

# **UTK OFFICE OF DISABILITY SERVICES**

## **VISUAL DISABILITIES DOCUMENTATION GUIDELINES**

Students who are requesting support services from the Office of Disability Services at The University of Tennessee are required to submit documentation to verify eligibility under the ADA of 1990. The following guidelines are provided in the interest of ensuring that the documentation is complete and appropriate:

1. Documentation of a visual impairment must include clinical observations by either an ophthalmologist or an optometrist. Things to include as documentation of a visual impairment:

- Cause of visual impairment (prenatal influence or congenital, infectious disease, injury, general disease, undetermined). And if it is non-progressive, progressive, or secondary complications.
- On-set of visual impairment.
- Clinical diagnosis (blind, partial vision, low vision) and/or Level of visual disability (moderate, severe, profound). Be specific.
- Snellen Chart measurement of acuity.
- Visual field (central loss, peripheral loss)
- Color measurement (ability to discriminate colors, as well as light and dark)
- Assessment of visual efficiency

2. Documentation should include a Functional Visual Characteristics and a physical needs assessment. It should express clinical terms as more concrete information for the setting of higher education.

3. A summary of the condition and evidence of a substantial limitation to learning or other major life activity must be provided.

4. Specific cognitive processing strengths, weaknesses, and deficits should be discussed. Clear documentation of deficit areas is necessary in order for the college to provide appropriate, reasonable accommodations.

5. A statement of 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 (i.e. the implications for reading, mobility, seeing the black board).

6. Other things that are helpful to include when doing a comprehensive assessment:

- Intelligence/Aptitude testing
- Sensory/Motor skills
- Academic Skills/ Concept Development
- Social/ Emotional/ Affective Information
- Functional Living Skills (i.e. orientation and mobility, and ADL's)

7. The documentation must include the following information:

- Names of the assessment instruments used
- Quantitative and qualitative information which supports the diagnosis
- The areas of educational impact and the severity of the condition
- Recommendations for prescriptive treatments
- Notation of medications prescribed, if any, and potential impact on learning
- Additional observations or recommendations which could assist us in adequately serving the student
- The names, titles, addresses, and phone numbers of the evaluator(s), as well as date(s) of testing

The aforementioned guidelines are provided so that Office of Disability Services can respond appropriately to the individual needs of the student. Disability Services reserves the right to determine eligibility for services based on the quality of the submitted documentation. All documentation is confidential.

**All documentation is confidential**

Please submit documentation and/ or inquiries to:

University of Tennessee  
Office of Disability Services  
2227 Dunford Hall  
Knoxville, Tennessee 37996-4007  
(Phone) 865-974-6087 V/TTY  
(Fax) 865-974-9552