

IEPs and Requests for Authorization of Services



What is an IEP?

An IEP is an Individualized Education Program. It is a formal service contract written with input from parents, the student, general educators, and special educators about the services that a school district will provide for a child's special education needs.

What does an IEP have to do with the services my providers have requested?

The IEP designs the services that it is determined the student needs to enable him or her to make progress in the general curriculum, and to help the child be successful in the life of the school. It may be necessary to identify accommodations, modifications, or services to meet specific learning needs. Also, students with disabilities who are found eligible for special education often have areas of need beyond the general curriculum. These areas of "Other Educational Need" must also be addressed in the IEP. Sometimes services such as Applied Behavior Analysis or speech therapy are a service necessary to meet learning needs, or an area of other educational need, and are included in the IEP.

Why is this important to Tufts Health Plan?

If your child has an IEP and the IEP calls for services, the law requires that the school district provide those services. If the school district is already providing services but a child needs additional services (for instance, ABA in the home as well as in the school, or speech therapy at school and after school, just for example), it is important to make sure that those services are coordinated and delivered in ways that are not duplicative, do not confuse the child, and do not reduce the effectiveness of either program. Tufts Health Plan helps make sure that multiple services are not duplications and that they work together well.

The IEP has a lot of personal information in it. Do I need to submit the whole thing?

Having the entire IEP helps our reviewers determine what services should be covered by your benefits, and just as with all health records submitted to us, they are subject to strict confidentiality and security standards applicable to health plans. But the most important parts are the sections that summarize your child's needs (to help us determine if the services requested are appropriate) and the services that it has been determined are to be provided by the school (so that we can understand what services your child is already receiving).

What happens if I do not provide it?

Often the information in the IEP helps us confirm that the requested services meet the requirements for coverage under the plan. If we do not have access to the IEP, we review the request with the information available to us, and make the best decision about coverage that we can.