



TURNING 18 CHECKLIST: TASKS FOR YEAR LEADING UP TO & DURING AGE 18 (For educational purposes only)

SCHOOL DISTRICT

- Discuss with your child's team whether your child requires special education services after senior year/until your child "ages out" at 22 years old
- Talk to school district about any possible support or service options after child "ages out"
- Think about what your child will do during the day once school ends and ensure that your child's IEP includes functional life skill goals that can help prepare them
- Obtain a Chapter 688 referral from school which is needed for DDS/DMH/Mass Rehab application

GOVERNMENT BENEFIT PROGRAMS (AFTER 18TH BIRTHDAY)

- Apply for Supplemental Security Income (SSI). *Note: SSI recipients automatically receive MassHealth/Medicaid.*
- Make sure to retain documentation of disability prior to age 22 for Disabled Adult Child benefits (and for ABLE Account qualification)
- Apply for SSDI if qualified
- Begin process of applying for Adult DDS Services
- File pre-application Section 8 at www.Section8listmass.org
- Apply for the RIDE

MEDICAL AND FINANCIAL DECISION-MAKING

- Determine whether guardianship is appropriate. *Note: In most cases, conservatorship can be avoided. If guardianship is appropriate, begin working on Clinical Team Report or Medical Certificate.*
- If child is still legally capable of financial or medical decision-making, consider whether it is appropriate for child to execute power of attorney, health care proxy and/or HIPAA release at age 18.
- If a health care proxy/HIPAA is executed, file copies with the child's primary care provider's office
- If child will be provided his or her own access to funds, consider and compare different options such as a joint bank account or prepaid card (for ex. TrueLink)

ESTATE PLANNING

- As part of your personal estate plan, have you consulted with a professional as to how your funds will be left to disabled child?
- Have you reviewed the titling and beneficiary designations on all accounts to ensure that if you have a trust set up for child, the trust is named as beneficiary on those accounts as advised by your attorney?
- If your child is already the beneficiary of any trust (set up by you or anyone else), an attorney should review the trust and advise on how it might affect benefits eligibility. Prepaid college fund accounts and/or other custodial accounts that benefit the child (for ex. UTMA accounts) should also be reviewed.
- If family members plan to gift funds to child in the future, consider use of an irrevocable special needs trust or ABLE account to protect those funds.
- Write a letter of intent which explains your child's needs, preferences, current benefits and any other information you think would be helpful for a caregiver or advocate.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Consider obtaining passport for child prior to age 18 as the process is easier when child is still a minor
- Males age 18 must still register with the Selective Service System within 30 days of 18th birthday.