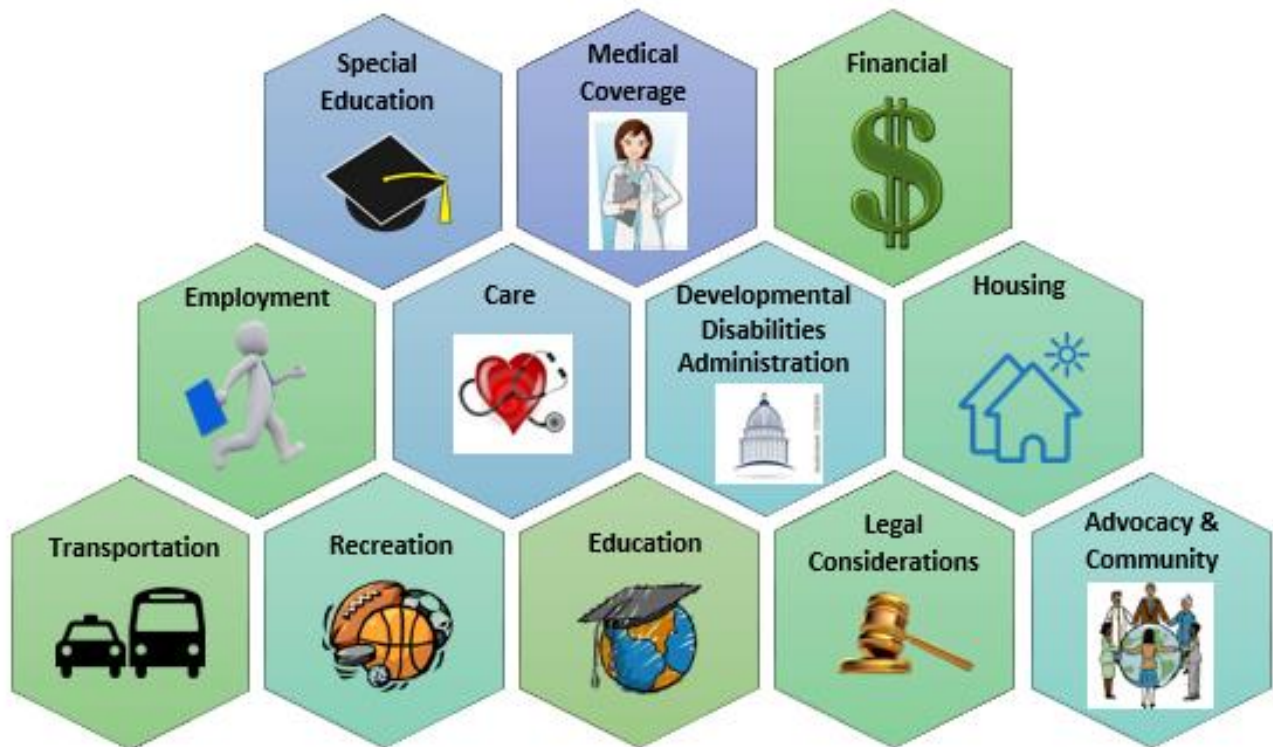


TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO ADULTHOOD

For people with intellectual & developmental disabilities

This document will familiarize you with some of the main considerations, public benefits, and resources that are relevant during transition for students with intellectual or developmental disabilities (I/DD) in King County. If you want to learn more, have questions, or want to talk about your situation please contact The Arc of King County.



For Questions, contact The Arc of King County
 Phone: 206.829.7053 Email: ask@arcofkingcounty.org
 TTY: 1.877.666.2348 Toll-Free: 1.877.964.0600



Transition Plans

All students with an IEP must have a Transition Plan included in the IEP starting at age 16 until the student exits school. The purpose of a Transition Plan is to coordinate learning opportunities and support to help facilitate the child's movement out of school into adult activities such as post-secondary education, employment, adult services, independent living, and community participation.

Graduation and Exiting School

The IEP should identify the circumstances in which the student will exit school. In all circumstances, there is no requirement that the student completes their IEP goals and objectives.

The two most common circumstances are:

- The student meets all requirements for high school graduation including earning all required credits, passing mandatory state assessments, etc. as described in the IEP. Depending on the accommodations and modifications identified in the IEP, a student in this category may graduate with a Certificate of Academic Achievement (CAA) or a Certificate of Individual Achievement (CIA).
- The student is eligible for the 18-21 year old program and continues in school until they "age out" at the end of the school year during which they turn 21. All students in this category will receive a Certificate of Individual Achievement (CIA). Students eligible for the 18-21 year old program are allowed to participate in high school graduation activities and ceremonies with their same-aged peers. They will not receive their high school diploma and will remain eligible to receive special education services. In this case, they have shared in the experience of graduation, but have not officially exited school.

