

Transition Checklist for Parents/Caregivers of Young Adults with Developmental Disabilities

The planning that occurs during the transition from High School into supports in the Dane County Self-Directed Service System (SDS) is not a linear process and can be quite complex. The following checklist is only a general guideline and should not be considered all-inclusive.

Age 18-19

- Apply for Dane County Adult Developmental Disability Services
- Apply for Social Security Benefits (SSI, Medicaid, etc)
- Investigate guardianship options
- Investigate the possibility of Medical Assistance Personal Care (MAPC) services
- Assist son/daughter to obtain valid State ID card
- If needed, investigate the possibility of respite supports (complete referral ASAP – can happen prior to age 18)

Age 19-21

- Network with other parents about transition and their experience in the adult service system
- Develop a plan around the replacement of non-work activities that are supported by the school
- Attend available trainings to learn about transition, self-determination and the adult service system
- DVR is involved with transition team
- Paid employment is secured and maximized
- Make referral for benefits planning
- Work with school and Transition Coordinator regarding post-high school transportation planning

Final Year of School (Age 20-21)

- Transition Coordinator is assisting with case coordination
- Provide Transition Coordinator photo copies of important documents
- Collaborate with Transition Coordinator and Dane County to identify future Vocational Provider
- Develop Person-Centered Plan with Transition Coordinator
- Interview and hire Support Broker in early June (near exit from high school)

The following pages provide a more detailed explanation of the above checklist.

Age 18-19

Eligibility- For an exiting high school student to qualify for adult SDS supports, the individual must be a resident of Dane County, exit High School at age 21, have a documented developmental disability, have a substantial impairment in at least three areas of daily functioning and meet the income and financial asset eligibility requirements for Medicaid.

Functional Eligibility

- *Aging and Disability Resource Center of Dane County* - At age 18 contact the Aging and Disability Resource Center High School Transition Helpline at 608-240-7476 to request information on applying for Dane County Adult Services. An Information and Assistance Specialists (I&A Specialist) will explain the eligibility criteria and process. The ADRC is responsible for determining eligibility for Adult Waiver Services and will need to complete an assessment and gather required medical documentation of a person's disability. An I&A Specialist will also be able to explain Dane County's guidelines for supporting adults with developmental disabilities in the community.

Financial Eligibility

- *Medicaid Eligibility*- Individuals must qualify for Medicaid and meet the Medicaid Waiver target group criteria to participate in the Dane County SDS system. Many people choose to apply for Medicaid and SSI benefits through the Social Security Administration (<http://www.ssa.gov/>) when their son/daughter turns 18. If your son/daughter is not eligible for Medicaid with Social Security, some individuals choose to apply for Medicaid through the County (<https://access.wisconsin.gov/>).
- *Estate Planning*- Many families choose to complete estate planning for their young adult with a disability. There are legal means, such as establishing a Supplemental Needs Trust, to help individuals maintain government entitlements as they age. More information about financial planning resources can be found at this website: http://cow.waisman.wisc.edu/resources_guardians.html

Guardianship- Regardless of the significance of your child's disability, at age 18 she/he will legally become her/his own guardian unless court proceedings are initiated by you or another interested person to obtain legal guardianship of your child. While full guardianship is not always in the best interest of a child, there are a variety of options, such as Partial Guardianship, Health Care Power of Attorney or Financial Power of Attorney, that may suit your child's needs. You will want to thoroughly investigate which option, if any, is the most desirable. More information about guardianship can be found at this website: http://cow.waisman.wisc.edu/resources_guardians.html or contact the Guardianship Support Center 1-855-409-9410.

Medical Assistance Personal Care (MAPC)- If your adult child (age 18 or older) is eligible for Medicaid and requires "hand's on" assistance with at least one hour of personal care every day, you may want to consider referring them for MAPC services. There are a variety of licensed Personal Care Agencies/Home Health Care Agencies in the area, so you will want to thoroughly investigate which option is the most desirable. A few agency options include: Community Living Alliance (CLA), REM Home Health, Home Health United, Interim Healthcare, Maxim, Catalyst, etc.

Identification- Assist your son/daughter to acquire a State of Wisconsin ID card and ability to communicate personal information. Proper identification is required to secure paid community employment. <http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/drivers/drivers/apply/idcard.htm>

Respite Supports- Dane County families are eligible for respite services if they have a child or adult living at home who meets the federal definition of developmental disability. To apply for services, interested families can contact UCP of Greater Dane County at 608-273-3318. Please note that there is a waitlist for respite services at this time, so the earlier you contact UCP about a referral, the better. <http://ucpdane.org/programs/respice-care>

Age 19-21

Community Building- Parents often have valuable insight and great recommendations, so it suggested to network with other parents to learn about their experiences with transition and the adult service system. LOV-Dane (<http://cow.waisman.wisc.edu/LOV-Dane.html>) and Special Olympics (<http://www.specialolympicswisconsin.org/>) are two examples of good places to network with other families.

Non-Work Activities- During the last years of school, begin planning with the school and your child's case manager around the replacement of non-work activities that are currently supported by the school. Begin to work on identifying other ways to pay for these activities such as using MAPC, respite, co-ops with other parents, Social Security Benefits, etc.

