

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES

7.20100 OP
OPERATIONAL
PROCEDURE

OVERVIEW

Metropolitan Community College has an established procedure for students to request reasonable accommodation(s) on the basis of disability to ensure equitable access pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, as amended. The procedure for the provision of reasonable accommodations for MCC students is outlined below.

PROCESS

ELIGIBILITY

As defined by the ADA, a person with a disability is someone who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities (for example, walking, seeing, hearing, thinking, concentrating, and learning.) A substantial limitation exists if the manner, duration, or condition under which the activity is performed is significantly limited compared to most people. With respect to post-secondary education, a qualified person with a disability is one who, with or without accommodation, meets the standards for admission to or participation in an educational program, service, or activity. (Adapted from Subpart E: The Impact of Section 504 on Postsecondary Education, Association of Higher Education and Disability.)

The [Disability Support Services \(DSS\) office](#) handles reasonable accommodation requests and works with qualified students and faculty to ensure the implementation of these requests. Students are required to utilize the College's established procedures to request reasonable accommodations.

DISABILITY
DOCUMENTATION

Metropolitan Community College may require documentation to confirm the existence of a disabling condition; to identify current deficits that cause limitations, preferably in a college setting; and to relate the current impact of the condition to the requested accommodations.

Students have the responsibility to provide documentation at their own expense. The College may request additional documentation if the information provided is incomplete to make a determination of eligibility or if the documentation does not support the accommodation(s) requested. The documentation will be used along with the student's description of need and educational history to determine eligibility for reasonable accommodations.

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The DSS Coordinator will consider all of the information the student provides including, but not limited to, the following:

- The student's self-report of their needs
- Records of past accommodations and services from another college; state or national standardized tests (e.g., ACT); and/or high school (e.g., IEP or 504 plan) formal psychological or medical evaluation reports
- Formal psychological or medical evaluation reports from a qualified professional

The DSS Coordinator needs enough information to confirm that the student has a disability that substantially limits a significant life activity and understand how the disability impacts the student in an educational environment. The extent of documentation required is determined on a case-by-case basis and may vary depending on the disability and requested accommodations. It is the student's responsibility to identify the accommodations they are requesting and identify how the disability may impact them. Some areas to be considered are:

- Communication
- classroom, laboratory and online learning
- reading and writing
- note taking
- testing
- the use of technology
- the physical environment
- group projects, formal and informal social interactions, etc.

While disability documentation does not typically need to be submitted each semester, there may be occasions when the DSS Coordinator asks for more or updated documentation. For example, more documentation may be needed if additional accommodations are requested that are not supported by the current documentation or if the condition changes.

PRIVACY

Student disclosure of a disability is voluntary. All students with disabilities who seek accommodation(s) have the responsibility to identify themselves to the DSS office. Identification may take place at

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admissions or at any time during the student's course of study. The College makes every effort to maintain the privacy of disability-related information, and it will not become a part of a student's academic record at the College. Faculty should refrain from discussing a student's disabilities and accommodations in the presence of other students, or to faculty or staff not directly involved in the accommodation process. Disability-related information will be released under the following conditions:

- if required by law
- with the student's written consent
- on a need-to-know basis

INTERACTIVE PROCESS

Reasonable accommodations are provided on a case-by-case basis for otherwise qualified students who disclose a disability that causes functional limitations in a college setting. Accommodations may vary from class to class depending upon course content and format. The accommodations are intended to provide the student with an equitable opportunity to participate in the College's programs and services. Accommodations are intended to be effective and reasonable; they do not guarantee success. The College is not required to make an accommodation that substantially alters essential elements of a course or program.

To determine appropriate accommodations, the DSS Coordinator engages in an individualized and interactive process with the student and other College professionals, as appropriate, based on the following considerations:

- Current substantial functional limitations caused by the condition in a college setting, as indicated by the documentation
- Student's description of need
- Course and program requirements

A prior history of accommodations does not mean that the College will provide similar accommodations. Consideration of a student's current functioning is essential in evaluating eligibility for accommodations.

