FREE GUIDE

California special education deadlines

Sources last checked between Nov 16, 2026 and Nov 20, 2026
State rules as of November 20, 2026

RULE	FIRST LINE OF THE RULE	SOURCE
EVALUATIONS		
Responding to an evaluation request	In California, if the school will assess your child, it must give you a written assessment plan within 15 days after it receives the referral for assessment.	Cal. Educ. Code § 56321(a)
Completing an initial evaluation	In California, your child's first IEP must be developed within 60 days after the school district receives your signed consent for assessment.	Cal. Educ. Code §§ 56344(a), 56302.1(a)–(b), 56043(c), (f)
FIRST IEP MEETING		
The initial IEP after eligibility	Once the team decides your child needs special education and related services, a meeting to write your child's first IEP must be held within 30 calendar days.	34 CFR 300.323(c)(1)
An IEP meeting after your written request	In California, when you ask in writing for an IEP team meeting to review your child's IEP, the school must hold the meeting within 30 days after it receives your request.	Cal. Educ. Code § 56343.5
SCHOOL RECORDS		
Timing of access to education records	In California, you can ask to see your child's school records out loud or in writing.	Cal. Educ. Code § 56504
Copies of records, fees and access barriers	California: Copy charges cannot exceed the actual reproduction cost.	Cal. Educ. Code § 56504; 34 CFR §§ 300.617, 99.11
IEP REVIEWS AND REEVALUATIONS		
Regular IDEA reevaluation	Your child must be reevaluated at least once every three years, unless you and the school agree it isn't needed.	34 CFR 300.303(a), (b)
Reviewing the IEP at least annually	Your child's IEP team must review the IEP periodically, and at least once a year, to see whether the annual goals are being met.	34 CFR 300.324(b)(1)(i)
TRANSITION PLANNING		
When transition goals and services begin	Under IDEA, your child's IEP must include transition goals and services, starting no later than the first IEP in effect when your child turns 16.	34 CFR 300.320(b)
RIGHTS AT ADULTHOOD		
Advance notice about the transfer of IDEA rights	In California, at least a year before your child turns 18, the IEP must say your child was told about any IDEA rights that will transfer to them.	Cal. Educ. Code §§56043(g)(3), 56041.5; 34 CFR 300.320(c)
The state's age of majority and IDEA rights	In California, special education rights under IDEA transfer from you to your child at age 18.	Cal. Educ. Code §56041.5
PRESCHOOL AND EARLY INTERVENTION		
Preschool special education by age three	A child who turns three while receiving early childhood special education may continue those services through June 30 of the current program year if the IEP team finds the child eligible for preschool services, develops an IEP, and finds the current services appropriate.	Cal. Educ. Code § 56426.9(b), (d)
Moving from early intervention to preschool	California: Plan the move from Early Start to preschool before age 3.	Cal. Educ. Code §56426.9(a)–(d); 34 CFR §§300.124, 300.323(b), 303.209
OTHER RULES		
When a manifestation determination must occur	California (same as the federal rule): A manifestation determination review must happen within 10 school days of a decision that changes placement for discipline.	34 CFR § 300.530(e)(1)–(3)
The school's response to an IEE request	An independent evaluator must have an equivalent opportunity to observe your child in the current or proposed placement when the school observed your child or permits classroom observation as part of its assessment procedures.	Cal. Educ. Code § 56329(b)–(c)
Give written notice before moving to a private school	If you plan to move your child to a private school and ask the district to pay, give the district written notice at least 10 business days before your child leaves the public school.	34 CFR 300.148(d)–(e); 300.11(b)
IEP services after a move within the state	California: When a student with an IEP moves to a new district within the state during the same school year, the new district must provide comparable services.	California Education Code § 56325(a)(1)-(2)

RULE	FIRST LINE OF THE RULE	SOURCE
IEP services after a move from another state	California: If a student with an IEP moves from another state during the same school year, comparable services begin with the move.	California Education Code § 56325(a)(3)(A)–(B)(i) (AB 1412, Stats. 2025, ch. 453, § 2; effective Jan. 1, 2026)

Planning aid only. Not legal advice. Confirm the date with the governing source.
Full answers and source links: https://endeavy.com/special-education-deadlines/california