



Missouri Special Education Eligibility Categories



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OVERVIEW

You heard about special education categories while you were an undergraduate college student in the Introduction to Special Education class. After that point you may not have had much need to recite the list to anyone, and you know the basics about most of the labels. It's time to refresh your knowledge.

Missouri is a categorical state. This means that any child must have one of the special education designations to receive special education supports and services. Not all U.S. states are categorical states. Some states categorize special education students by the severity level of their functioning: mild, moderate, severe. Some states use labels that are worded slightly differently. Missouri's state department of education is called the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), while other states may use Department of Education (DoE).



THE SCOOP ON CATEGORIES

Missouri's 13 categories are specified under federal educational law. These categories are defined, and eligibility criteria for each is given in the Missouri State Plan for Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act 2004 (Public Law 108-446).

In Missouri, special educational determinations do not always match medical diagnostic terminology or diagnostic criteria. In fact, Missouri's educators do not diagnose. That's a term the medical establishment used. Educators determine: 1) whether a student is a student with a disability, and 2) whether the student needs special education and services to succeed.

A category, or label, is the key which opens the door to special education services. Important: The label does not drive the services provided for the child. Services are matched to the individual needs of the child regardless of the child's educational label(s).



Missouri's 13 Special Education Categories

1

Autism

2

Deaf/Blindness

3

Emotion Disturbance (ED)

4

Hearing Impairment & Deafness

5

Intellectual Disability (ID)

6

Multiple Disabilities

7

Orthopedic Impairment (OI)

8

Other Health Impairment (OHI)

9

Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD)

10

Speech/Language Impairment (SLI)

11

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

12

Visual Impairment/ Blindness (VI)

13

Young Child w/ Developmental Delay (YCDD)



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