



College of Court Reporting

Disability Accommodations Information Sheet

2803 Boilermaker Court
Valparaiso, Indiana 46383
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Policy

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) which governs appropriate and reasonable accommodations for students in the K-12 setting, is not in effect in higher education. Colleges have no legal responsibility to identify students with disabilities or involve parents in decision making. Individual Education Plans (IEP) developed for individuals in the K-12 setting under IDEA have no relevancy in higher education. The relevant law in higher education and post-secondary education is civil rights law- it protects people with disabilities from discrimination in admission to college and participation in college activities. The two federal laws that provide this protection are Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA states "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall, solely by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity, or be subjected to discrimination by any such entity." In general, a disability cannot be grounds for excluding a person from a college, an academic program, a class, a residence hall, or college activity, if the person is qualified. Under these

laws:

1. Students must self-identify that s/he has a disability
2. Students must provide appropriate documentation of a disability. If an evaluation is needed, the expense is the student's responsibility
3. Students must request specific accommodation(s)
4. Under "reasonable accommodations", academic adjustments that equalize opportunity for participation are required; substantial modifications to curriculum and lowering standards are NOT required.
5. College students are over 18 and are considered adults. No parent consultation is required.

Students requiring accommodations are encouraged to begin the process prior to enrollment, if possible.



Process

Once a student self-discloses a disability and has expressed the intent to request reasonable accommodations, they should be directed to the ADA Coordinator to receive appropriate paperwork.

The ADA Coordinator will respond with the Accommodations Request Form via email. This form must be completed in its entirety and returned to the ADA Coordinator along with appropriate supporting documentation of the disability that is current (dated within 2 years) and includes recommendations for accommodations that are specific to the post-secondary learning environment. IEP's will not be accepted as appropriate supporting documentation. The institution requires diagnosis and recommendation (post-secondary level) paperwork from a third-party professional such as a doctor or therapist.

The completed Disability Accommodations Request form and supporting documentation are to be submitted to the ADA Coordinator for review and evaluation via email. Upon approval from the ADA Coordinator, the documentation will move through the institution's internal approval process. Once a decision has been rendered by the institution regarding the accommodation, the ADA Coordinator will prepare an Accommodations Plan and send this to the student for review and signature within 30 days of the completed request. After the student signs off on the Accommodations Plan, the ADA coordinator will sign/date the document and notify the appropriate personnel in the Education Department (i.e.: Director of Education and Instructors).

The ADA Coordinator maintains the disability accommodations request and supporting documentation in his/her confidential files. The Accommodations Plan gets scanned into the student's permanent electronic record. The ADA Coordinator will set aside three check-in dates during the student's education, where they will check in with the student to ensure they are receiving the accommodations they've been approved for. It is encouraged, however, that if a student feels they are not receiving what they were approved for, to contact the ADA Coordinator as soon as possible so that the issue at hand can be resolved.

The process, from start to finish, can take several weeks. It is encouraged that students begin the process sooner than later so that accommodations can be put into place as soon as possible.

It is important to note that accommodations are not retroactive. Once accommodations have been approved, they will be honored moving forward, however, prior earned grades cannot be adjusted after accommodations are approved and implemented.

ADA Coordinator Contact Information:

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