

Documentation Guidelines for Visual Impairment

The guidelines below are provided to facilitate the process of obtaining the necessary documentation to validate the existence of a visual impairment. Students requesting disability related services are required to provide their evaluator with a copy of these guidelines. Davidson County Community College or the evaluator cannot be held responsible for the documentation not being acceptable to validate the existence of the disability if the student fails to give the evaluator a copy of these guidelines.

Students requesting accommodations on the basis of Blind or Low Vision must provide documentation by a professional who has undergone comprehensive training and has relevant experience in differential diagnosis and the full range of knowledge of blind and low vision. (A school plan such as an Individualized Educational Plan [IEP], Summary of Performance [SOP], or 504 Plan are not sufficient documentation.) Documentation must give clear and specific evidence of blindness or low vision. A brief statement on a prescription form is not acceptable.

Acceptable documentation should include:

1. An ocular assessment or evaluation from a licensed ophthalmologist, or a low-vision evaluation of residual visual function an assessment of functionally limiting manifestations of the disabling condition.
2. Medical information relating to the student's needs and the status of the student's vision (static or changing) and its impact on the demands of the academic program.
3. Narrative or descriptive text providing both quantitative and qualitative information about the student's ability including the use of corrective lenses or glasses and ongoing visual therapy.
4. A medical summary which:
 - a. indicates the substantial limitations to major life activities posed by the disability,
 - b. describes the extent to which these limitations would impact the academic context for which accommodations are being requested, and
 - c. describes any functionally limiting manifestations of the condition(s) relevant to participation in any aspect of college life.
5. Documentation should reflect the current level of functioning and is dependent on the condition, the current status of the student and the student's request for reasonable accommodations. Suggestions of reasonable accommodations are necessary. These suggestions should be linked to the impact of the disability.

NOTE: The professional conducting the assessment and rendering the diagnosis of blind or low vision must be qualified to do so. The person who signs the report must be the one who conducts the evaluation and writes the report. Documentation by family members, immediate or otherwise, is **not** acceptable.