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Accommodations ▪ Coaching ▪ Consultation

Blind/Low Vision – Documentation Guidelines

Students who are blind or low vision and are seeking disability accommodations and services through Student Accessibility and Support Services (SASS) at Rider University 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 as amended. Current and comprehensive documentation should be provided in order for a student to be eligible for accommodations and services and to be protected under the law. Documentation provided will be used to determine the student's accommodation and accessibility needs.

Secondary schools and post-secondary institutions are governed under different laws with regard to providing services to students with disabilities. A prior history of accommodation does not in and of itself warrant the provision of a similar accommodation at the post-secondary level. A student's high school Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a 504 Plan may not be sufficient documentation to establish the rationale for academic adjustments, auxiliary aids and/or services in the post-secondary setting.

The following guidelines are provided in the interest of assuring that documentation is appropriate to verify eligibility and support requests for reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids at the postsecondary level.

DOCUMENTATION GUIDELINES

Qualifications of the Evaluator

- Diagnostic reports should be completed by an optometrist or ophthalmologist.
- Diagnostic evaluations completed by professionals who have a personal relationship with the student will not be accepted.

Requirements of the Evaluation Report

- All diagnostic reports must include the names, titles, and professional credentials of the evaluators and include the signature of the professionals and the date(s) of testing/assessments.
- The report must be typed and submitted on professional letterhead. Handwritten diagnostic reports are not acceptable.
- The required report components must be clearly presented and well organized.

Assessment and Accommodations

The evaluation must reflect the current functional limitations of the impairment; documentation may require periodic updates if changes occur in the student's functioning. Documentation should fully explain the following criteria of the student's impairment:

- Diagnosis
- Duration (chronic, episodic, or short term)
- History and symptoms
- Severity (mild, moderate, or severe)
- Detailed explanation of how the disability limits the student's functioning in the college environment
- List of the student's relevant current medications and an explanation of the extent to which medication mitigates the symptoms of the disability
- Specific recommendations regarding academic adjustments, auxiliary aids, and/or services related to the student's condition and a rationale
- Information regarding situations that may exacerbate the student's disability

Documentation Retention

Rider University policy requires that disability documentation be retained for seven years after a student has stopped attending. All submitted materials will be held in SASS as educational records under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Students have a right to review their educational record.

Students are encouraged to retain their own copies of disability documentation for future use.