



A Support Plan Comparison: IEP vs. 504

IEP

504

Definition	Individualized Education Program: student program or curriculum that is essentially different from what peers utilize – fundamentally a special education program at its core	Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: equal opportunity for those students with disabilities – fundamentally a general education program at its core with supports extended to access it
Purpose	Specialized instruction with modification of actual program or curriculum materials	Accommodations for accessing standard program or curriculum materials
Eligibility	Only under specified disability categories: Autism, Emotional, Specific Learning Disability, Sensory (Hearing, Vision, Deaf-Blind), etc.	Less discriminatory – available to students with physical or mental impairment substantially limiting at least one major life activity, have a record of such impairment or regarded as having such an impairment
Oversight	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) – Education Law	Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) – Civil Rights Law
Contents	Disability listing, vision statement, progress impact, short-term goals, accommodations/modifications, behavior and/or social skills plan if applicable, summer services, transport needs, placement recommendation	Plan objectives, definitions, care and self-care details, resource access, health/medical monitoring, emergency planning, testing and classroom dynamics, communication and notification instructions, additional contact details
Funding	Federal funding	No federal funding
Reciprocity	A student covered under IDEA on an IEP is automatically covered under ADA’s Section 504	A student covered under ADA’s Section 504 is not necessarily covered by education law under IDEA
Testing	Standardized testing accommodations available	Standardized testing accommodations available
Tracking	Progress reporting	No progress reporting