

# Psychiatric Disabilities Documentation Requirements

The University of Alabama Office of Disability Services

## Evaluation by an appropriate expert

Students requesting accommodations on the basis of a psychiatric disability must provide documentation from a licensed clinical psychologist (Ph.D.), psychiatrist (M.D.), licensed clinical social worker, or licensed professional counselor.

## Documentation must be current

Because of the variable nature of psychiatric disabilities, students registering for the first time must submit documentation from an assessment conducted no more than **six months** prior to the date of registration with ODS. Frequent updates may need to be provided depending on the nature of the academic adjustments requested. A school report such as an IEP or 504 Accommodation Plan is **insufficient** documentation.

## Documentation must include, but is not limited to, the following elements:

### 1. Diagnosis

The report must address a specific, current psychiatric diagnosis as per the DSM-V (including diagnostic codes) which indicates the **nature, frequency and severity** of the symptoms upon which the diagnosis was predicated. A diagnosis without an **explicit listing of current symptoms** is not sufficient. Primary and secondary Axis I and Axis II diagnoses are required.

### 2. Medications

Prescribed medications, dosages, schedules and side effects which may influence the type of accommodations provided should be addressed. Medication cannot be used to imply a diagnosis.

### 3. Clinical summary

This section of the report must address:

- (a) The **substantial limitations** to major life activities posed by the psychiatric disability.
- (b) The extent to which these limitations would impact the academic context for which accommodations are being requested.
- (c) Suggestions as to how the specific effects of the psychiatric disability may be accommodated.
- (d) The rationale behind the suggested accommodations. \*

### 4. Additional Requirements

All reports must be in narrative form, **typed**, and signed by the appropriate clinician. Documentation must be submitted on the official letterhead of the professional diagnosing the disability. Chart or clinic notes are not acceptable forms of documentation.

\* A history of accommodations does not in itself warrant the provision of similar accommodations at UA. The final determination of appropriate and reasonable accommodation rests with the University of Alabama.

Email documentation to [ods@ua.edu](mailto:ods@ua.edu) or mail documentation to:

Office of Disability Services  
University of Alabama  
1000 Houser Hall  
Box 870185  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0185

This document will be made available in alternative formats upon request. Please contact the Office of Disability Services, (205) 348-4285 (Voice) or (205) 348-3081 (TTY) for assistance.

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