



Advocates for Children of New York

Protecting every child's right to learn

Requesting School Transfers

This tip sheet explains how to ask for school transfers for students in New York City. Transfer options are limited. Families will have more choices if they apply to schools through the regular application process. For more tips on school choice, see AFC's *Choosing an Elementary or Middle School* at www.advocatesforchildren.org/sites/default/files/library/choosing_a_school.pdf and *Applying to High School* at www.advocatesforchildren.org/sites/default/files/library/applying_to_high_school.pdf.

WHEN CAN I ASK FOR A TRANSFER?

You can find the NYC Department of Education's (DOE's) transfer rules in Chancellor's Regulation A-101, at <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/policies-for-all/chancellors-regulations/volume-a-regulations>. There are safety, medical, guidance, travel hardship, childcare hardship, and sibling transfers. Each type of transfer has its own rules. Visit <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/enrollment-help/transfers> for more information and see the examples below.

WHAT PAPERWORK WILL I NEED TO GET A TRANSFER?

SAFETY TRANSFERS are for students who have been assaulted at or near school or who will not be safe if they stay at their school. Chancellor's Regulation A-449 describes the safety transfer process. You or the school can request a safety transfer from a Family Welcome Center. For a list of Family Welcome Centers, visit www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/enrollment-help/family-welcome-centers.

To get a safety transfer, your school must turn in the following:

1. A School Occurrence Report or other proof of the incident(s);
2. A Safety Transfer Summary of Investigation form;
3. A Safety Transfer Intake form; and
4. A police report, court papers, or other documents, like hospital records, letters, text messages or printouts from social media, that support the transfer.

MEDICAL TRANSFERS are for students who need a new school because of a medical condition. A parent can also ask for a medical transfer when they have a medical condition or disability that keeps them from accessing their child's school. Medical transfers require a letter from a healthcare provider, on their letterhead, which explains the condition and why a transfer is necessary. The Department of Education may call the provider to get more information.

GUIDANCE TRANSFERS are for students who are struggling academically or socially. Go to a Family Welcome Center to ask for a guidance transfer if you think a new school may help your child. The Superintendent decides whether to approve the transfer.

TRAVEL HARDSHIP TRANSFERS are for students in grades 9-12 who live more than 75 minutes from school by public transportation. To ask for a transfer, bring proof of your address to the Family Welcome Center.

CHILDCARE HARDSHIP TRANSFERS are for students in grades K-5 whose school is too far from their parent's job or their babysitter or daycare. You will need a note from your job or childcare provider that explains the hardship.

SIBLING TRANSFERS are for students in grades K-5 whose sibling goes to a different school.

HOW TO REQUEST A TRANSFER

STEP 1: Think about which type of transfer is best for your child. For example, a student may want to transfer for safety reasons, but a medical transfer may be easier to get if the student's therapist supports it. For older students, also consider other types of high schools, like transfer schools and YABCs. These programs may be a better fit for your child than a traditional high school. Find more tips on programs for older students in AFC's *Know Your Options: Alternatives for High School Students*, available at http://www.advocatesforchildren.org/sites/default/files/library/know_your_options.pdf.

STEP 2: Talk to your child's guidance counselor about the transfer and set up a meeting. Chancellor's Regulation A-101 requires schools to meet with any family asking for a transfer. At the meeting, your child should say why they want a transfer. Make sure to get copies of all of the paperwork you may need.

STEP 3: The school must send the paperwork to the Family Welcome Center. Staff there will decide to approve or deny the transfer.

STEP 4: Follow up with the Family Welcome Center. Bring copies of the transfer paperwork to the Family Welcome Center yourself if the school is not helping you or it is taking too long.

WHO CAN GRANT A TRANSFER?

The Office of Student Enrollment, not the school, decides whether the student will get a transfer. They base their decision on the student's needs and space in other schools. For safety transfers where there has not been a violent incident, the Director has one week to decide after receiving all the paperwork.

IMPORTANT: Students do not get to pick which school they will transfer to, but they can tell the Family Welcome Center which schools they like. If a transfer is approved, the Family Welcome Center will offer you a new school. You can accept or reject it.

Still have more questions?

Call the Jill Chaifetz Education Helpline:

Monday through Thursday • 10 am to 4 pm • 1-866-427-6033 (toll free)

www.advocatesforchildren.org

This tip sheet is not legal advice. It summarizes existing policies or laws without stating the opinion of Advocates for Children. If you have a legal problem, please contact an attorney or advocate.