Trainings- Attend available trainings as needed to learn about transition, self-determination and the adult service system. A few resources for training opportunities include: Waisman Center Community Outreach Wisconsin (<http://cow.waisman.wisc.edu/traincon.html>), Wisconsin Facets (<http://www.wifacets.org/>) or joint workshops with Madison Partners and Dane County.

Vocational Planning

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)- No later than 1 ½ years before your child is going to exit High School, school personnel should make a formal referral to DVR. DVR is a federal/state program designed to assist individuals with disabilities. It is DVR's goal to help individuals with disabilities obtain, maintain and improve employment opportunities. There are many services provided by DVR, a few examples of their services are: guidance & counseling, funding job coaching supports and funding assistive technology. <http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/>

Employment- Paid Employment is very important during transition. During the last year of High School (20-21 years old), your son/daughter should be spending a majority of her/his days outside of the school building in vocational and community activities. Most exiting students try to secure the maximum number of hours of paid work in the community of which they are capable. Individuals transitioning from high school will be assessed when they enter the Dane County adult system in order to determine the level of support needed. The team must then assure that the level of supports given, matches the assessment. A vocational rate is given based on the amount of hours an individual is employed in the community and the level of support required at the paid job site(s).

Benefits Planning- Many people exiting high school find it beneficial to receive a benefits analysis during the last few months they are in school. This is a great tool to learn about the nuances of your son/daughter's Social Security benefits and the different Social Security work incentive programs available. For more information regarding benefits counseling, contact Employment Resources Inc (ERI). There is generally no change for benefits counseling if the requesting individual is eligible for a SSI benefit. <http://eri-wi.org/>

Transportation- It's recommended to try to minimize complications with transportation during transition. If you live in the Madison metro area, you may want to reference this map when your son/daughter is considering adding a job to their schedule: http://www.cityofmadison.com/metro/documents/PT_09Aug.pdf. Given the limited funding available to consumers in the adult service system, and the high cost of transportation in areas not served by Madison Metro Para-transit, it is the practice of Dane County Adult Community Services to investigate alternatives to County funded transportation whenever feasible. These alternatives may include: Requesting parents, other family members, friends, neighbors or coworkers to assist with rides; using a Social Security Work Incentive such as an Impairment Related Work Expense (IRWE) to help pay for rides; investigating ride share arrangements such as state van pools to commute to/from work; and walking or riding a bike to and from a job. For current transportation options while in school you can also contact the Dane County Transportation Center 608-242-6489.

Final Year of School (Age 20-21)

Case Management

Transition Coordinator- A Transition Coordinator employed by Progressive Community Services or UCP-ASAP works with all high school graduates with developmental disabilities in Dane County who are eligible for services and who do not already have a Children's System Case Manager or Support Broker. The Transition Coordinator is assigned to exiting students during the September prior to the student's exit from high school. The Transition Coordinator assists with service coordination for approximately 1 year (age 20-21; the last year of high school).

Support Broker- The Support Broker is the system case manager and primary quality assurance monitor that will be a part of your son/daughter's team in the adult service system. High school graduates with developmental disabilities in Dane County who are eligible for services have the opportunity to interview and select their Support Broker at the time of their transition into the adult service system. Your son/daughter can begin to receive Support Broker services at the point they begin to receive CIP Waiver funded services. Individuals typically select their Support Broker in early June (near graduation/exit from high school).

Important Documents- Your Transition Coordinator will likely request photo copies of guardianship papers, Forward Health card, Social Security card, State ID, etc during the last year of school.

Vocational Provider- For many years, providers specializing in vocational services have been hired by supported workers to provide job coaching and job development services. Your Transition Coordinator will work with you and Dane County to identify your future Vocational Provider. Vocational Providers are typically identified in February and officially begin to provide support to eligible individuals at the time of their transition into the adult service system (June).

Person-Centered Plan- Your child's Transition Coordinator will help to write their initial person-centered plan the month prior to their exit from high school and their Support Broker will help to update the plan in the future. Personal Futures Plans, PATH plans and Essential Lifestyle Plans are a few examples of person-centered planning tools that focus on community building and an individual's short-term and long-term dreams and goals.

Other Suggested Reading & Resources

- **Dane County Department of Human Services:**
<http://www.danecountyhumanservices.org/DevelopmentalDisabilities/Adult/default.aspx>
- **Madison Metropolitan School District – Transition Guide:**
https://specialedweb.madison.k12.wi.us/files/specialed/Transition_Guide.pdf
- **Opening Doors to Self-Determination Skills – Planning for Life After High School:**
<http://dpi.wi.gov/sped/pdf/tranopndrs-self-determination.pdf>
- **Opening Doors to Employment – Planning for Life After High School:**
http://www.wsti.org/documents/topics/o/opening_doors_employment.pdf
- **Wisconsin Statewide Transition Initiative – Transition Topics A - Z:**
http://www.wsti.org/transition_topics.php
- **Transition Health Care Checklist – Preparing for Life as an Adult:**
<http://www.waisman.wisc.edu/wrc/pdf/pubs/THCL.pdf>