

INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY GUIDELINES

Federal Definition of Intellectual Disability:

Defined as significantly sub average general intellectual functioning, existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period, that adversely affects a child's educational performance [34 CFR 300.8(c)(6)]. The term does not include conditions primarily due to a sensory or physical impairment, traumatic brain injury, autism spectrum disorder, cultural influences, or a history of inconsistent and/or inadequate educational programming.

The term intellectual disability covers the same population of students who were identified previously with mental retardation. This change in terminology does not affect the continued need for individualized supports and services.

Adaptive Behavior: The age-appropriate behaviors necessary for people to live independently and to function safely and appropriately in daily life.

Below are some of the commonly referred to adaptive behavior skills:

- Conceptual skills: language, reading, writing, math reasoning, knowledge and memory
- Social Skills: interpersonal skills, social responsibility, self-esteem, social judgment, following rules/obeying laws, actively avoiding victimization, and social problem solving
- Practical Skills: activities of daily living, occupational skills, money management, safety, health care, travel/transportation, schedules/routines, use of the telephone, recreation, and organizing school and work tasks

Criteria:

1. Significantly impaired intellectual functioning, which is defined in most cases as **two or more standard deviations below the mean**, with consideration given to the standard error of measurement for the test, on an appropriate individually administered, standardized measure of intelligence.

2. Significantly impaired adaptive behavior in the home and/or community determined by a composite score on an individual standardized instrument to be completed with or by the child's primary caretaker which measures **two or more standard deviations below the mean**, with consideration given to the standard error of measurement for the test.

3. Significantly impaired adaptive behavior in the school, daycare center, residence, or program determined by a composite score on an individual standardized instrument to be completed with or by the child's teacher which measures **two or more standard deviations below the mean**, with consideration given to the standard error of measurement for the test.

- **Note-** Additional documentation, when appropriate, may be obtained from systematic documented observations, impressions, and/or developmental history by an appropriate specialist in conjunction with the primary caretaker in the home, community, residential program or institutional setting. (The Team may wish to consider using the **Adaptive Behavior Characteristics Checklists** and/or **Systematic Observation Forms** located in Appendix A).

4. Developmental history that indicates the delays in intellectual and adaptive behavior functioning were manifested during the developmental period.

5. As part of the specific eligibility criteria, the Team must consider general determinant factors. The data regarding the lack of appropriate reading and math instruction, the language proficiency of the student and factors such as culture, socio-economic status, attendance, frequent moves, incarceration, substance abuse, etc. must be discussed and determined to not be primary factors for the student's lack of performance.

Educational Impact:

The impact of the disability requires **specialized instruction** as it has an **adverse impact** on educational performance and is **not** able to be provided by general education.