

State of Colorado Consortium of Support Services for Students with Disabilities

Documentation Guidelines

Students with disabilities who are requesting support services in the form of academic accommodations, academic adjustments or auxiliary aids from Disability Services or Supplemental Services at any postsecondary institution in the state of Colorado are required to submit documentation to verify eligibility under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). Eligibility for services and determination of the individual needs of each student are based on the quality of the submitted documentation. Students also need to meet with an Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (OSSD) staff member for an intake appointment where documentation will be reviewed and students may share additional relevant information.

The guidelines are provided to assist the service provider in collaborating with each student to ensure that the documentation is complete and to determine appropriate accommodations. They are intended to give the service provider as much breadth and depth of information as necessary to provide individualized accommodations. According to McGuire et al. (Journal of Learning Disabilities, May, 1996), such documentation can assist both students and the institution in "otherwise qualified" decisions in meeting the technical demands of the institution. Secondly, McGuire reiterates that documentation is an essential component of determining individualized academic adjustments and auxiliary aids. Finally, McGuire states that good documentation is important in assisting students to address their learning strengths and weaknesses as well as helping them to establish clear and realistic future goals. Colorado School of Mines reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of submitted documentation on a case by case basis utilizing the professional judgment of the OSSD staff. Additional information may be requested to determine eligibility for services. All information regarding a student's disability is confidential and will not be shared with anyone without the consent of the student. All documentation and files relating to a student's disability are housed in OSSD and are not part of the student's college record.

Disability documentation should reflect current levels of skills, abilities and needs for accommodation. For most students, documentation should be no older than three years. For students age 21 and older where sufficient evidence is provided by the student indicating that the disability has regularly been evaluated without significant changes in skills and needs across time, it may be appropriate to extend the length of time the documentation will be considered valid. Disabilities that are sporadic or degenerative in nature may require more frequent evaluation as needed for accommodation change. Generally an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) from a secondary school, in itself, does not provide thorough information for the provision of academic adjustments at the postsecondary level.

Documentation Guidelines for Attention Deficit/Hyperactive Disorder

Attention Deficit/Hyperactive Disorder (*AD/HD*) is -considered a medical or clinical diagnosis. Individuals qualified to render a diagnosis for this disorder are practitioners who have been trained in the assessment of *AD/HD* and are experienced in assessing the needs of adult learners. Recommended practitioners may include: developmental pediatricians, neurologists, psychiatrists, licensed clinical or educational psychologist, family physicians, or a combination of such professionals. The diagnostician should be impartial and not a family member.

The following guidelines are provided to assist the service provider in collaborating with each student to determine appropriate accommodations. Documentation serves as a foundation that legitimizes a student's request for appropriate accommodations. Recommended documentation includes:

1. A clear statement of ADD or *AD/HD* with the DSM-IV diagnosis and a description of supporting past and present symptoms;
2. Documentation for eligibility should be current, preferably within the last three years; (the age of acceptable documentation is dependant upon the disabling condition, the current status of the student and the student's specific request for accommodations);
3. A summary of assessment procedures and evaluation instruments used to make the diagnosis;
4. A narrative summary, including all scores, which supports the diagnosis;
5. Medical information relating to student's needs to include the impact of medication on the student's ability to meet the demands of the postsecondary environment;
6. Suggestions of reasonable accommodations which might be appropriate at the postsecondary level are encouraged. These recommendations should be supported by the diagnosis.

Further assessment by an appropriate professional may be required if co-existing learning disabilities or other disabling conditions are indicated. Appropriate accommodations are collaboratively determined by the student and OSSD.

Documentation Guidelines for Specific Learning Disability

Professionals conducting assessment and rendering diagnoses of specific learning disabilities (SLD) must be qualified. A qualified professional needs to hold a degree in a field related to diagnosis of SLD and have at least one year of diagnostic experience with adults and late adolescents. Recommended practitioners may include: certified and/or licensed

psychologists, learning disabilities specialists, educational therapists, diagnosticians in public schools or colleges and rehabilitation services and private practitioners with the above characteristics are typically considered qualified. The diagnostician should be an impartial individual who is not a family member of the student.

The following guidelines are provided to assist the service provider in collaborating with each student to determine appropriate accommodations. Documentation serves as a foundation that legitimizes a student's request for appropriate accommodations. Recommended documentation includes:

1. Testing that is comprehensive, including a measure of both Aptitude and Achievement in the areas of reading, mathematics and written language;
2. Documentation for eligibility should be current, preferably within the last three years; (the age of acceptable documentation is dependant upon the disabling condition, the current status of the student and the student's specific request for accommodations);
3. A clear statement that a learning disability is present along with the rationale for this diagnosis. (Note: individual "learning deficits," "learning styles," and "learning differences," do not, in or of themselves, constitute a learning disability);
4. A narrative summary, including all scores, which supports the diagnosis;
5. A statement of strengths and needs that will impact the student's ability to meet the demands of the postsecondary environment;
6. Suggestions of reasonable accommodations which might be appropriate at the postsecondary level are encouraged. These recommendations should be supported by the diagnosis.

