

**DISABILITY SERVICES AND PROGRAMS  
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

**Guidelines for Documentation of Psychological Disabilities**

**Student Affairs**

Disability Services and  
Programs

Students who are seeking disability support services on the basis of a diagnosed psychological/psychiatric disability are required to submit documentation to verify eligibility under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Protection under these civil rights statutes is based on documentation of a psychological/psychiatric disability **that currently substantially limits a major life activity**, including learning. Any documentation requires the expertise of a qualified professional: a licensed psychologist or psychiatrist, or other qualified mental health professional.

**Documentation must include:**

1. A description of present symptoms that meet the criteria for diagnosis, using the diagnostic criteria established by the DSM-IV-TR (American Psychiatric Association, 2000).
2. The specific details stating how the disorder manifests in the individual, with supporting evidence that it has caused impairment in current academic functioning. A formal statement of the severity of the disorder is essential and should be supported by clear evidence in clinical detail.
3. The printed name, signature, title, professional credentials/license number, address, phone number and fax number of each evaluator involved as well as the date(s) of evaluation, all on official letterhead.
4. A recent evaluation. Documentation should be current (within 1 year).

Suggestions of reasonable accommodations that might be appropriate at the postsecondary level are encouraged. These recommendations must be supported by the diagnosis and current symptoms.

All documentation is confidential and should be submitted to:

Disability Services and Programs  
University of Southern California  
3601 Trousdale Parkway, #301  
Los Angeles, CA 90089-0896  
(213) 740-0776  
(213) 740-8216 Fax  
ability@usc.edu  
[http:// www.usc.edu/disability](http://www.usc.edu/disability)