

Documentation Guidelines for Students with Disabilities at Suffolk University

The Office of Disability Services (ODS) is committed to providing accommodations and services to students with disabilities in order to ensure a comprehensively accessible University experience. We engage in an interactive process with each student and review requests for accommodations on a case-by-case basis. In determining reasonable accommodations, we consider each student's condition(s), history, experience, and request. In addition to a one-on-one interview with the student, ODS will request information from other sources in order to establish a disability and the impact it has on living and/or learning in a postsecondary environment.

The following guidelines are provided to assist students in identifying the type of information and documentation that will inform the process of determining reasonable and appropriate accommodations. These guidelines are not exhaustive, but should help students prepare for their one-on-one meeting with an ODS staff member.

General Information

- Students are encouraged to submit any prior assessments and/or evaluative reports conducted by evaluators, physicians, medical professionals, etc., which may assist in determining appropriate accommodations. Documentation should be current and relevant to the requested accommodations.
- While an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and/or 504 Plan provide helpful information, these documents alone may not provide sufficient information to determine appropriate accommodations in the postsecondary environment. Your ODS staff member will inform you if more documentation is needed.
- Reasonable accommodations are determined based on the nature of the condition(s) and resulting impact in the postsecondary environment. A student's program of study and the courses a student is enrolled will also inform the types of accommodations that are appropriate.
- Prior receipt of accommodations (e.g., in high school or in another University setting) will inform the process of determining appropriate accommodations at Suffolk; however, they do not guarantee receipt of the same accommodations.
- While the law requires that priority consideration be given to the specific methods requested, it does not imply that a particular accommodation must be granted if it is deemed not reasonable or other suitable methods are available.
- Professionals (e.g., physicians or other medical professionals) conducting assessment, rendering diagnoses of specific conditions and making recommendations for appropriate accommodations must be qualified to do so. Diagnoses, histories and recommendations for the postsecondary environment must be made on professional letterhead, dated and signed.

Specific information needed from a diagnostic provider:

Documentation should include the following information:

1. Existing Condition(s) - Information regarding the student's current condition(s) including any relevant history
2. Presenting Concerns - Information regarding the student's presenting concerns (ongoing difficulties and behaviors) that substantially impact functioning in a postsecondary setting.
3. Background History - Information regarding the student's history of any prior accommodations received (e.g., high school, another University setting, etc.) (if applicable).

4. Medications/Treatment - Information regarding the student's current medication(s) including dosage(s) and frequency (if applicable). Please include any known adverse side effects due to medications, a description of the student's current treatments or other interventions including frequency and a description of any auxiliary aids you use (e.g., hearing aids, assistive listening devices, visual aids, etc.)
5. Recommendations and Evaluator Qualifications - Specific recommendations regarding academic and/or residential accommodations, auxiliary aids and/or services based on the impact of the condition(s) in the postsecondary environment