

THE THREE MAJOR EDUCATION LAWS & HOW THEY RELATE TO DISABILITIES

Responsibilities of K12¹ and PostSecondary Institutions²

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IDEA defines a “child with a disability” according to the following criteria:

- (a) A child who has been evaluated according to IDEA's standards
- (b) A child who has been determined, through this evaluation, to have one or more of the disabilities listed below, and
- (c) A child who, because of the disability, needs special education and related services.

The Disabilities Listed by IDEA Are The Following:

mental retardation/developmental disabilities	hearing impairments, including deafness	speech, language impairments
visual impairment, including blindness	serious emotional disturbance	orthopedic impairments
autism	traumatic brain injury	other health impairments
specific learning disability	deafblindness	multiple disabilities

Four Major Provisions of IDEA

- 1. The Law applies to children with disabilities enrolled in all public schools from infant programs through twelfth grade.
- 2. Education for all disabled children is mandated. Schools must provide education, or risk losing their federal aid.
- 3. Children with disabilities are to be taught in the least restrictive environment (LRE). To the maximum extent possible, children must be “mainstreamed” into regular classes so that they can have appropriate peer models.
- 4. Children with disabilities must have individualized education programs (IEPs). Plans are developed to ensure that each student benefiting from special education and must include:
 - a. A statement of the