



Overview of Higher Education Regulations for Students with Disabilities June 2025

Background

Since 2007, Massachusetts has provided funding to public state colleges and universities that chose to invite individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to **engage in college life** (e.g., take classes, participate in extracurricular activities, or engage in paid work or internships) as non-matriculating students, with supports and services necessary to facilitate inclusion. The decision about whether to participate in the Massachusetts Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Initiative (MAICEI) was left to each college/university, and a student's eligibility for the program ended at age 22.

Despite these limitations, the program was successful, and advocates sought to **make participation mandatory** for all state institutions of higher education and to **eliminate the age cap for persons with "severe disabilities"** (including autism and other intellectual or developmental disabilities). **The Arc of Massachusetts was a lead advocate** for this expansion, and in 2022, the legislature adopted key changes to the program.

Reflecting its broader coverage, the program has been renamed "Massachusetts Inclusive Postsecondary Education" (MAIPSE). In April 2025, the Department of Higher Education adopted regulations implementing the 2022 law.

Highlights of the New Regulations (see [610 C.M.R. 15.00](#))

- Massachusetts Inclusive Postsecondary Education Initiative (MAIPSE) is composed of two component programs
 - MAICEI Programs, for students up to age 22 (similar to the original MAICEI programs)
 - Post-MAICEI Programs, for students aged 22 years and over with a "severe disability," defined as "severe intellectual disability (ID), severe autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or other severe developmental disability (DD)."
- The regulations set minimum requirements for MAIPSE programs at public institutions of higher education
 - Each institution of higher education must develop guidelines that address
 - student selection (consistent with criteria set by law)
 - course selection
 - the institution's administrative capacity
 - residential housing
 - student conduct
- Eligible individuals interested in pursuing participation in the Post-MAICEI Program work with the Department of Developmental Services, MassAbility or other state agencies to develop an **Individual Student-Centered Participation Plan ("ISCPP")**.
 - The state agency (e.g., DDS) may issue guidelines for ISCPPs, but those guidelines must follow the principles included in these regulations, focusing on a collaborative approach that encourages self-direction and meets the student's individual goals and interests in both course selection and other aspects of participation in college life.



Resources

- If you or a loved one are interested in learning more about these programs, you can learn more here:
 - [Massachusetts Inclusive Postsecondary Education Initiative \(MAIPSE\)](#)
 - [Massachusetts Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Initiative \(MAICEI\)](#)
- Questions? Contact Nora Bent, Director of Government Affairs and Strategic Partnerships (nbent@arcmass.org)