

*Oklahoma Christian University*

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## **Disability Support Services Handbook**

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# Disability Support Services Handbook

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This *Disability Support Services Handbook* has been prepared for general information purposes only. No statement appearing in this *Handbook* constitutes a contractual obligation by Oklahoma Christian University or its Board of Trustees. If any official policy statements of the Board of Trustees or of the University are in contradiction to statements appearing in this *Handbook*, such official policy statements will be deemed to have control over the statements appearing in this document. The Board of Trustees and the University reserve the right to alter the terms of official policy statements and/or this *Handbook* at any time, without advance notice.

## Introduction

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The *Disability Support Services Handbook* has been developed to provide students with an outline of the services provided by Disability Support Services. Please familiarize yourself with the information outlined in the *Handbook*. If you have additional needs which are not specifically addressed, please contact Amy Janzen in the Student Life Office (405.425.5907). Disability Support Services is committed to providing assistance to students with disabilities that will facilitate their independence and academic progress.

## How Do Students Access Services?

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Students with disabilities who wish to access services should contact Disability Support Services, coordinated by Amy Janzen (405.425.5907 or amy.janzen@oc.edu). Provision of services includes an intake process during which the existence of a disability and any functional limitations are verified and appropriate strategies and resources are identified.

### *How do students qualify for services?*

Disability Support Services is committed to serving all students with disabilities as defined by federal regulations.

A qualified person with a disability means:

...an individual with a disability, who, with or without reasonable modification to rules, policies, or practices, the removal of architecture, communication, or transportation barriers, or the provision of auxiliary aids and services, meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or the participation in programs or activities provided by a public entity.

(Public Law 101-336. Section 201)

The federal legal definition of a disabled person includes a person who:

- 1) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities; or
- 2) has a record of such impairment; or
- 3) is regarded as having such impairment.

(Public Law 101-336, Section 3)

### ***What documentation is required?***

Students must provide documentation of their disability and their need for accommodation before receiving services. This documentation can only be prepared by a person who is not a family member of the student and who is qualified by professional training and practice to diagnose and treat the impairment leading to the disability. Documentation must be typed or word-processed and printed on the letterhead of either the practitioner or the agency hosting the practice. Handwritten notes on prescription pads or handwritten treatment records will not be accepted. A student's Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan is not sufficient documentation.

In general, documentation of disability should be reasonably current and include:

- A diagnostic statement identifying the disability, date of the current diagnostic evaluation, and the date of the original diagnosis;
- A description of the diagnostic criteria used;
- A description of the current functional impact of the disability;
- Treatments, medications, and/or assistive devices currently prescribed or in use;
- A description of the expected progression or stability of the disability over time and its impact;
- The credentials of the diagnosing professional(s);
- Recommendations for reasonable accommodation. These recommendations should be supported by the diagnosis. Please note that Disability Support Services will make the final determination of eligibility for accommodations.

### ***Learning Disability Documentation***

Students applying for services and accommodations on the basis of a learning disability must submit a comprehensive report of a psychoeducational assessment performed by a qualified professional (e.g. licensed psychologist, school psychologist, neuropsychologist, learning disabilities specialist). The assessment should be reasonably current, that is, one that was completed in the junior or senior year of high school or as an

adult. All documentation is confidential and is on file only at the Disability Support Services (DSS). In accordance with the guidelines developed by the Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD), the psychoeducational assessment should contain:

- **Aptitude** – a complete intellectual assessment with all subtests and standard scores reported. The Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS-3) with scaled scores and percentiles and/or the Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery-Revised (WJPEB-R): Part 1, Tests of Cognitive Ability with standard scores and percentiles) are the preferred instruments.
- **Academic Achievement** – a comprehensive academic achievement battery with all subtests and standard scores reported for those subtests administered. The battery should include current levels of academic functioning in relevant areas such as reading (decoding and comprehension), mathematics and oral and written language. Acceptable instruments include: the Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT) or specific achievement tests like the Nelson-Denny Reading Test, and the Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests Revised.
- **Information Processing** – specific areas of information processing (e.g., short and long term memory, sequential memory, auditory and visual processing, processing, speed, executive functioning, and motor ability). Use of subtests from the WAIS-3, and /or the cognitive portion of the Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery-Revised is acceptable. Additional testing such as the Wechsler Memory Scale (WMS-3) designed to assist in corroborating the existence of processing disorders as identified by the WAIS-3 or the WJPEB-R Part 1 is recommended.
- **Conclusions** – the report should conclude with a clinical summary which brings the supported judgment of the person conducting the assessment to bear in stating a diagnosis. Suggestions of reasonable accommodations that might be appropriate at the postsecondary level are encouraged. These recommendations should be supported by the diagnosis. Please note that Disability Support Services will make the final determination of eligibility for accommodations.

