

# Planning for the Future Checklist















Use this checklist as a discussion guide in preparing for life after high school. Bring it to your meetings with your school and/or agency supporters to talk about your progress and how best to plan for your future. The checklist is meant to be individualized and not all of the items listed may pertain to you.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Every Year

1. Meet with your agency and school supporters.
2. Take time to talk about information learned from any assessments about your abilities and interests.
3. Ask about accommodations and technology you can use to meet your school, work, and other life goals.
4. Use your individualized education program (IEP) to create the right goals to help you get ready for life after high school (transition).
5. Build on what you started the year before.

14-15 Year Olds		15-16 Year Olds	
Education/Training After High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Talk with your school and/or agency supporters about your interests and what you want to study after high school.</li><li>○ Study websites to learn about training, technical school, college programs and classes where you can explore an interest or hobby. Visit at least one of these educational programs.</li><li>○ Meet with your school’s transition coordinator to make sure you are taking the right classes for your goals.</li><li>○ Understand your disability. Ask for your own accommodations and/or assistive technology.</li></ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Learn how accommodations may be different at the educational program you’ve chosen for after high school, so you can start to prepare.</li><li>○ If you’ve chosen college, sign-up for the PSAT test (given in fall of sophomore and junior years) and make an appointment with your guidance counselor to talk about colleges and your plan for applying.</li><li>○ Visit technical schools or certificate programs you may be interested in.</li></ul> 	
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Sign up to volunteer and job shadow during school and/or summer months.</li><li>○ Start keeping a list of the names, email addresses, and phone numbers of people who can be references for jobs.</li><li>○ Learn about programs at your local career and technical education (CTE) centers. If you are interested, ask to visit. If you like it, learn how to apply.</li></ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ To get ready for a job, practice filling out job applications and answering questions an employer might ask you.</li><li>○ Ask your school and/or agency supporters for help with on-the-job training, job exploration, and/or part-time employment in your areas of interest. Your school can help you get this experience during school and during the summer.</li><li>○ Ask your parents/guardians to sign forms that will allow Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) and/or other adult agencies to come to your transition meetings.</li></ul> 	
Community Living	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Join an activity at your school, community, or place of worship.</li><li>○ Practice asking for what you need during your IEP and other meetings.</li><li>○ Ask about certified transportation training at your IEP meeting.</li><li>○ Know the medications you take (names, dosage, why you’re taking them). Talk with your doctor about sexuality and boundaries, and about how behaviors like smoking and drinking affect our bodies.</li><li>○ If you have an intellectual disability and no one has contacted the County’s Office of Intellectual Disabilities (OID), ask your parents/guardians to call the county to complete an intake to register for services.</li><li>○ If needed, create an Individual Health Plan with your doctor and school nurse.</li></ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Talk with your school and/or agency supporters about the possibility of funding through Medicaid Waivers.</li><li>○ Keep a list of your medical conditions and physicians. Be able to describe your health needs.</li><li>○ If you have questions about your emotional or mental health, talk to your parents/guardians, school or agency supporters, and your medical team. You can also call the county crisis line for help.</li><li>○ Find out about adult agencies (like OVR) that can help you prepare for work, training, and independent living. The back of this checklist has a list of these agencies.</li><li>○ Keep copies of your medical, education, and government papers in a file to have ready when you need them.</li><li>○ Learn the differences between wants and needs, and the differences between earned and unearned income.</li></ul> 	

	16-17 Year Olds	18-21 Year Olds
Education/Training After High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If your goal is a trade or higher education, sign up for standardized tests in your junior year and ask for any testing accommodations you might need.</li> <li>○ Ask your counselor about financial aid to pay for tests and test-prep classes and books.</li> <li>○ Apply to these schools during the fall of your senior year. If needed, apply for financial aid during the winter.</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Know how to access current documentation of your disability before you leave high school.</li> <li>○ Contact the office for disability services and support at the school you'll be attending. Let them know the accommodations you need.</li> <li>○ Talk with your IEP team about how you can use your "Summary of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance" after high school.</li> <li>○ Make sure you have the assistive technology you need as you leave high school.</li> </ul> 
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Research 5 to 10 jobs that interest you and discuss what accommodations you may need.</li> <li>○ Apply for part time, summer, and/or weekend jobs. Ask for help finding good matches with your skills, interests, and location.</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ask adult agencies to come to your IEP meetings at school to assist with job placement, training, and accommodations.</li> <li>○ Ask your school and agency supporters for help in arranging community-based, on-the-job training, and employment in your areas of interest. They can help you with this for work during school, nights and weekends, and during the summer.</li> </ul> 
Community Living	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Decide whether you want to live independently after graduation. Talk with your family, school and agency supporters about options for housing.</li> <li>○ Learn about community activities you can get involved in.</li> <li>○ Apply for a driver's license or state ID card.</li> <li>○ If needed, apply for Supplemental Security Income-Social Security (SSI) and Medical Assistance (health insurance). Ask for help to understand working and adult benefits.</li> <li>○ If possible, schedule and attend at least some of your medical appointments by yourself.</li> <li>○ Practice budgeting your money and develop savings goals.</li> <li>○ If you have autism, call the Bureau of Autism Services to request information about applying for their adult autism programs. A parent/guardian can also call on your behalf.</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If your goal is to live on your own or with a roommate, talk with your family, school and agency supporters.</li> <li>○ Contact the Special Needs Units (Medicaid plans) or Customer Service (private health plans) to choose a physician who treats adults. Ask your pediatrician to send a transfer summary of your records.</li> <li>○ Verify your healthcare insurance coverage and continuation of benefits past age 18.</li> <li>○ Apply for Personal Assistance Services, if needed.</li> <li>○ Register to vote (age 18). Young men need to register for the Selective Service after their 18th birthday.</li> <li>○ Practice getting around your community by taking public transportation or arranging medical transportation.</li> </ul> 

The "Planning for the Future Checklist" was developed and supported through a partnership between the United Way of Allegheny County's 21 and Able Initiative, the Pennsylvania Bureau of Special Education, and the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network, with input from stakeholders across Pennsylvania.



Adult Agencies	
Autism Resources	1-866-415-1708
Bureau of Children's Behavioral Health Services	717-705-8289
Career Link	610-280-1010
Department of Human Services	610-344-6640
Office of Intellectual Disability	610-344-6265
Office of Mental Health	610-344-6000
Office of Vocational Rehabilitation	1-800-221-1042
Pennsylvania Council on Independent Living	717-364-1732
Social Security Administration	800-772-1213

For information and resources on secondary transition in Pennsylvania, go to the Pennsylvania Secondary Transition Guide at: [www.secondarytransition.org](http://www.secondarytransition.org).