While a student's accommodation preferences will be considered, not all accommodation requests will be granted. The college is not

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required to fundamentally alter its programs or provide accommodations that compromise essential course standards. If a student requests an accommodation and the request is denied, an alternative accommodation may be suggested and implemented.

Students should complete the following steps to receive accommodations:

1. The student chooses to self-identify to a DSS office. Students can identify themselves to DSS as a student with a disability and request accommodations anytime during their education, but accommodations are not retroactive. Early notification and self-identification to DSS can allow more time to make arrangements for accommodations. Some accommodations, such as alternate formats and in-class readers and scribes, can take several weeks to arrange.
2. The student schedules an appointment with the DSS office.
3. The student should read and review the documentation guidelines and bring any applicable documentation to their DSS appointment.
4. During the appointment, the DSS Coordinator will review any documentation this is provided and engage in a discussion with the student to determine eligibility. If needed, additional documentation may be requested.
5. Accommodations are determined on a case-by-case basis through the interactive process. Once the accommodations have been determined, the student is provided with an accommodation letter that lists the accommodations the student will receive.
6. For each class in which the student would like to receive accommodations, the student must provide the instructor with the accommodation letter. The student is encouraged to meet with the instructor to discuss the accommodations. Accommodations begin when the instructor receives the accommodation letter and are not retroactive. The instructor will make note of the date the accommodation letter is received.
7. The student must communicate any concerns about accommodations to the DSS Coordinator. These concerns may include that accommodations be added, adjusted, or eliminated based on coursework experiences and academic

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needs. Students should also notify DSS when they withdraw from a course. Should changes occur, a new accommodation letter will be issued, and those accommodations will begin when the instructor receives the new accommodation letter. Students can typically expect to receive the new letters within 5-7 business days. If additional documentation is required due to changes in needs, this process may take longer.

8. Students are required to renew their accommodations each semester. This allows for the interactive process to continue so that accommodations can be reviewed and changes made, if necessary, based on the student's course requirements and needs for that semester.

Classroom accommodations may include but are not limited to the following: record lectures or note-taker; adaptive software or assistive technology; sign language interpreters; alternative formats for print.

Testing accommodations may include but are not limited to the following: extended time for completion; distraction-reduced testing room; readers; scribes; adaptive software and assistive technology.

Course substitutions must be approved by the Division Chairperson and Dean of Instruction.

PROVISIONAL
ACCOMODATIONS

There are some instances in which provisional accommodations may be provided for students for a maximum of one semester, pending the official and complete documentation of a student's disability.

This type of assistance is determined on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Disability Support Services Coordinator.

TEMPORARY
ACCOMODATIONS

The Disability Support Services office can sometimes provide time-limited assistance for students in need of temporary services (such as a broken bone that affects the ability to write).

This type of assistance is determined on a case-by-case basis and may depend on documentation. The student should contact the DSS office as soon as possible to make the request.

The DSS Coordinator has the right to request documentation of the need for temporary assistance from the student's physician prior to

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providing services. Updated documentation may also be requested to determine the duration of services.

COMPLAINT
PROCEDURE

Students are encouraged to discuss disability-related concerns with the DSS Coordinator. The DSS office will attempt to resolve issues by assisting the student in discussing concerns with the faculty member, department, or program; participating in such discussions; or calling the faculty member and/or head of the department to clarify and resolve issues. Most situations are positively resolved through this process.

If a student feels they have been discriminated against on the basis of disability, the student may file a complaint internally with the [MCC Office of Civil Rights](#). Students may also choose to file a discrimination complaint externally through the [Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights](#).

PROCEDURE
MODIFICATION

This procedure must be reviewed regularly by Student Success and Engagement and District Disability Support Services at a minimum of every five years.

ENFORCEMENT

This operational procedure and applicable regulations shall be strictly enforced. Violations may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

VALUES ALIGNMENT

People

NOTIFICATION

The responsible officer will ensure districtwide communication is made within 30 days of approval through the college-wide communication platform available.

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