

Hamline University Disability Services Office

Guidelines for Documenting Psychological Disabilities

The Disability Services Office at Hamline University arranges reasonable accommodations for students with diagnosed psychological disabilities. Psychological disabilities include but are not limited to: Depressive Disorders, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Bipolar Disorder, and Dissociative Disorders. To determine eligibility for accommodations and services, this office requires current and comprehensive documentation of the disability from the diagnosing psychiatrist, psychologist, or other qualified licensed professional. Disability documentation and related information will be kept in a confidential file in the Disability Services office.

The following guidelines are provided in the interest of assuring that the evaluation and report are appropriate for eligibility and identifying reasonable accommodations. **Documentation must show the current impact of the disability.** The age of acceptable documentation is dependent upon the stability of the disorder and the current functioning of the student.

The documentation must:

1. **Be prepared by an appropriately trained and credentialed health care professional** (psychiatrist, psychologist, neuro-psychologist or other licensed mental health or medical professional);
2. **State the diagnosis** in the nomenclature used by the *DSM IV* or *DSM IV TR*, date diagnosis was made, and date of most recent contact with the student;
3. **Specify the nature, severity, and effect** of the disability in the education environment;
4. **Describe current symptoms and address the ways in which the disability is likely to affect the student's ability to function** in the post-secondary environment (e.g. ability to concentrate, manage time, attend class, live in a group setting, participate in group and individual learning tasks, etc.);
5. Where appropriate, **describe any side effects of medication** if medication is part of the treatment plan.

Suggestions of reasonable accommodations may be included. The final determination for providing appropriate and reasonable accommodations rests with Hamline University.

This information is to be typed (or legibly written) using official letterhead. The student is not to complete any part of this verification letter. Please contact Kathy McGillivray, Director of Disability Services, at (651) 523-2521 with questions regarding these guidelines.