



When to Write a 504: Part 2

There is no “set” time that triggers the writing of a 504 Plan.

There is no “set” symptom presentation that triggers the writing of a 504 Plan.

There is no “set” needed accommodation that triggers the writing of a 504 Plan.

A 504 Plan is a legal requirement that is interpretable through your school district so make sure you are consulting with legal counsel or administration when starting down the road of evaluating for a 504 Plan.

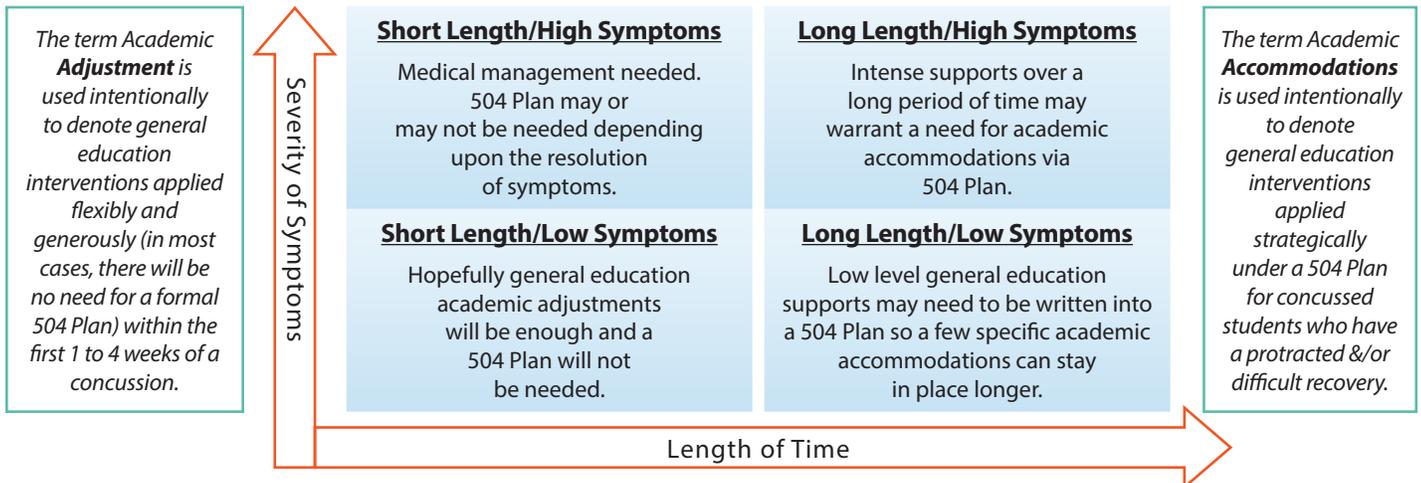
Here are some *practical* guidelines around 504 Plans. Know that some schools like to apply 504 Plans quickly and generously and some schools virtually never utilize a 504 Plan. A 504 Plan is just one of many ways to support a student academically while he/she is recovering from a concussion.

The logical place to start with a 504 Plan is with the statistical “outlier”. If a student has not resolved from a concussion within the typical 4 week timeframe, it may be prudent to begin to look at a more “targeted” and/or longer term approach. Keeping with the *philosophical* understanding of RTI/MTSS, when part of your student population does not respond to good, early intervention in the general education classroom, they will likely need a more “targeted” approach (Tier 2). A 504 Plan can be the roadmap that outlines a more individualized and formalized plan.

504 Plan Decision Formula for Concussion

Length of Time AND/OR Severity of Symptoms PLUS Need {L &/or S + N}

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- For Short Length/Low Symptoms = Academic **Adjustments**, 504 Plan is likely not needed.
- For Long Length/High Symptoms = Academic **Accommodations**, 504 Plan may be prudent. School team should be a part of intense and on-going treatment planning and coordination between school, family and medical team.
- For Short Length/High Symptoms = Academic **Adjustments** OR **Accommodations**. High symptoms require the medical team to stabilize symptoms first and then school determines academic needs. Ideally symptoms can be quickly resolved (short length) so Academic Adjustments might suffice and a more formal 504 Plan may not be needed.
- For Long Length/Low Symptoms = often times, Academic **Accommodations**, 504 Plan is needed. A 504 Plan is often needed in this case simply due to how long academic supports need to stay in place. In this scenario, a 504 Plan often helps teachers and student clarify academic expectations over long periods of time. This is beneficial in reducing confusion regarding in-class work, homework requirements, tests and grades. This category also requires on-going consultation, planning and collaboration between the family, school and medical teams.

What is **Need: L &/or S + N (Need)**?

The “need” category cannot be put into objective measures. This category leaves open the intangible factors on either school or parent side, regardless of length of time or severity. Some schools feel a high “need” for a 504 Plan as they feel better protected legally. Some schools feel a low “need” for a 504 Plan and choose to support their students informally. Some parents are so concerned about their student’s rights that they feel an intense “need” for a 504 Plan ASAP. There are no legal guidelines around “need”; these human factors have to be sensitively taken into account and require some element of professional judgment. There may be a small percentage of students who may need more than a 504 Plan. In those extreme cases, refer to you state guidelines for IDEA/TBI.

Now that you know
When to Write a 504 Plan,
 go to: **How to Write a 504 Plan**