FREE GUIDE

North Carolina 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		
Completing an initial evaluation	In North Carolina, the school has 90 calendar days after it receives a written referral.	North Carolina Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities, NC 1503-2.2(c)–(e), p. 61 (March 2021)
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)
SCHOOL RECORDS		
Timing of access to education records	You have the right to review your child's education records that the school keeps or uses under IDEA.	34 CFR 99.10(b); 34 CFR 300.613(a)
Copies of records, fees and access barriers	North Carolina: Under IDEA, copying fees cannot prevent you from reviewing records.	34 CFR 300.617(a)-(b)
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		
The earlier age-14 transition step	In North Carolina, transition planning starts at age 14.	North Carolina Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities, NC 1503-4.1(b)(1)–(2) (March 2021)
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	The age of majority is when your child becomes a legal adult under state law.	34 CFR 300.320(c); 300.520(a)–(b)
The state's age of majority and IDEA rights	In North Carolina, IDEA rights other than required parent notices transfer from you to your child at 18.	N.C.G.S. §115C-109.2(a)–(b)
PRESCHOOL AND EARLY INTERVENTION		
Preschool special education by age three	For a child moving from early intervention (Part C) to preschool special education, an IEP, or an IFSP where that is allowed, must be developed and in place by the third birthday.	34 CFR 300.124(b); 300.101(b); 300.102(a)(1), (4)
Moving from early intervention to preschool	For a toddler in early intervention who may be eligible for preschool special education, the early intervention program, with your family's approval, holds a transition conference with you and the school district at least 90 days before your child's third birthday.	34 CFR 303.209(c)(1); 303.209(b)–(f)
OTHER RULES		
Section 504 protections in school discipline	Under Section 504, a significant change in placement generally requires an evaluation first.	34 CFR 104.35(a); 29 U.S.C. § 705(20)(C)(i)–(iv)
The school's response to an IEE request	The school must pay for an independent evaluation or file to defend its own evaluation without unnecessary delay, and the results of an evaluation paid for publicly must be provided to the school.	N.C. Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities, NC 1504-1.3(b)(2), (6)
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	After a move within North Carolina, your child receives comparable services until the new school adopts or replaces the IEP.	N.C. Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities, NC 1503-4.4(e)(1)–(2)

Planning aid only. Not legal advice. Confirm the date with the governing source.

Full answers and source links: https://endeavy.com/special-education-deadlines/north-carolina