

Vanderbilt University - Psychological Documentation Guidelines

Students requesting accommodations on the basis of a psychiatric disability must provide current documentation administered and signed by a licensed psychologist, psychiatrist, or licensed clinical social worker. The documentation must include, but is not restricted to, the following:

- o **Evidence of current impairment:** An assessment of the presenting symptoms and evidence of current behaviors that significantly impair functioning. In an academic setting, functional impairment is most often expressed in poor academic performance across a variety of academic tasks.

Evidence is needed to determine the current impact of the disorder on the ability to function in an academic setting and to establish eligibility for classroom accommodations such as alternative testing arrangements, note-takers, and/or reduced course load.

- o **A list of prescribed medication:** An indication of whether the dosage and schedule may affect the types of accommodations requested.
- o **A clinical summary:** The clinical summary must provide details indicating the substantial limitations to major life activities posed by the psychiatric disability, a description of the extent to which these limitations would impact the academic context for which accommodations are being requested, suggestions on how the specific effects of the psychiatric disability may be accommodated, and a statement on how the effects of the psychiatric disability are mediated by the recommended accommodations.

The documentation must include a specific and current psychiatric diagnosis as per the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual V (DSM-V) indicating the nature, frequency and severity of the symptoms upon which the diagnosis was predicated. A diagnosis without an explicit listing of current symptoms is not sufficient.

Copies of an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) or a 504 Plan alone are not acceptable documentation. Prior accommodations in an educational setting do not necessarily warrant the provision of current accommodations.

Submission of Documentation and Questions

Documentation should be mailed to the Disability Program Coordinator, Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, & Disability Services Dept., Vanderbilt University, PMB 401809, 2301 Vanderbilt Place, Nashville, TN 37240-1809 or fax to (615) 343-0671. Questions should be directed to (615) 322-4705.

Accommodations and Services

The final determination of appropriate accommodations, auxiliary aids and services rest with Vanderbilt University's Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, & Disability Services Department's Disability Services Program, in consultation with individual academic and non-academic programs.

Confidentiality

All information obtained in diagnostic and medical records will be maintained and used in accordance with applicable confidentiality requirements.