

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Each school district must designate an employee to coordinate the district's efforts to comply with requirements of section 504. Questions and concerns regarding 504 should be directed to the district's 504 coordinator.

Hearing Procedures

In Rhode Island, a party seeking an impartial due process hearing under Section 504 may file a complaint with the Commissioner of Education. The Commissioner's office will assign the matter to a RIDE hearing officer who will hear the dispute and render a written decision. RIDE hearings meet the federal requirements for 504 hearings and have additional jurisdiction under the following statutes:

§ 42-87-5 Enforcement of anti-discrimination provisions

The Rhode Island department of elementary and secondary education is empowered and directed to hear all complaints relating to violations of this chapter in the area of elementary and secondary education. Those complaints shall be heard in accordance with the process set forth in chapter 39 of title 16.

§ 16-39-1 Appeal of matters of dispute to commissioner. – Parties having any matter of dispute between them arising under any law relating to schools or education may appeal to the commissioner of elementary and secondary education who, after notice to the parties interested of the time and place of hearing, shall examine and decide the appeal without cost to the parties involved.

Appeals to the commissioner under section 504 must include the following information:

1. Name, telephone number, and address of the person filing the appeal.
2. A brief statement of the facts describing the nature of the appeal.
3. A statement of the relief being requested.

The hearing will be scheduled as promptly as possible and a recommended decision will be forwarded to the commissioner no later than forty-five (45) working days following the completion of the appeal record.

IDEA/Section 504 hearing procedures

A party that seeks a special education due process hearing that includes Section 504 issues may raise them as an issue in the special education due process hearing.