

**Disabilities Support Services**  
**Chattanooga State Community College**  
**Disability Documentation Guidelines**

Students requesting services from Disabilities Support Services (DSS) are required to submit documentation to determine eligibility in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 as amended in 2009 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The following guidelines were established to ensure that all documentation is complete and accurate. DSS reserves the right to determine eligibility and reasonable accommodation based on the completeness of the documentation provided, as well as first-person reports and observations from the student, family members, and others who may be involved with the treatment and/or education of the student. All documentation is kept confidential.

### Initiating Services

Unlike high school, where students are automatically provided with testing and accommodation services, on the college campus it is the student's responsibility to self-disclose and to provide documentation in order to receive accommodation.

### General Guidelines

1. **A Qualified Professional Must Conduct the Evaluation.** Evaluator should provide name, title, address, professional credentials, including information about state licensure or certification number.
2. **Documentation Must be Current.** Disabilities may change in severity over time and documentation should support current accommodation needs.
3. **Documentation Must be Comprehensive:**
  - a. Evaluation should include the diagnosis (including codes) and be dated.
  - b. Evaluation should include the original signature of the professional responsible for the assessment of functioning.
  - c. Recommendation and rationale for accommodation and/or assistive technology must be based on analysis of the functional impact of the diagnosis.
4. **Services, accommodation, and/or assistive technology** will be determined on an individual basis upon documentation review and consultation with a college disability

service professional. Insufficient documentation may result in the delay of services and accommodation.

### **Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD) Documentation Guidelines**

Documentation should include:

- A specific diagnosis of AD/HD based on the DSM-IV diagnostic criteria.
- A summary of assessment procedures and evaluation instruments used to make the diagnosis.
- All quantitative information in standard scores and/or percentiles.
- Age of onset and all relevant developmental, familial, medical, medication, psychosocial, behavioral, and academic information.
- Description of functional limitation to learning and the degree to which it affects the individual in a higher education setting.
- Recommendation of reasonable accommodation that might be appropriate at the postsecondary level, as well as the rationale for each accommodation. These recommendations should be based on functional limitations to learning and other major life activities and should be supported by the diagnostic assessment.

### **Deaf/Hard of Hearing Documentation Guidelines**

Documentation should include the following:

- Clinical observations that address cause of hearing loss, age of onset; prognosis (progressive, stable, etc.); secondary complications; level of loss.
- Functional hearing characteristics, including secondary diagnoses, as well as the impact on the hearing loss in the postsecondary setting.

### **Learning and Cognitive Disabilities Documentation Guidelines**

A psychological or psycho-educational evaluation (required) should:

- Be conducted by a school psychologist, psychiatrist, or psychological examiner with comprehensive training in assessing adolescents and adults with learning and cognitive disabilities.
- Indicate how patterns of the student's aptitude, achievement, and processing show the presence of a learning or cognitive disability.
- Include a description of the functional impact and degree of limitation to learning and other major life activities.
- Include test scores to document the nature and severity of the disability.

- Include recommendations and rationale for specific accommodation and/or assistive technology.

### **Mobility and Chronic Health Conditions Documentation Guidelines**

Documentation should:

- Be provided by a qualified medical professional with the appropriate training in diagnosing physical disabilities.
- Be submitted on letterhead (or a college Medical Documentation Form).
- Identify current functional limitations in the academic environment and recommendations for accommodation and/ or assistive technology.
- Identify medication, if any, and include information describing the possible impact of the medication upon academic performance.

### **Psychological/Psychiatric Disabilities Documentation Guidelines**

The evaluation should:

- Include a clear statement of the disorder including DSM-IV criteria and a summary of present symptoms and the current functional impact to learning and other major life activities.
- Be conducted by a licensed mental health professional, such as a psychologist, psychiatrist, or licensed clinical social worker. The diagnostician must be an impartial individual who is not a family member of the student.
- Be current. Due to the changing nature of this type of disability, information provided should be no more than one year old, and if the condition has not been stable for at least that period of time, more recent information will be required (within the last six months).
- Include a summary of assessment procedures and evaluation instruments used to make the diagnosis and a summary of evaluation results, including standard or percentile scores.
- Include medical information relating to the student's needs, including the impact of medication on the student's ability to meet the demands of the postsecondary environment.
- Include rationale for specific recommendations or accommodation.

### **Traumatic/Acquired Brain Injuries Documentation Guidelines**

The evaluation should:

- Be performed by a professional who is knowledgeable about brain injuries and qualified to make appropriate recommendations.

- Include a specific statement of the injury and the probable site of lesion must be stated within the documentation submitted.
- Include the current status of the injury and its relevance to the collegiate setting.
- Include a summary of cognitive and achievement measures used and evaluation results, including standardized scores and percentiles used to make the diagnosis. Because of the evolving nature of these kinds of injuries, information provided should be as current as possible, preferably within the last six months.

### **Visual Impairment or Blindness**

Documentation of a visual impairment must include clinical observations by either an ophthalmologist or an optometrist. Documentation should include the following:

- Cause of visual impairment (prenatal or congenital influence, infectious disease, injury, illness, undetermined, etc.) as well as current status of the loss (stable, progressive, etc.).
- Age of onset.
- Clinical diagnosis (blind, partial vision, low vision) and/or level of visual ability.
- Visual field testing.
- Current functional limitations and recommendations for academic accommodation/assistive technology.

**Other:** Consult with Disabilities Support Services (DSS).

These guidelines are provided so that DSS can respond appropriately to the individual needs of the student. DSS reserves the right to determine eligibility for services based on the quality of the submitted documentation, the in-person interview, and observations.

**It is the student's responsibility to provide documentation to DSS.**

**Documentation should be submitted in person or by postal mail/email to:**

Disabilities Support Services, S-113  
Chattanooga State Community College  
4501 Amnicola Highway  
Chattanooga, TN 37406  
Telephone: (423) 697-4452; Fax: (423) 697-2693