### ***Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders Documentation***

Students applying for services and accommodations on the basis of ADD/ADHD must submit a comprehensive report of a psychoeducational assessment completed by a psychiatrist or licensed psychologist who has experience diagnosing and treating this condition. This psychoeducational assessment must include measurements of aptitude, achievement, information processing (see detailed examples in learning disability section), and measures specifically assessing impact of ADHD. The assessment should be reasonably current, that is, one that was completed in the junior or senior year of high school or as an adult. In addition to the psychoeducational assessment, documentation must address the following criteria:

- **DSM-IV** diagnosis and a description of supporting past and present symptoms.
- **Narrative summary** of assessment procedures, including all scores used to make the diagnosis.
- **Description** of present symptoms, fluctuating conditions and prognosis.

- **Medication needs** and side effects of how the medication will affect the student's academic performance.
- **Recommendations** for reasonable accommodation.

### ***Psychiatric Disabilities***

Students applying for services and accommodations on the basis of psychiatric disabilities must submit documentation completed by a psychiatrist or licensed psychologist who has experience diagnosing and treating this condition and must address the following criteria:

- **DSM-IV diagnosis.**
- **Psychological test** used to make the diagnosis and all scores to support the diagnosis.
- **Current Medications** , side effects and compliance with medication plan.
- **Therapeutic interventions** and compliance with such to ensure that accommodations do not jeopardize successful therapeutic interventions.

### ***Low Vision or Blindness***

Students requesting services and accommodations based on a visual impairment must provide documentation including:

- **Ocular assessment from licensed ophthalmologist.** Documentation must be current if visual impairment is progressive.
- **Low vision evaluation of residual functioning,** if appropriate.
- **Functional impact of the visual disability** and recommendations for accommodations.
- **A narrative report from an ophthalmologist** including diagnosis, progression, functional impact, and recommendations for accommodations.

### ***Hearing Impairment or Deafness***

Students requesting services and accommodations based on a hearing loss or deafness must provide the following documentation to receive services:

- **An audiological evaluation/exam and/or audiogram.** Documentation must be current if impairment is progressive.
- **An interpretation of the functional impact of the hearing impairment/deafness** and hearing aid evaluation, where appropriate.
- **A narrative report from the audiologist** including diagnosis, progression, functional impact, and recommendations for accommodation.

### ***Nonspecific Disabilities, Injuries, and Conditions***

Students must provide documentation of their disability and their need for accommodation before receiving services. Your documentation needs to be current (in order to reflect present functioning) and from a qualified professional. (e.g. medical

doctor). The medical report should be specific about your diagnosis and functional limitations, and signed by the professional who is making the diagnosis. All documentation is confidential and is on file only at the Disability Support Services (DSS).

If your disability is progressive, or if you experience any change in the severity that would affect your accommodations, you must provide updated documentation that reflects the change in status.

Students requesting accommodations on the basis of other nonspecific disabling injuries and conditions must provide documentation consisting of:

- **Description of the disability** from Medical or other licensed professional describing the nature of the condition including information pertaining to the history, expected course of treatment, and limitations resulting from the condition or treatments.
- **Documentation must be recent** in order to assess the current impact on academic functioning.
- **Documentation must be comprehensive** and establish clear evidence of a significant impact on academic functioning.
- **Recommendations** for reasonable accommodation. These recommendations should be supported by the diagnosis. Please note that Disability Support Services will make the final determination of eligibility for accommodations.
- **Credentials** of the diagnosing professionals.

Information obtained is confidential and is used solely for the purpose of identifying appropriate support services. Information regarding a student's disability is only released with written permission from the student or so directed by a Court of Law.

