

Turning 14, 18 and 21 in New Jersey

What often comes up at each age, and who to ask. Plain information only.

Around 14 Planning for after high school

- The IEP starts to include plans for after high school: work, more school, and daily life. This is often called transition planning.

Ask: the case manager. <https://www.nj.gov/education/specialed/>

- Help with getting ready for work may be available from Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRs).

Ask: DVRs. <https://www.nj.gov/labor/career-services/special-services/individuals-with-disabilities/>

Around 18 Your child becomes an adult

- At 18 your child is an adult. Some families look into guardianship or other kinds of help with decisions. It goes through the courts.

Ask: NJ Courts guardianship self-help. <https://www.njcourts.gov/self-help/guardianship>

- Social Security reviews SSI at 18 using the rules for adults.

Ask: Social Security. <https://www.ssa.gov/ssi>

- The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) serves adults. Many families apply before school ends.

Ask: DDD when to apply. <https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/ddd/individuals/transition/>

Around 21 School ends, adult services begin

- School services can continue until about 21.

Ask: the school when the last school year is. <https://www.nj.gov/education/specialed/>

- Adult day programs and supports come through DDD after school ends.

Ask: DDD. <https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/ddd/individuals/transition/>

SPAN is New Jersey's parent center: free help for families with questions about school and growing up.

<https://spanadvocacy.org/>

Links checked: October 2026. Rules and forms change: always ask the agency.



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Our notes

Questions, next steps and dates, by age.

CHILD

Around 14

QUESTIONS

NEXT STEP

BY WHEN

Around 18

QUESTIONS

NEXT STEP

BY WHEN

Around 21

QUESTIONS

NEXT STEP

BY WHEN

OTHER NOTES



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