

# Documentation Guidelines for Blind/Low Vision

Students requesting support services from Student Disability Services at Drake University are required to submit documentation of their disability to verify eligibility under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Drake's policies. ADA defines a disability as a substantial limitation of a major life function. The diagnostic report must document a disability.

Submission of documentation is not the same as the request for services. The student must initiate request for services and/or reasonable accommodations once he/she is confirmed at the Drake University. The student must schedule an intake appointment with a staff so that support services and reasonable accommodations may be discussed. Our staff prior to the appointment will review documentation. Reasonable accommodations cannot be implemented until the student's documentation is complete.

The following guidelines are provided to assist the diagnostician in providing the required information. Documentation may be obtained from an ophthalmologist, optometrist, or other licensed medical specialist who has experience and expertise in the assessment and diagnosis of visual impairments. Documentation should include the **names, titles, professional credentials, license number, addresses, and phone numbers** of the evaluators as well as the **date of the report**.

1. A clear statement of a visual disability with supporting data.
2. Documentation for eligibility should be current, preferably within the last three years; (the age of acceptable documentation is dependent upon the disabling condition, the current status of the student and the student's specific request for accommodations);
3. A summary of present symptoms which meet the criteria for diagnosis of a visual disability.
4. 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.
5. Narrative or descriptive text providing both quantitative and qualitative information about the student's abilities which might be helpful in understanding the student's profile, including the use of corrective lenses and ongoing visual therapy (if appropriate).
6. Suggestions of reasonable accommodation(s) which might be appropriate at the post-secondary level are encouraged. These recommendations should be supported by the diagnosis.

**All documentation is confidential and should be submitted to:**

Drake University  
Student Disability Services  
107 Old Main  
Des Moines, Iowa 50311  
Phone: 515-271-1835 FAX: 515-271-2376