### ***How does a student obtain services?***

Services must be requested by the student in writing each semester. Students must complete a Service Request Form (SRF) to initiate their requests, which should be done prior to or at the beginning of the semester to help ensure timely provision of necessary accommodations. Students must also identify themselves to their instructors to facilitate implementation of the identified classroom accommodations. Consultation among the student, his/her instructor(s), and the Coordinator of Disability Support Services may be necessary for some accommodations. Each student is authorized to act as his/her own advocate and has the major responsibility for securing assistance. Early and regular contact with Disability Support Services will help ensure the timely identification and provision of services and accommodations.

Accommodations cannot be retroactive and begin only after documentation is received and a reasonable time for accommodation development has been allowed.

# What Services Are Available?

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Assistance is tailored to the needs of the individual student. Services will be designed in a manner intended to remove barriers which hinder learning and which allow maximum independence. Reasonable accommodations are based on specific disability-related needs. Services are intended to provide equal access and equal opportunity. Academic support services offered, based on individual need, may include:

- ◆ Instructor notification
- ◆ Note taking assistance
- ◆ Alternative testing accommodations
- ◆ Assistance in obtaining texts in alternative formats
- ◆ Interpreter services
- ◆ Classroom accessibility
- ◆ Additional accommodations as necessary

The Americans with Disabilities Act does not require colleges to provide personal assistants, individual personal tutors, or personal assistive technology. Whenever possible, the Office of Disability Support Services will refer students to agencies which may provide personal assistance of that nature. Accommodations are not made which reduce academic expectations, standards, or which would eliminate essential components of any course.

## *Instructor Notification*

To aid students in securing appropriate services, DSS provides instructors with written verification of a student's disability and recommendations for academic accommodations. Students must also identify themselves to the instructor(s) for implementation of the identified classroom accommodations.

## *Note taking Assistance*

Students may arrange for note taking assistance by securing a volunteer note taker or by tape recording lectures. Working with Disability Support Services to obtain copies of instructors' lecture notes, as available, is also an alternative.

If the volunteer note taking option is selected, it is the student's responsibility to contact Disability Support Services to request assistance with note taking. This request, accompanied by a student's class schedule, must be given to DSS three weeks prior to the beginning of classes. A letter will be sent to the student's instructors requesting an in-class volunteer note taker solicitation. It is then the student's responsibility to obtain the volunteer's name and number from the instructor. Disability Support Services will pay for the expenses of making copies of the notes. Students should attempt to take his or her own notes. The Volunteer note taker Program is not intended to replace class attendance and class attendance requirements will be enforced unless specifically authorized in writing by the Disability Support Services' office and the class professor.

If the tape recording option is selected and the student does not have a tape recorder, the student with disabilities may check out a tape recorder and tapes from Disability Support Services. The student is responsible for the return of tape recorders and tapes at the conclusion of each semester, or he/she will be billed for the cost of the equipment.

### ***Alternative Testing***

Students with disabilities may request modifications in course examination requirements or formats. Authorized testing accommodations are designed to assist students in demonstrating their skills or acquired knowledge rather than the impact of their disabilities.

The following steps have been established for students and instructors to initiate alternative testing. Students seeking testing accommodations are responsible for speaking with their instructors regarding their requests far in advance of scheduled examinations, preferably at the beginning of the semester. Students must also request appropriate services from Disability Support Services on a timely basis. The Coordinator of Disability Support Services will notify the student's instructor(s) of recommended testing procedures. Consultation among the student, his/her instructor(s), and the Coordinator of Disability Support Services may be necessary before some testing accommodations are authorized.

### ***Alternative Format Test Materials***

Disability Support Services provides assistance to students in obtaining required texts in alternative (i.e., recorded, large print, braille) formats. If a student is eligible to obtain recorded textbooks and equipment, Disability Support Services will assist the student in processing the application(s) to Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFB&D) and/or Oklahoma Library for the Blind, if necessary. DSS will work with students to order books on tape through the student's own membership. Students need to identify the required texts as soon as possible to begin this process. Early identification and requests are important in order to ensure timely receipt of materials.

Students with disabilities may request assistance in obtaining text materials in a large print or braille format if this is determined to be the most effective reasonable accommodation. Disability Support Services will provide large print or braille copies of required text materials.

