

## **Documentation Policy**

- Documentation has two main purposes: (1) to establish that an individual has a disability and (2) to describe and document the functional impact of the disability for use in establishing the need for, and design of, accommodations. Documentation will be used to evaluate requests for reasonable accommodations and/or auxiliary aids. The evaluation process will include the impact of the disability in accessing the offerings of the college. In general, the documentation must:
  1. identify the nature and extent of the disability
  2. include information on the functional limitations as related to the academic environment, and specifically to learning
  3. provide a description of the current course of treatment including medical side effects and prognosis for the future
  4. include recommendations for reasonable accommodations
- Documentation must reflect the current status of the disability, reasonably within a period of three to five years. Psychological documentation must be updated annually. The time period varies with the nature and course of a student's specific disability. Disability Services will often request periodic updates regarding a student's functional limitations due to the disability.
- Documentation must be provided by a professional qualified to make the diagnosis and include the evaluator's name, address, telephone number, and professional credentials relevant to the diagnosis, and must be on official letterhead stationery, dated, and signed.

**Medical Conditions:** Students whose disabilities are medical conditions must present documentation from a medical professional qualified to diagnose the specific medical condition. If a student has multiple conditions, each condition for which the student is seeking accommodations must be so documented. The documentation must sufficiently indicate the functional limitations of the disability to determine and support appropriate accommodations.

**Psychiatric/Psychological Conditions:** Students with psychiatric, psychological, cognitive, and learning impairments must present a comprehensive evaluation presenting DSM-IV diagnostic criteria. The report must provide sufficient indication of the functional limitations posed by the disability in order to determine appropriate academic accommodations. DS personnel will review the documentation to determine if it is sufficient to support accommodations requested by the student. Additional documentation may be requested. In certain circumstances, a re-evaluation may be necessary. Re-evaluations are the responsibility of the student.

- CCC&TI reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of submitted documentation and requests for accommodations on a case-by-case basis. Additional information may be requested to determine eligibility for services. Documentation acceptable for other agencies and institutions (Vocational Rehabilitation, public schools, etc.) may not be sufficient for determining post-secondary services. Generally, although these documents can be helpful, an IEP, 504 Plan or Gen. Ed. Initiative from a secondary school does not provide enough information for the documentation of disability and for determining accommodations in a post-secondary setting.
- If documentation presented is deemed to be insufficient or outdated, the student may be requested to obtain additional documentation. In such cases, consideration will be given to a student presenting documentation showing good evidence of a disability by allowing services to

that student on a provisional basis for one semester. Costs related to obtaining documentation are the responsibility of the student.

Documentation may be delivered to Disability Services, emailed, FAXed, or mailed to Disability Services on the campus where the student is enrolled in classes whether the classes are seated classes, hybrid, or online. Accommodations for disabilities are not in effect retroactively (prior to the date of identification to DS, student providing appropriate documentation, and completion of the accommodation form with signatures).

## **Responsibilities Related to Disability Services at Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute**

### **Responsibility of Students**

- Identify themselves to Disability Services as early as possible at the beginning of each semester.
- Provide current documentation of the disability according to college's policy.
- Meet with the DS personnel on your campus to determine specific accommodations at the beginning of each semester.
- Provide the faculty member and director/coordinator with a signed copy of the accommodation form.
- Communicate regularly with DS during the semester and always at the beginning of each semester.
- Maintain the same responsibility for their education as all students including maintaining the same academic progression standards, academic integrity, and behavior according to the college's Code of Conduct.
- Become familiar with all policies and procedures of the college and abide by them. Ask questions if anything is unclear.
- Understand the differences between secondary and post-secondary disability laws and procedures.

### **Responsibility of Faculty**

- Cooperate and communicate with Disability Services.
- Meet with the student as quickly as possible with consideration given to the student's need for privacy.
- Provide reasonable accommodations as requested on accommodation form from DS. Please do not change or write on accommodation forms.
- Do not question the validity of a documented disability when accommodations have been authorized by the college.
- Do not request to examine the student's confidential documentation.
- Arrange with the student the means for providing accommodations in a particular class respecting the student's need for confidentiality.
- Expect students with disabilities to comprehend the course material and be able to communicate that comprehension to the instructor and comply with the college's Code of Conduct.
- Present materials in accessible formats.

### **Responsibility of Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute**

- Provide information to faculty, staff and students with disabilities in accessible formats and upon request.
- Evaluate faculty, staff, students, and applicants on their abilities not their disabilities.

- Provide or arrange reasonable accommodations and assistive devices through designated disability services offices. Accommodations and services are not provided retroactively (prior to the date the student identified to Disability Services, provided appropriate medical documentation, and signed the accommodation form)
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality of records and communications according to FERPA.

### **Disability Disclosure**

Disclosure, telling others about the existence of a disability, is voluntary. It is a personal decision, usually made with a specific purpose in mind, and it should be an informed choice based on disability laws, legal rights, and legal responsibilities. Students are not required to disclose a disability, but disclosure and documentation are both required in order to receive accommodations and/or services.

#### **Why Might a Person Choose to Disclose?**

- to request and receive needed, helpful accommodations and/or support services
- to receive legal protection from discrimination (ADAAA/504)
- to maintain/improve relationships with employers, coworkers, instructors, peers, etc.
- to reduce stress by being open and honest
- to develop self-advocacy at the post-secondary level
- to insure access to educational opportunities

#### **Why Might a Person Choose Not to Disclose?**

- student believes accommodations and/or services are not needed
- learning is not compromised by the disability
- person may be unaware that accommodations and/or services are available
- fear of discrimination, negative attitudes, exclusion, stigma, etc.
- may experience stress because of embarrassment, anxiety, etc.

#### **What Information Should a Person Disclose?**

- how disability and limitations affect performance
- current difficulties experienced
- current documentation from a qualified, licensed professional
- ideas for solutions that will allow improved functioning and success
- knowledge about his or her disability and insights into past efforts, successes, and failures

#### **To Whom Should the Person Disclose?**

- to those who have a need to know to provide accommodations and/or services
- at CCC&TI a person who has a disability should disclose to the Disability Services representative on the campus where the student plans to, or is currently, attending classes either by email, telephone, or in person

### **Confidentiality**

The college keeps documentation concerning disabilities and medical conditions in a secure DS file only, separate from other records such as the student's general academic file or employment record. Student documentation is subject to FERPA and only shared on a need-to-know basis and only for the benefit of students' education.