

Texas 504 Plan Request Kit for Autism

A one-page letter to ask your child's school for a 504 plan, and a list of school changes to bring to the meeting.



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How a 504 plan and an IEP differ

What to know	504 plan	IEP
Who qualifies	A child whose condition, like autism, makes learning or another major daily activity much harder than it is for most kids.	A child with a disability in one of 13 groups, which include autism, who needs special teaching because of it.
What your child gets	Changes in regular classes, like extra test time, plus services such as counseling or speech therapy when needed.	Teaching planned for your child, plus services such as speech therapy, all written into the IEP.
The written plan	Schools often put the plan in writing, though federal rules do not require it, so ask for a copy.	The school must write an IEP and give you a copy of it.
How long testing takes in Texas	Section 504 sets no number of days, so ask which timeline your district follows.	45 school days after the school gets your signed consent form, with some exceptions, so confirm with the school.
Cost to you	No cost to you for the school's testing or the plan.	No cost to you for the IEP or the services in it.
If you disagree	You can see records and ask for an impartial hearing run by a neutral person.	You can ask for a due process hearing run by a neutral person.

An IEP is a written special education plan. A child with an IEP does not also need a 504 plan, since the IEP can hold the same changes. In Texas, the team that writes the IEP is called the ARD committee. If your child does not qualify for an IEP, the school must still check if a 504 plan fits.

Letter asking for a 504 plan

Fill in the blanks, then send it by email or hand it in at the front office.

Today's date

Dear 504 coordinator or principal's name,

I am the parent of child's full name, who is in grade at school name. My child has a diagnosis of autism or the diagnosis on the report, and a copy of the report is attached. At school, my child has a hard time with the following.

what you have seen or been told

the part of the school day it affects most

I am asking the school to test my child under Section 504 for a 504 plan. Please send me the consent form and the notice of procedural safeguards, which explains my rights.

Please tell me in writing which timeline the district follows for this testing. I would like to attend the 504 meeting, so please send me the date and time once it is set.

If the school decides not to test my child, please explain the reason in writing.

You can reach me at phone number or email address. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Your name

You can send this at any time of the school year. The 504 coordinator runs 504 plans and is named in a public notice, like the student handbook or district website. Log the date you send it on page 10.

After you send the letter

Keep this page next to your log, and write down each call or meeting on page 10 as it happens.

Step 1: The school asks for your OK to test

The school asks for your OK to test, usually in writing. This OK is called consent, and the testing costs you nothing. If the school decides not to test, it must tell you and explain how to challenge that choice.

Step 2: The school gathers information

For a 504 plan, the school may give tests or may look at records like grades and teacher notes. Give the school any outside report, like an autism evaluation, since the school must consider it.

Step 3: How long testing can take

Section 504, the federal law behind these plans, sets no number of days, so ask the 504 coordinator which timeline your district follows. To decide if a wait is too long, the Office for Civil Rights, the federal office that enforces Section 504, looks at the special education deadline or state and district rules. In Texas, that deadline is 45 school days after the school gets your signed consent form, with some exceptions.

Step 4: The 504 meeting

A group of people who know your child and the test results decides if your child qualifies and which changes to make. Ask to be invited, and bring pages 5 to 8. A diagnosis alone does not decide it. Good grades do not rule your child out, and the group must not count help from medicine or coping skills your child has learned.

Step 5: You get the plan in writing

Ask for a copy at the meeting, since every teacher of your child must follow it.

What is hard at school

Fill this in before the meeting. In each row, write one thing you have seen or been told at school, then pick a change from pages 6 to 8.

Where it is hard	What I have seen or been told	A change that could help
Loud rooms and crowded places like the cafeteria.		
Moving from one activity or class to the next.		
Asking for help or saying that something is wrong.		
Following directions that are only said out loud.		
Finishing tests and classwork in the time given.		
Staying calm and ready to learn through the day.		
Playing at recess or working in a group with others.		
Keeping track of homework and school supplies each day.		
Something else you or the teacher have noticed.		

Sensory and routine changes

Accommodations, the school's word for these changes, go in a 504 plan. Tick each one that fits. The first seven are for sensory needs and the last six for routines.

Change to ask for	Tick it and note where or when
Headphones for loud places.	
A seat away from the door and the busy hallway.	
A small fidget to hold.	
Leave class a few minutes early to miss crowded halls.	
A quiet lunch spot with a friend.	
A warning before fire drills when the school can give one.	
Sunglasses for bright rooms.	
A picture schedule of the day taped to the desk.	
Notice before each new activity.	
A timer your child can see that shows how long is left.	
A note home or a heads-up when the day's plan changes.	
A card that shows what happens first and what comes next.	
Extra time between classes.	

