

Guidelines for Clinical Documentation of Low Vision or Blindness

The provision of reasonable accommodations for otherwise qualified individuals with diagnoses of a vision impairment will be made on a case-by-case basis, and will be based on current impact on functioning. Prior diagnosis or a prior history of receiving accommodations, does not guarantee the provision of similar accommodations in the absence of additional documentation.

The documentation must describe a disabling condition, which is defined by the presence of substantial limitations in one or more major life activities. The following guidelines are provided to ensure documentation not only validates the existence of a disability, but establishes the impact of the disability on the individual's functioning, and supports the request for accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids.

Disability Support Services will make the final determination regarding whether accommodations are reasonable and can be provided in the University environment. This determination will be based not only on the data provided in the documentation, but also on Colorado School of Mines criteria for reasonable accommodations.

All information obtained in diagnostic and medical reports will be maintained and used in accordance with applicable confidentiality requirements.

Documentation should be sent to:

Disability Support Services
Colorado School of Mines
W. Lloyd Wright Student Wellness Center
1770 Elm St., Room 209
Golden, CO 80401

Fax: 303-384-2009

Please expect a minimum of two weeks for a review of documentation.

Documentation Requirements:

A Qualified Evaluator Must Conduct the Evaluation:

Professionals qualified to diagnose and recommend accommodations must be trained and experienced. The following professionals would generally be considered qualified: Ophthalmologists; Optometrists and Fellows of the College of Optometrists in Vision Development are qualified to provide diagnosis and recommend accommodations regarding visual acuity and tracking and fusion difficulties. These include eye movement disorders, inefficiency using both eyes together, misalignment of the eyes, lazy eye, focusing problems, visual sensory disorders and motor integration.

Name, title, professional credentials of evaluator, and information about licensure and/or specialization are required. All evaluation reports must be typed on letterhead, signed, and dated.

Documentation Must Be Current:

- Documentation must show that a disability is currently impacting function in one or more major life activity. The age of acceptable documentation depends upon the need for accommodations in the post-secondary setting and those accommodations being requested.
- In most cases, evaluation must have been completed within the past three years.

Documentation Must Include the Following Components:

Specific, Current Diagnosis

- An evaluation from an ophthalmologist, including primary diagnosis/pathology, and visual acuities/field restrictions.
- Quantitative and qualitative information about the student's abilities to help in understanding the student's profile, including the use of corrective lenses and ongoing visual therapy (if appropriate).
- Functional limitations related to classroom learning, testing methods, laboratories, and field work (outdoors).
- Description of assistive technology and/or adaptive equipment currently being used, including brand names and models.

Recommended Accommodations

The recommendation of reasonable accommodations must be appropriate for the postsecondary level and Colorado School of Mines, and must be supported by the diagnosis. If extended test/quiz and/or lab time is recommended, the amount of time must be specified. Rationale must be given for each recommendation.