

# Psychiatric or Psychological Disability

## Documentation Guidelines for Psychiatric or Psychological Disabilities

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, a "qualified individual with a disability is one who, with or without reasonable modification to rules, policies, or practices, the removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers, or the provisions of auxiliary aids and services, meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or participation in programs or activities provided by a public entity". A person with a disability is anyone with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of such major life activities as walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, caring for self, performing manual tasks, working or learning. Psychiatric/Psychological disabilities (such as, but not limited to, depressive and bipolar disorders) are considered disabilities under the ADA if a major life activity is substantially limited. A diagnosis by a licensed mental health professional, including clinical social workers (LCSW), professional counselors (LPC), psychologists, psychiatrists is required and should include the license number and the date of the evaluation in the report on letterhead stationary.

The following guidelines are provided to assist the service provider in collaboration with each student to determine appropriate accommodations. Documentation from family members, immediate or otherwise, is not acceptable. Recommended documentation includes:

- Diagnosis (clear statement of the DSM-V diagnosis);
- Date of the original diagnosis;
- Date of the most recent evaluation (usually within a year, the age of acceptable documentation is dependent upon the disabling condition, current status, and the student's request for accommodations);
- Diagnostic criteria/assessment procedures used to make the diagnosis;
- Description of the present symptoms;
- Description of current impact of the condition (including impact of medication);
- Treatments/medications/devices or services currently prescribed;
- Expected duration, stability, or progression of the condition;
- Functional impact or limitation of the disability on learning or other major life activity;
- Medical information with signature of appropriate physician on letterhead stationary.

Further assessment by an appropriate professional may be required if coexisting learning disabilities or other disabling conditions exist. Documentation must be submitted to the Accessibility Resources Office in person, by fax (434-395-2434), by email to [accessibilityresources@longwood.edu](mailto:accessibilityresources@longwood.edu), or by mail: Accessibility Resources, Longwood University, 201 W. High Street, Farmville, VA 23909.