

University of Maryland Eastern Shore
DOCUMENTATION GUIDELINES FOR SPECIFIC DISABILITIES

Documentation Guidelines

Students requesting accommodations or services from the Office of Student Accessibility Services (SAS) must submit documentation of their disability that meets SAS guidelines and verifies eligibility under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act as amended (ADAAA). Under the ADAAA, a “person with a disability” is someone with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Some major life activities include, caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating and working.

Although a disability is typically lifelong, how it will manifest itself and impact the student may change in different settings and over time. Therefore, SAS requests documentation to better understand each student individually and how the disability will impact him or her in a college setting.

Students are encouraged to submit any prior assessments and evaluation reports that may be helpful in determining appropriate accommodations. Documentation should be current, relevant to the requested accommodations, and completed by a professional qualified to make the diagnosis, such as a psychologist, licensed clinical social worker, education professional, psychiatrist/physician, or other health care provider. The documentation should identify the disability, describe its current impact, and address how the impairment substantially limits a major life activity. It is recommended that the documentation describe the individual’s current or past accommodations, support services and medications, as well as any recommendations for accommodations in the college setting.

Types of documentation can include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Psychoeducational, psychological and educational evaluations
- Medical reports, letters and assessments from health care providers that are written on office letterhead and signed by the treating professional
- Documents such as a 504 Plan or Individualized Education Program (IEP) are generally not sufficient on their own but can be useful in establishing a history of accommodation. While these may be sent to SAS to review, typically more comprehensive documentation will be required, such as the initial assessment or evaluative information used to determine the need for the 504 Plan or IEP.

SAS will evaluate disability documentation and determine eligibility and accommodations based on the appropriateness, recency and completeness of the documentation submitted. If the submitted documentation is incomplete, out of date, or does not support the student’s request for accommodations, the student may be asked to provide additional documentation. In some cases, interim accommodations may be provided on a temporary, provisional basis while the student is in the process of obtaining appropriate documentation. Students are encouraged to contact SAS for further guidance on the documentation needed for their individual situation.

The review of documentation will include a personal interview as part of an interactive process with the student. During the interview, consideration will also be given to the student’s self-report, strengths and

needs; academic experiences, the current program of study and courses in which he or she is enrolled, as well as the student's ideas regarding accommodations.

Confidentiality

Disability records are confidential, maintained in the SAS office, and are protected as an educational record under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Disability-related information may be disclosed on a limited, need to know basis in order to provide accommodations and services with the permission of the student or as otherwise permitted under the university's student records policy.

Questions and Contact Information:

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