



Criteria for Documentation

Access Office for Students with Disabilities

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Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders (ADHD)

In order to be eligible for accommodations due to ADHD, students must meet the DSM-IV diagnostic criteria of the American Psychiatric Association (APA) and must meet the following criteria for documentation adopted by the Regents Centers for Learning Disorders:

1. Developmental history that is documented, using independent sources, of appropriate symptoms and problem behaviors across multiple settings (i.e., past evaluations, school records, teacher report).
2. Documentation of current symptoms that meet diagnostic criteria (clinical interview, behavior rating scales).
3. Documentation of both childhood and current adult behavior on rating scales of ADHD symptoms that have appropriate age norms (Norms-based behavior rating scales -- actual data required).
4. Corroboration of current ADHD symptoms across multiple settings by two independent observers with knowledge of the student's functioning (e.g., parent, spouse, teacher, supervisor, co-worker, relative, and/or clinician observation).
5. Clear evidence and documentation of interference with developmentally appropriate academic, social, or vocational functioning.
6. All other psychiatric or medical disorders which may cause problems with inattention are differentially evaluated, documented, and considered in the differential diagnosis. This is particularly important when mood, anxiety, or substance abuse disorders are involved. Other causes of problems with attention and concentration must be considered and discussed (i.e., test anxiety). A positive response to medication is not by itself considered diagnostic.
7. Assessment on which the documentation or evaluation is based must have been completed no more than three years prior to the student's application for academic assistance, OR must have been completed as an adult (18 years old or older) and still be considered current.

All documentation must include a specific diagnosis of ADHD and provide the evidence used to meet the above seven criteria. It is important for all evaluations to state clearly how ADHD functionally impacts the student's life across settings, creates a substantial limitation in learning, and provide a clear rationale why specific accommodations are needed to mediate its impact.