18-21 year old Transition Program

Each school district provides special education services for students aged 18-21 years old differently. Common learning activities include job training including writing resumes, interview skills, and on-the-job training, life skills such as shopping, cooking, budgeting, and using public transportation. Talk to your school district to determine the services they provide and what will be appropriate for your student. We encourage students to take full advantage of the special education services and remain in school through age 21; school is an entitlement, adult day services are not.

School-To-Work Program

A program of KCDDD designed to help students achieve employment in their final year of the Transition Program. Students must be clients of DDA and must apply in the spring before the student's final year of school. Taking part in this program may help connect students with adult waiver services. Talk to the teacher or go here for more information: <http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/DDD/services/employment/school-to-work.aspx>.



Medical Coverage & Services

Medical coverage is complex, below is a summary which addresses information relevant for DDA services. There are very specific eligibility requirements for medical coverage such as Medicaid including the individual's citizenship status. Please don't hesitate to contact The Arc of King County to discuss your situation.

- Services through DDA such as employment support services and Personal Care rely on Medicaid eligibility.
- It is important to keep to the resource limit (\$2,000) once you receive these services.
- The main ways that people are eligible for Medicaid (Classic) which ensures eligibility for DDA services are:
 - Receiving SSI
 - Healthcare for workers with Disabilities (HWD)
 - By qualifying based on income



Social Security Administration (SSA) Cash Benefits

Social Security benefits require a certain level of citizenship status. For questions about this, please contact The Arc of King County.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

SSI is cash benefit for people with disabilities who also have a low income. There are three main eligibility criteria for SSI: income, assets and disability. When someone turns 18 they can qualify for SSI based on their own income and resources. You will want to set this up in the first month after the person with disabilities' 18th birthday. Prior to age 18 the parents' finances are taken into consideration. If the child is still living in the family home, you can set up a room and board agreement to receive the full amount of SSI. The Arc of King County has some resource that will help you set this rental agreement up.

Social Security Disability Income (SSDI)

If a parent has retired, passed away, or become disabled, their child with I/DD may be eligible for SSDI. That person will get benefits based on their parent's work history. Also known as Child Disability Benefits (CDB) or Social Security Disabled Adult Child (SSDAC). Apply online <https://secure.ssa.gov/iClaim/dib> or in person.

How do I apply for benefits?

Begin the application process online at <https://secure.ssa.gov/iClaim/dib>. After SSA have reviewed this information they will contact you for more information. You can also call 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778) from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday to set up an appointment. Application are regularly denied. If this happens follow the appeal process rather than applying again. If you are successful with your appeal you will receive back pay from the date of application.

Good to know:

- These benefits are often easier to obtain before beginning work.
- They can serve as a safety net should a work effort not be successful.
- Look at <http://plantowork.org/> to explore options to maintain Social Security while working.
- Keep copies of any documents you submit, and record your communications for future reference.



Employment Supports

For students still in school

- Ensure the student is enrolled in DDA so they can be in the School to Work program (S2W).
 - Note: Students must have a citizenship status that makes them eligible for Medicaid Waiver services in order to utilize the S2W program.
- Apply for S2W by the spring before their last school year.
- Ensure the IEP includes goals that will support future job placements.

For those who have already exited school

- The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) offer short term support for all people with disabilities looking for work. <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/ra/division-vocational-rehabilitation>
- If enrolled in DDA and interested in working, go to DVR to begin the process.

Short term support for finding work is available for all people with disabilities through Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). Your child's school should have an assigned DVR counselor. You might also be interested in finding your local DVR office and attending an orientation. <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/ra/dvr/find-an-office>

Long term employment support are only available through DDA or private pay. This involves a job coach who spends a certain number of hours on the job with the employee, providing the support they need. The level of support is determined by an assessment. People in transition should tell DDA if they are wanting to work and needing support.



Developmental Disability Administration (DDA) Services

What is DDA?

DDA (previously known as DDD) is the state level administration within the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) specifically for people who meet its criteria of developmental disability.

Why should I connect with DDA?

- To enroll in School to Work (see more information under Special Education).

- Services may include Personal Care (PC), respite, supported employment, residential services, emergency assistance, and more.
- Even if you don't need services now, it is best to enroll as early as possible. This way you will have quicker access to assistance should you need it. Eligibility determinations takes several months.

How do I know if I am enrolled in DDA?

- Call 206.568.5700 with the name and birth date of the person who has a disability.
- If you are not enrolled, then ask DDA to mail you an application, or download one here: <http://www.dshs.wa.gov/ddd/eligible.shtml>

What DDA services are available?

DDA services are always changing, contact The Arc of King County for information on current services and eligibility requirements. DDA has many services and each one has its own eligibility requirements which might include family or individual income, citizenship status, and level of support needs.

How do I navigate the DDA system?

- If you are enrolled and are not getting services, you are on the 'No Paid Services' caseload. Call 1.800.974.4428 to request specific services.
- If you have questions about the services you are getting, or want to know more about services available you can visit the DDA website, contact your case manager, or contact The Arc of King County.

