

ALVIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Student Accessibility Services

Documentation Guidelines

These guidelines will assist you in identifying or obtaining documentation necessary to verify eligibility under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Students requesting support services through the Student Accessibility Services Office at Alvin Community College are required to submit documentation. Providing documentation does not automatically qualify an individual for academic accommodations.

Appropriate documentation should meet the following guidelines:

- The evaluation should be **typed on letterhead** that includes the place of employment, address, and phone number of the qualified professional that completed the evaluation. It must be dated, and signed by the qualified professional.
- The evaluation must be conducted by a **qualified professional** with comprehensive training and relevant experience in the diagnosis of psychiatric and related disorders. It must include the name, title, and professional credentials of the evaluator including information about license, certification and/or area(s) of specialization.
- Qualified professionals may include: psychologists, neuro-psychologists, psychiatrists, and other relevantly trained medical doctors - *The qualified professional(s) completing evaluation must be impartial and not related to person being evaluated.*
- The documentation and identified diagnosis should be **current**. In some cases, it may be necessary to update or obtain a more recent diagnostic evaluation.
- The documentation must address the **severity or current level of functioning** of the individual and areas of academic impact.
- The diagnostic evaluation or verifying letter must identify current **functional limitations and/or academic limitations** and address the need for accommodations in an educational setting.

Information in these guidelines was derived from a variety of sources, including the *Association of Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD)*, *Educational Testing Service (ETS)*, *the University of North Texas*, and *Collin College*. AHEAD and ETS have developed comprehensive documentation guidelines for use by post-secondary institutions.

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Mental Health Disorders

Mental Health Disorder documentation must include:

1. **Specific diagnosis** of a Mental Health Disorder (using **definitive** language) according to DSM / ICD diagnostic criteria and specification of presenting symptoms.
2. **Severity of the condition** and/or assessment of the social, occupational, and psychological functioning of the individual.
3. **Current Functional Limitations** or symptoms of a Mental Health Disorder that impact this individual in educational setting / academic environment.

Mental Health Disorder documentation should also include:

- Evidence of ongoing mental health related behaviors that significantly impair functioning in more than one setting over time. Developmental, family, medical, and educational history.
- Relevant psycho-social history and relevant interventions.
- Investigate and rule out other factors that may influence the diagnosis such as neurological, medical, substance abuse, educational, linguistic, sensor motor, or cultural factors, which may cause behaviors similar to a Mental Health Disorder.
- Names of assessment instrument(s) used, date administered, and both quantitative and qualitative information which supports the diagnosis.
- Identify Prescriptive treatments and medications prescribed, if any, and the possible impact medication could have on an individual in an educational setting.
- A **Disability Verification Form** is available upon request to assist in providing the information requested above. ***This form can be submitted to your provider to document your disability in accordance with The Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.***