

Documentation Guidelines for Academic Accommodations

Carnegie Mellon University is committed to ensuring that individuals with disabilities are able to fully participate in its programs, services, and activities in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. To establish that an individual is covered under these laws, the student must submit documentation indicating that the student has a disability that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Major life activities include, but are not limited to, seeing, hearing, walking, speaking, learning, reading, concentrating, and communicating.

General Documentation Guidelines

- Documentation must be obtained from a professional with comprehensive training and experience in the relevant specialty who holds appropriate licensure or certification.
- Documentation must be up to date and reflect the current status of the student's disability and functional limitations. If the documentation provided does not reflect the current status of the student's disability or limitations, Disability Resources will need to request more recent documentation which will delay the accommodations process. Note: documentation that is five years old or more often does not meet this requirement.
- Documentation must describe the treatment relationship between the student and medical or mental health provider (e.g. how long the provider has treated the student, frequency of treatment visits, primary goals of treatment, etc.).
- Documentation must describe in detail how the student's disability impacts the student and substantially limits the student's ability to engage in one or more major life activities, as well as its impact on participation in academics and/or other aspects of campus life.
- The documentation provided cannot be from a family member or someone with a personal relationship with the student or the student's family.
- Additional information that is very helpful (but not required) in determining appropriate accommodations includes the specific diagnosis or diagnoses, the treatment history and plan of care, diagnostic methodology, recommended disability accommodations and/or auxiliary aids and services.

Documentation must follow the guidelines stated above. The [Documentation of Disability for Academic Accommodations Form](#) serves as one option for

providing the necessary information. Alternatively, a student can submit a letter on their healthcare professional's letterhead that provides the above information and is signed and dated by the professional. Disability Resources strongly encourages typed documentation for legibility and accessibility reasons.

The cost of obtaining documentation is generally the responsibility of the student requesting accommodations. If the initial documentation is incomplete or inadequate, Disability Resources has the discretion to require additional documentation. Any cost of obtaining additional documentation is also the responsibility of the student. If you have questions about documentation, please contact our office at 412-268-6121 or access@andrew.cmu.edu.

Referrals for Psychological and Neuropsychological Evaluations

Disability Resources does not perform psychological or neuropsychological evaluations but can provide a list of agencies that perform such evaluations.

Requests for Housing Accommodations or Service or Emotional Support Animals

The above requirements and process apply to requests for academic accommodations. For the process and requirements for requesting housing accommodations or a service or emotional support animal, please refer to our [Forms and Helpful Documents](#) page.