Communication and test changes

Tick each change that fits your child, and note the class or time it is for. The first seven help with communication, and the last six help with tests and classwork.

Change to ask for	Tick it and note where or when
Directions in writing too.	
One direction at a time, with extra time to answer.	
A break card to hand over.	
Pictures or a talking device to answer when words are hard.	
One adult to check in with.	
A daily note or app message between home and school.	
Cue cards for asking for help.	
Extra time on tests and on timed classwork.	
Tests in a quiet room.	
Short breaks during long tests without losing test time.	
Test directions read aloud.	
Shorter assignments that still cover the same skills.	
Big tasks split into steps.	

Social time and homework changes

Tick each change that fits, and note the class or time it is for. The first seven help with staying calm and time with other kids, and the last six help with homework.

Change to ask for	Tick it and note where or when
Movement breaks at set times.	
A calm-down space your child picks and can leave anytime.	
A quieter choice at recess.	
An adult nearby to help during group work and projects.	
A set role in group work.	
A written plan for what staff do when your child is upset.	
A plan to stop teasing.	
An adult checks that homework is in the backpack before your child goes home.	
Homework posted online each day.	
Fewer practice problems once your child shows the skill.	
More days to turn in work.	
One folder color for each class, kept the same all year.	
A copy of the class notes.	

After the plan is in place

Work down this list in the first weeks of the plan, and come back to it whenever something changes.

- ☐ **Get a copy of the final plan and read it within a week of getting it.**
Check that each change names the class or time it covers, so every teacher can use it the same way.
- ☐ **Ask the campus 504 coordinator to share the plan with every teacher.**
Your district has a 504 coordinator, and each campus may have its own, so ask the front office who yours is. Teachers must follow the plan as it is written.
- ☐ **Ask how often your district looks at 504 plans again.**
Federal rules say the school must check again from time to time, and the Texas Education Agency (TEA) says some districts review plans every year.
- ☐ **Ask for a 504 meeting in writing when a change is not working.**
TEA's guide says the team may need to meet more often when a student is struggling.
- ☐ **Ask about special education testing if your child keeps falling behind.**
TEA's guide says the team should think about this when a student is not making enough progress.
- ☐ **Ask about retesting if your child could miss more than 10 school days for discipline.**
The Office for Civil Rights calls that a big change, and the school must retest first.
- ☐ **Keep every letter and email about the plan in one folder.**
You also have the right to see the records the school used, such as test results.
- ☐ **If you think the school broke the rules, you can file a complaint.**
TEA says to file with the Office for Civil Rights within 180 days of the last incident. Call the Kansas City office that serves Texas at 816-268-0550 to confirm the deadline.

Call and meeting log

Write down every call and meeting about the 504 plan on the day it happens.

Date	Who I talked to	What they said or decided	Next step and date

Sources

Facts checked on 2026-09-25. Sources change over time, so check each one before you act on it.

Texas Education Agency, Section 504

<https://tea.texas.gov/special-populations-and-support/section-504>

Texas Education Agency, Technical Assistance: Section 504 (January 2024)

<https://tea.texas.gov/special-populations-and-support/special-education/504-guide-0.pdf>

Texas Education Agency, Section 504 fact sheet for families

<https://tea.texas.gov/special-populations-and-support/special-education/section-504-0.pdf>

U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Parent and Educator Resource Guide to Section 504 (December 2016)

<https://www.ed.gov/sites/ed/files/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/504-resource-guide-201612.pdf>

U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Section 504 frequently asked questions

<https://www.ed.gov/laws-and-policy/civil-rights-laws/disability-discrimination/frequently-asked-questions-section-504-free-appropriate-public-education-fape>

Code of Federal Regulations, 34 CFR 104.35, evaluation and placement

<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-34/subtitle-B/chapter-I/part-104/subpart-D/section-104.35>

Code of Federal Regulations, 34 CFR 104.36, procedural safeguards

<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-34/subtitle-B/chapter-I/part-104/subpart-D/section-104.36>

Code of Federal Regulations, 34 CFR 300.322, parent copy of the IEP

<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-34/section-300.322>

This kit is general information and is not medical or legal advice. Talk to a qualified professional about your child's situation.

Build skills with ABA

A 504 plan changes the school day around your child. Applied behavior analysis (ABA) therapy with a board certified behavior analyst (BCBA) can help your child build skills to use in those moments, like asking for a break. Alpaca Health connects Texas families with independent, local BCBAs and handles the insurance and billing paperwork. If you want to start ABA therapy, you can begin with the Alpaca Health intake form.



When you are ready

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<https://secure.alpacahealth.io/signup>



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For more on who qualifies and how to get ready for the meeting, read the full guide to Texas 504 plans. <https://www.alpacahealth.io/family-resources/guide-to-texas-504-plans>