What if I'm not eligible for DDA?

Maybe you are eligible, but didn't provide the correct documentation to qualify. Contact The Arc of King County if you're not sure what you need. If your disability doesn't meet DDA criteria for I/DD see 'Home and Community Services' below.

More information about DDA: <http://www.dshs.wa.gov/ddd/region2.shtml>

What is King County Developmental Disabilities Division (KCDDD)?

KCDDD is the county level division that provides specific services to those who are already eligible/enrolled in DDA. Specific for students in transition KCDDD overlooks

- Employment programs, and employment service providers
<http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/DDD/services/employment.aspx>
- Housing program allowing adults to get on a waitlist for a Section 8 Voucher. Contact your DDA Case Manager, or if you do not have one contact Katherine Festa at 206-263-9053.



Care & Respite

- Publically funded care and respite can be obtained through either DDA, or Home and Community Services (HCS). The main type of care received is Personal Care (PC) which requires an annual assessment. Prepare

ahead of time to ensure you have an accurate assessment. Contact us for [resources to help you prepare](#). Parents can be the paid care provider for their children over the age of 18.

- DDA requires someone to be enrolled before they are able to request services. Possible services include MPC, respite or a waiver (IFS, Basic Plus or CORE). Caregivers can also request respite hours.
- HCS does not have an eligibility/enrollment requirement but rather assesses needs and allocates services. This means it serves those who are aging or those with other disabilities not covered by DDA.
- Request sliding scale respite for unpaid caregivers of adults at <http://www.kccaregiver.org/>



Housing Options

It is important to note that housing options in King County are limited for people with developmental disabilities, and can often take a long time to secure. Consider and plan for housing arrangements that will work for your family now and in the future.

- There are several different types of housing models.
- Which independent living skills should be focused on for future housing possibilities?
- There are Section 8 vouchers and subsidized units available, through the King County Housing Authority for clients of DDA. You can ask your DDA Case Manager or contact Katherine Festa at 206-263-9053.
- If not in DDA and wanting to live in subsidized housing you will need to go through housing authorities and get on their waitlists; these are usually several years long.
- If not in DDA and wanting to live with support in an adult family home apply through Home and Community Services (HCS) or online at www.washingtonconnection.org



Self-Advocacy, Social, Recreational & Educational

Becoming an adult brings with it opportunities to advocate for yourself. Here are a couple of opportunities:

- The Arc of King County: Advocacy Program for People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
 - Come to Olympia with The Arc during the legislative session to talk with your representative
- Self-Advocates in Leadership (SAIL): monthly meetings
- People First of Washington regional meetings

The transition away from school also means a transition away from a structured week and time with friends. Try to establish regular activities that will continue beyond school to allow some continuity of routine and social connections. It is always best to establish these activities before graduation! Explore The Arc of King County resource guide for places who facilitate activities or consider hobbies and interests (e.g. Going for a walk, go bowling, rent a movie, etc.).

There are a number of resources supporting adults with I/DD to learn beyond school. Some provide support for college, and others build on life skill or skills needed for employment. Find options on The Arc of King County Resource Guide under “Special Education” then subcategory “Education for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities”.



Transportation

King County Metro has a number of options to make transport more accessible for people with disabilities including reduced fares, shared rides through Access, reduced taxi rides, and training to learn how to use the bus.

<http://metro.kingcounty.gov/tops/accessible/index.html>



Legal Considerations

Supported Decision Making, Power of Attorney, and Guardianship

What & Why: When a person turns 18 they are considered able to make their own decisions regardless of disability. For some adults with disabilities, additional support is necessary to protect their financial and personal wellbeing. Supported Decision Making and Power of Attorney are two popular ways to support people with disabilities in decision making without restricting their civil rights. Sometimes, guardianship is necessary when all other options have been considered. Guardianship must be set up through the county court where the person with a disability lives. Some people establish guardianship themselves, others use an attorney. Contact The Arc of King County to learn more.

Special Needs Trusts

What & Why: A special needs trust allows someone to keep assets or financial resources without jeopardizing benefits which have resource limits such as Medicaid and SSI. Many people ensure that their will so that any inheritance goes into a special needs trust and doesn't impact their loved ones benefits.

How: For folks enrolled in DDA The Developmental Disabilities Endowment Trust Fund (www.ddefit.org) is a lower cost option, or folks can also go through a private attorney. Contact The Arc of King County for more information.



Advocacy & Community

Make connections that might help your family during this transition. These may help you learn about resources and navigate the changes. Here are some programs within The Arc of King County. Other groups and organizations can be found on The Arc of King County resource guide.

- **King County Parent & Family Coalition (KCPFC):** monthly meetings and emails focusing on legislative topics
- **Parent to Parent (P2P):** regular events and Yahoo email group "Into Adulthood"
- **Multicultural Information and Family Support:** Our staff provide support in both English and Spanish as well as culturally specific support to African American and Latino families.