

Related Services

Related services in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) help students with disabilities benefit from special education by providing them extra support or help in other areas, such as writing, moving, or communicating. These services are an important part of a student's program that provides a free, appropriate, public education, or FAPE. There is wide range of related services that a student may need that are listed under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), including:

- transportation
- speech-language pathology
- audiology services
- interpreting services
- psychological services
- physical therapy
- occupational therapy
- recreation, including therapeutic recreation
- early identification and assessment of disabilities in children
- counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling, orientation, and mobility services
- medical services for diagnostic or evaluation purposes
- school health services and school nurse services
- social work services in schools
- parent counseling and training

Example: Parents with a child who is learning to communicate with an AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication) device as part of their IEP can get training to support their child's communication and use of their AAC device. The school team could also provide those parents child development information related to communication.

Parent counseling and training is a related service that many parents are not aware of. This related service is to help parents in understanding the special needs of their child, provide them with information about child development, and help them to acquire the necessary skills that will allow them to support the implementation of their child's IEP.

While IDEA lists the services above and provides definitions for them, this is not an exhaustive list of related services. A developmental, corrective, or other supportive service that is needed to help the student benefit from their special education program can be a related service in the IEP, even if it is not on this list. A couple of examples of other related services are behavioral supports and music therapy.

Related services do not include: a medical device that is surgically implanted (such as a cochlear implant), the optimization of that device's functioning (for example, mapping), maintenance of that device, or the replacement of that device.

However, even if a student has a medical device that is implanted, IDEA says that nothing:

(i) Limits the right of a child with a surgically implanted device (e.g., cochlear implant) to receive related services (as listed in paragraph (a) of this section) that are determined by the IEP Team to be necessary for the child to receive FAPE.

(ii) Limits the responsibility of a public agency to appropriately monitor and maintain medical devices that are needed to maintain the health and safety of the child, including breathing, nutrition, or operation of other bodily functions, while the child is transported to and from school or is at school; or

(iii) Prevents the routine checking of an external component of a surgically implanted device to make sure it is functioning properly, as required in §300.113(b).

Example: While the school district would not be responsible for paying for a surgically implanted device such as a cochlear implant, or for replacing it, the student might need audiology services for reasons such as identifying acoustical modifications for the classroom, making sure that equipment needed to access the curriculum consistently works, and helping teachers and other related service providers to identify appropriate accommodations and modifications for the student.

Where are related services on the IEP document?

In CT's IEP form, related services are documented in the service grid, as well as with the student's goals that it supports in the IEP.