### ***Interpreter Services***

Freelance interpreters are utilized to provide interpreter services. Students using interpreters must notify DSS (405.425.5907) as soon as possible of interpreter needs. If a class will be missed, at least 24-hours advance notice is expected. A "no show" or notice less than 24 hours will be counted as a "miss." Three misses will result in suspension of services until the student meets with the Coordinator.

## ***Classroom Accessibility***

If a student with a disability enrolls in a course that is scheduled in an inaccessible location, the student should notify Disability Support Services to obtain a change in classroom location.

## ***Emergency Evacuation Procedures***

To ensure personal safety in emergency situations, the following guidelines should be observed by students with disabilities. In advance of emergency situations, be aware of at least two exit possibilities for each location. Notify instructors and/or classmates of the type of assistance you need during an emergency situation.

In the event of a fire, immediate and complete evacuations are preferred if it can be accomplished in a safe manner. If immediate and complete evacuation is not possible, ask someone to assist you to a “safe area,” such as an enclosed stairwell, until emergency personnel arrive and complete evacuation. The assisting individual should stay with you until emergency personnel arrive. In addition, you should ask a second person to immediately notify emergency personnel of your location and the type of assistance required.

In the event of a tornado warning, you should utilize elevators and proceed to the lowest floor of the building. Request assistance from instructors or classmates if assistance is needed. If elevator use is not possible, then fire evacuation procedures (above) should be followed. Once you have reached the lowest possible floor, remain in the corridors away from windows and exterior doors.

## **Complaints: Incident Report Form and Request for Review of Provision of Accommodations**

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Students may register complaints regarding physical, programmatic, or attitudinal barriers they encounter at Oklahoma Christian University using the “Incident Report Form” available upon request. This procedure has been implemented to: 1) identify physical access problems on the campus and 2) use feedback from students to improve the delivery of services.

Students who wish to contest a decision of Disability Support Services regarding requested accommodations or curricular modifications or a decision of a faculty member to not provide recommended accommodations can initiate a “Request for Review of Provision of Accommodations.” Disability Support Services will advise students and provide the appropriate form upon request.

Students who are not satisfied with the response they receive may file a complaint with any of the following agencies:

- ▶ Office of Handicapped Concerns  
4300 North Lincoln Blvd., Suite 200  
Oklahoma City, OK 73105  
800/522-8224 (V/TTY)
  
- ▶ U.S. Department of Education  
Office for Civil Rights, Region VI  
1200 Main Tower Bldg., Suite 2260  
Dallas, TX 75202-9998  
214/767-3959 (V)  
214/ 767-3639 (TTY)
  
- ▶ Office of the Americans with Disabilities Act  
Civil Rights Division, U.S. Department of Justice  
P.O. Box 66738  
Washington, DC 22035-6118  
800/514-0301 (V)  
800/514-0383 (TTY)

# Differences Between High School & Postsecondary Services

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## High School

### **LAWS:**

- \* IDEA (Individuals w/ Disabilities Education Act)
- \* 504 (Section 504, Rehab Act, 1973)
- \* ADA (Americans w/ Disabilities Act, 1990)

### **RESPONSIBILITY:**

School districts are responsible for identifying, evaluating, and planning educational interventions.

### **INTENT:**

- \* Legal mandate
- \* Foster success

IDEA is to provide a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment to eligible students with disabilities, including special education and related services. 504/ADA are to ensure that no otherwise qualified person with a disability is denied access to, benefits of, or is subjected to discrimination in any program or activity provided by any public institution or entity.

All infants, children and youth requiring special education services until age 21 or graduation from high school are covered. A list of disabilities is provided in IDEA and includes specific learning disabilities.

### **IMPORTANT NOTE:**

Students must be “otherwise qualified,” which requires meeting established criteria (e.g. admissions, course expectations, graduation).

## Postsecondary

- \* 504 (Section 504, Rehab Act, 1973)
- \* ADA (Americans w/ Disabilities Act, 1990)

Students are responsible for self-identification and for obtaining disability services.

- \* Civil rights, non-discrimination
- \* Equal access

504/ADA ensure that no otherwise qualified person with a disability will be denied access to, the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination by any program or activity provided by any public institution or entity.

All qualified persons with disabilities who meet the entry age level criteria or particular program entry criteria of the college and who can document the existence of a disability as defined by the ADA are covered.

**DISABILITY** is defined as “any physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; having a record of such an impairment; or being regarded as having an impairment.”