Further assessment by an appropriate professional may be required if co-existing *AD/HD* or other disabling conditions are indicated. Appropriate accommodations are collaboratively determined by the student and OSSD.

Documentation Guidelines for Head Injury/Traumatic Brain Injury

Head Injury or Traumatic Brain Injury are considered medical or clinical diagnoses. Individuals qualified to render a diagnosis for these disorders are practitioners who have been trained in the assessment of Head Injury or Traumatic Brain Injury. Recommended practitioners may include: physicians; neurologists; licensed clinical, rehabilitation and school psychologists; neuropsychologists and psychiatrists. The diagnostician should be an impartial individual who is not a family member of the student.

The following guidelines are provided to assist the service provider in collaborating with each student to determine appropriate accommodations. Documentation serves as a foundation that legitimizes a student's request for appropriate accommodations. Recommended documentation includes:

1. A clear statement of the head injury or traumatic brain injury and the probable site of lesion;
2. Documentation for eligibility should be current, preferably within the last three years; (the age of acceptable documentation is dependant upon the disabling condition, the current status of the student and the student's specific request for accommodations);
3. A summary of cognitive and achievement measures used and evaluation results including standardized scores or percentiles used to make the diagnosis;
4. A summary of present residual symptoms which meet the criteria for diagnosis;
5. Medical information relating to student's needs to include the impact of medication on the student's ability to meet the demands of the postsecondary environment;
6. Suggestions of reasonable accommodations which might be appropriate at the postsecondary level are encouraged. These recommendations should be supported by the diagnosis.

Further assessment by an appropriate professional may be required if co-existing learning disabilities or other disabling conditions are indicated. Appropriate accommodations are collaboratively determined by the student and OSSD.

Documentation Guidelines for Physical Disabilities and Systemic Illnesses (Includes but is not limited to: Mobility Impairments, Multiple Sclerosis, Cerebral Palsy, Chemical Sensitivities, Spinal Cord injuries, Cancer; AIDS, Muscular Dystrophy, Spina Bifida)

Any physical disability and systemic illness are considered to be in the medical domain and require the expertise of a physician, including a neurologist, psychiatrist or other medical specialist with experience and expertise in the area for which accommodations are being requested. The diagnostician should be an impartial individual who is not a family member of the student.

The following guidelines are provided to assist the service provider in collaborating with each student to determine appropriate accommodations. Documentation serves as a foundation that legitimizes a student's request for appropriate accommodations. Recommended documentation includes:

1. A clear statement of the medical diagnosis of the physical disability or systemic illness;
2. Documentation for eligibility should be current, preferably within the last three years; (the age of acceptable documentation is dependant upon the disabling condition, the current status of the student and the student's request for accommodations);
3. A summary of assessment procedures and evaluation instruments used to make the diagnosis, including evaluation results and standardized scores if applicable;
4. A description of present symptoms which meet the criteria for diagnosis;
5. Medical information relating to the student's needs to include the impact of medication on the student's ability to meet the demands of the postsecondary environment;
6. Suggestions of reasonable accommodations which might be appropriate at the postsecondary level are encouraged. These recommendations should be supported by the diagnosis.

Further assessment .by an appropriate professional may be required if co-existing learning disabilities or other disabling conditions are indicated. Appropriate accommodations are collaboratively determined by the student and OSSD.

Documentation Guidelines for Psychiatric/Psychological Disabilities (Includes but is not limited to: Depressive Disorders, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Bipolar Disorders, and Disassociative Disorders).

A diagnosis by a licensed mental health professional including licensed clinical social workers (LCSW), licensed professional counselor (LPC), psychologists, psychiatrists, neurologists is required and must include the license number. The diagnostician should be an impartial individual who is not a family member of the student.

The following guidelines are provided to assist the service provider in collaborating with each student to determine appropriate accommodations. Documentation serves as the foundation that legitimizes a student's request for appropriate accommodations. Recommended documentation includes:

1. A clear statement of the disability, including the DSM-IV diagnosis and a summary of present symptoms;
 2. Documentation for eligibility should be current, preferably within the last three years; (the age of acceptable documentation is dependant upon the disabling condition, the current status of the student and the student's request for accommodations);
 3. A summary of assessment procedures and evaluation instruments used to make the diagnosis and a summary of evaluation results, including standardized or percentile scores;
 4. Medical information relating to the student's needs to include the impact of medication on the student's ability to meet the demands of the postsecondary environment;
 5. Suggestions of reasonable accommodations which might be appropriate at the postsecondary level are encouraged. These recommendations should be supported by the diagnosis.
- Further assessment by an appropriate professional may be required if co-existing learning disabilities or other disabling conditions are indicated. Appropriate accommodations are collaboratively determined by the student and OSSD.

