



It's **YOUR Right!** Age of Majority and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

For students not under guardianship

Because it's your life, you have your own rights and responsibilities¹. This information is for you if you:

- live in Minnesota
- will be 18 years old soon
- receive special education services and have an Individualized Education Program (IEP)

When you are 18 years old, you will become an adult and reach the age of majority.² This means you will be expected to make educational decisions for yourself. You will have new rights and responsibilities. Your IEP team needs to explain age of majority to you and your parents before you turn 18. If advocating for yourself is new to you, it may be helpful for you to ask your IEP case manager to make sure self-advocacy is listed as a need at your IEP meeting.

All the rights and responsibilities your parents had in regards to your special education services will now be yours. This is often called **transfer of rights**. Your new rights and responsibilities will include:

- Receiving notice that there will be an IEP meeting
- Giving permission (consent) to be reevaluated for special education or to change your educational placement
- Agreeing or disagreeing on a new IEP

Reaching the age of majority means that you can make your own decisions. If you have questions, here are some steps:

1. Stop and think about the situation
2. Think about possible choices
3. Get information about each of your choices
4. Think about the good and bad consequences of each choice
5. Ask for advice from people you trust, including your parents
6. Then YOU decide!

Even though YOU are the one who will make decisions now, **there are people who can help you.**

- Your parents can be a helpful resource because they have known you for a long time. You have the right to ask that they attend meetings with you to help you make decisions.
- An adult from your community (religious staff, employer, volunteer supervisor, or teacher) who knows you well might be able to support you.

It is very important for you to be involved in making decisions to the best of your ability. Share your ideas with your parents, other adults, and your teachers. Speak up for yourself. Take responsibility for yourself. Know that you have a right to do so. When you do, it is much more likely that you will have the future that you wish for.

It's **YOUR Right!**

¹ You are entitled to have certain rights because of what a law says. *Responsibilities* are things you are expected to do.

² If someone else, often a parent, will become your legal guardian when you turn 18, then your guardian will make educational decisions. However, you are encouraged to advocate for yourself and participate in the decision-making.