

Blind and Low Vision Documentation Guidelines

Visual impairments are defined as disorders of the structure and/or function of the eyes. Documentation of an uncorrectable visual impairment should consist of a medical report or physician's letter from an optometrist, ophthalmologist or other appropriate medical practitioner. The diagnostician must be an impartial individual who is not a family member of the student.

Documentation must be **current**. In most cases, this means a diagnosis has been made and/or treatment has been prescribed **within the past three years**. Because the provision of all reasonable accommodations and services is based upon assessment of the current impact of the student's disabilities on his/her academic performance, it is in a student's best interest to provide recent and appropriate documentation.

The following guidelines are provided to assist the Office of Student Disability Services in collaborating with each student to determine appropriate accommodations. Documentation serves as a foundation that legitimizes a student's request for appropriate accommodations. Recommended documentation includes:

- A clear statement of vision-related disability with supporting numerical description that reflects the current impact the blindness or vision loss has on the student's functioning.
- A summary of assessment procedures and evaluation instruments used to make the diagnosis and a summary of evaluation results including standardized scores.
- Present symptoms that meet the criteria for diagnosis.
- Medical information relating to the student's needs the status of the individual's vision (static or changing), and its impact on the demands of the academic program.
- Narrative or descriptive text providing both quantitative and qualitative information about the student's abilities that might be helpful in understanding the student's profile including functional limitation, the use of corrective lenses and ongoing visual therapy (if appropriate).
- A statement of the functional impact or limitations of the disability on learning or other major life activity and the degree to which it impacts the individual in the learning context for which accommodations are being requested.

Further assessment by an appropriate professional may be required if co-existing learning disabilities or other disabling conditions are indicated. The student and the Office of Student Disability Services will collaboratively determine appropriate accommodations.

NOTE: Please complete and return the **Student Intake Form** and the **Release of Information Form** with your documentation.