
Day Treatment: A Basic Overview

Contributed by Nancy Bowden, Beyond Advocacy Consultant

In Colorado, Day Treatment is for school aged children (3-21 yrs.) typically on an IEP and/or a Section 504 Plan who are in need of more intensive support with respect to their behavioral needs and/or their social and emotional needs while they continue to work on their academics. In other words, Day Treatment is designed to really focus on a child's challenging behaviors and/or their social and emotional needs that might be preventing the child from being fully available for academic learning.

Who Provides Day Treatment?

Day Treatment programming is implemented in Day Treatment Centers known as Facility Schools by the Colorado Department of Education in alignment with the Colorado Revised Statutesⁱ, Title 26: Human Services Code. Colorado Department of Education (CDE) identifies two different types of Facility Schools: Eligible Facility and Approved Facility School. CDE defines each as followsⁱⁱ:

- *The term Eligible Facility means a day treatment center, residential child care facility or a hospital licensed by either the Colorado Department of Human Services or the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.*
- *The term Approved Facility School refers to an educational program that is operated by a licensed agency and that has been approved to receive reimbursement for education services for students placed in the program.*

A few local examples of an *Eligible Facility* are

- Hampton Academy
- The Joshua School
- Laradon Hall
- Morgridge Academy
- Metro Children's
- Serenity Education and Day Treatment Center
- Spectra Autism Center

A few local examples of an *Approved Facility School* are

- Bansbach Academy at Denver Children's Home
- Devereux Cleo Wallace
- Jefferson Hills-Aurora
- Mt. St. Vincent Home
- Shiloh-Family Resource Pavilion
- Shiloh-Littleton Campus
- Tennyson Center for Children-CCH

Note: in the remainder of this article I use "Facility Schools" to refer to either type

Placement Referrals

Considered an out of District placement for a child, Facility School referrals generally come from the child's school staff and/or local school district in conjunction with the child's community mental health therapist. The local school must have tried the least restrictive means over a three month period to help a child with his/her behavioral and/or social emotional needs and failed before referring a child to a Facility School. The child must present with a risk to self, a risk to others, and/or property destruction at the time of the referral to a Facility School. Basically, the child's local school district foots the bill for educational costs at a Facility School, and the child's insurance helps cover the therapeutic costs. Thus, the child's insurance must approve the placement prior to admission into a Facility School.

Admission Criteria and End Goal

Every Facility School has its own admission criteria, average length of stay, and cost per day. For example, some Day Treatment Centers/Facility Schools may serve both males and females, while others may serve only males; some may serve all types of intellectual and developmental disabilities, while others may specialize in serving children with autism or severely traumatized youth. The end goal of a Facility School is to help get the child stabilized and back in his/her local school district, not necessarily in his/her neighborhood school.

Academic Standards

Efforts are underway by The Office of Approved Facility Schools to provide all Facility Schools access to Colorado Academic Standards, inclusive of all core content areas. Curriculum guides are available for grades K-12 at the [CDE Facility Schools' website](#). Keep in mind, the Facility School will be teaching your child in accordance with your child's IEP, so it is critical to ensure that your child's IEP thoroughly identifies his/her needs and how each need will be addressed (support, accommodation, and/or goal).

Transportation

Transportation to and from a Facility School/ Day Treatment Center is provided free of charge to the student/family. Transportation might be provided by either the child's local school district or through a private transportation service contracted by and with the child's local school district. I suggest you talk with any contracted private transportation service, as well as the local school district, prior to their servicing your child to ensure they fully understand your child's needs and how to properly support your child on the ride to/from school. Suggested points to talk about include

- Will your child have the same driver each ride?
- Will your child have the same vehicle each ride?
- What are the options for type of vehicle?
- Are there any other passengers in the vehicle?
- Is para support provided?
- How do you get in touch with the driver, if needed?
- How are emergencies that may occur during the ride handled?
- How are snow days handled?
- How do you cancel a ride due to an appointment, illness, rough day, etc.?

Liability insurance is another suggested topic of discussion to have with both your local school district and the private transportation service prior to your child being transported to and from school.

How to Find a Facility School

For a contact list of Facility Schools in Colorado, follow the Colorado Department of Education link at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/facilityschools>. Through this link, you can review everything from whom each school serves (age, gender, diagnosis/disability), who can refer a student to its program, the number of children it can serve, its average length of stay, how long the Program has been around, and basic contact information. The link will also give you access to tuition costs for each Facility School.

Resources

- For more information about Facility Schools, visit the Colorado Department of Education website: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/facilityschools>.
- For more information on the Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.) regarding Facility Schools and/or education in general, search: LexisNexis:

<http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/michie/> Note: *This site requires a user agreement.*

- Your Arc of Aurora advocate can help if you have questions about Facility Schools and their appropriateness for your child.

References

ⁱ Colorado Revised Statutes found via LexisNexis:

<http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/michie/>

ⁱⁱ Colorado Department of Education website: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/facilityschools>.

C.R.S. 22-20-1. Education related information

C.R.S. 26-6-1. Human Services Code pertaining to Approved Facility Schools

Contact List of Eligible Facility and Approved Facility Schools

Tuition Costs