Documentation Guidelines for Deaf/Hard of Hearing

Physicians, including otorhinolaryngologists and otologists are qualified to provide diagnosis and treatment of hearing disorders. Audiologists may also provide current audiograms. The diagnostician should be an impartial individual who is not a family member of the student.

The following guidelines are provided to assist the service provider in collaborating with each student to determine appropriate accommodations. Documentation serves as the foundation that legitimizes a student's request for appropriate accommodations. Recommended documentation includes:

1. A clear statement of Deafness or hearing loss, with a current audiogram (the age of acceptable documentation is dependant upon the condition, the current status of the student, and the student's request for accommodations);
2. A summary of assessment procedures and evaluation instruments used to make the diagnosis and a narrative summary of evaluation results. if appropriate;
3. Medical information relating to the student's needs and the status of the individual's hearing (static or changing) and its impact on the demands of the academic program;
4. A statement regarding the use of hearing aids (if appropriate);
5. Suggestions of reasonable accommodations which might be appropriate at the postsecondary level are encouraged. These recommendations should be supported by the diagnosis.

Further assessment by an appropriate professional may be required if co-existing learning disabilities or other disabling conditions are indicated. Appropriate accommodations are collaboratively determined by the student and OSSD.

Documentation Guidelines for Blind/Low Vision

Ophthalmologists are the primary professionals involved in diagnosis and medical treatment of individuals who are blind or experience low vision. Optometrists provide information regarding the measurement of visual acuity as well as tracking and fusion difficulties (including but not limited to: eye movement disorders, inefficiency in using both eyes together, misalignment of the eyes, lazy eye, focusing problems, visual sensory disorders and motor integration). Fellows of the College of Optometrists in Vision Development may also provide therapy in treating the above optometric conditions. The diagnostician should be an impartial individual who is not a family member of the student.

The following guidelines are provided to assist the service provider in collaborating with each student to determine appropriate accommodations. Documentation serves as the foundation that legitimizes a student's request for appropriate accommodations. Recommended documentation includes:

1. A clear statement of vision related disability with supporting numerical description (the age of acceptable documentation is dependant upon the disabling condition, the current status of the student and the student's request for accommodations);
2. A summary of assessment procedures and evaluation instruments used to make the diagnosis and a summary of evaluation results including standardized scores;
3. Present symptoms which meet the criteria for diagnosis;
4. Medical information relating to the student's needs and the status of the individual's vision (static or changing) and its impact on the demands of the academic program;
5. Narrative or descriptive text providing both quantitative and qualitative information about the student's abilities which might be helpful in understanding the student's profile including the use of corrective lenses and ongoing visual therapy (if appropriate) ;
5. Suggestions of reasonable accommodations which might be appropriate at the post secondary. level are encouraged. These recommendations should be supported by the diagnosis.

Further assessment by an appropriate professional may be required if co-existing disabling conditions are indicated. Appropriate accommodations are collaboratively determined by the student and OSSD.

Documentation Guidelines for Rehabilitated Drug! Addiction! Alcoholism

Professionals who are qualified for diagnosing, treating and providing documentation for individuals who have been rehabilitated for drug addiction or alcoholism include physicians with a specialty in addiction; clinical psychologists, psychiatrists and licensed mental health professionals or State Health Department certified addiction counselors who are supervised by psychologists or psychiatrists. The diagnostician must be an impartial individual who is not a family member of the student.

The term "qualified individual with a disability" shall not include any student who is currently engaging in the illegal use of drugs or alcohol,

The following guidelines are provided to assist the service provider in collaborating with each student to determine appropriate accommodations. Documentation serves as the foundation that legitimizes a student's request for appropriate accommodations. Recommended documentation includes:

1. A clear statement of successful completion of a supervised drug/alcohol rehabilitation program with the DSM-IV diagnosis. A dated statement attesting to the compliance with appropriate post-rehabilitation treatment (the age of acceptable documentation is dependant upon the disabling condition, the current status of the student and the student's request for accommodations);
2. A summary of assessment procedures and evaluation instruments used to make the diagnosis;
3. A summary of qualitative and quantitative information which supports the diagnosis;
4. Medical information related to the student's needs to include the impact of medication on the student's ability to meet the demands of the postsecondary environment;
5. Suggestions of reasonable accommodations which might be appropriate at the postsecondary level are encouraged. These recommendations should be supported by the documentation. Further assessment by an appropriate professional may be required if co-existing learning disabilities or other disabling conditions are indicated. Appropriate accommodations are collaboratively determined by the student and OSSD.

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