



AGE OF MAJORITY

A critical point on the path of transition to adulthood is when a child attains the age of majority, as there is a significant shift in the roles and responsibilities for both the parent(s) and the young adult.

What is Age of Majority in Georgia?

Each state determines at what age a child will be considered an adult. In Georgia, a child is considered to be an adult when he/she turns 18 years old.

What happens when your child turns 18 in Georgia?

When your child turns 18, he/she will gain many of the rights and responsibilities that adults have.

- If your child receives special education services and has an IEP (Individualized Education Program), all the rights of the parent will transfer to the student.
- If your child is on Medicaid (Katie Beckett Deeming Waiver, Low Income Medicaid, SSI Medicaid for children or Medicaid through Care Management Organizations such as Amerigroup, Peach State and CareSource,) then they might have to reapply as an adult.

Can I still be part of the decision-making process after my child turns 18?

Yes! You can! In the eyes of the law, your child might be an adult, but he/she might still need your help in making decisions. There are a range of options available depending on the type of support your child might need. Some of the least restrictive options include supported decision-making, maintaining limited or joint accounts, financial power of attorney, educational power of attorney, consent to release medical information, and Georgia advance directives for healthcare. Full Guardianship is the most restrictive option. Consult an attorney to help you decide which option might be best for your situation.

Rights gained at 18	Responsibilities at 18
<p>The Right to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vote • Enter into a contract (such as rental agreements) • Apply for credit • Enter military service • Marry • Obtain and make their own medical treatment decisions <p>If your child has an IEP, they will have the right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decide who is invited to the IEP meeting • Make decisions about their IEP goals • Give signed consent to reevaluation and changes in placement • Request an IEP meeting • Make decisions regarding resolving disputes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legally responsible for all their actions • If male, they are required to register with Selective Services • They will be responsible for all contracts they sign • Jury duty

Tips for Families:

- Prepare your child for adulthood by encouraging them to attend and actively participate in their own IEP meetings.
- Work with your child so he/she is comfortable asking questions at his/her own medical appointments.
- Have a clear plan to address your child's healthcare needs once he/she turns 18.
- Talk to you child about their rights and responsibilities
- Start laying the foundation for them to be able to take on responsibilities, such as paying bills, managing their own healthcare, living independently, etc.
- Help build your child's self-determination and self-advocacy skills.
- Help your child talk about his/her disability and how to ask for support and accommodations.
- If your child has an IEP, then at least one year before your child turns 18, your child's IEP team should talk to you and your child about transfer of rights at the age of majority. Take this opportunity to start planning for these changes.
- Allow your child to make mistakes, as long as it is not a matter of health and safety. Your child can learn from their mistakes.
- Foster a team approach that involves your child.



Resources

You can find information on power of attorney for education, Georgia advance directives for health, supported decision-making and guardianship in the Financial and Legal Planning section of our Roadmap to Success (<https://www.p2pga.org/roadmap/>).

Where to go for more information:

Parent to Parent of Georgia
770 451-5484 or 800-229-2038
www.p2pga.org

Georgia Department of Education, Divisions for Special Education Services and Supports

404 656-3963 or 800-311-3627 and ask to be transferred to Special Education
http://www.gadoe.org/ci_exceptional.aspx

Additional Resources: Contact the Special Education Director for your school system.



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