

DSS Procedures for Requesting Services and Auxiliary Aids: An Overview

The University of New Hampshire and Disability Services for Students (DSS) take great pride in promoting the development of students and the personal independence necessary to succeed academically and beyond. We seek to create a welcoming, universally accessible environment where all students are able to participate in the myriad aspects of the UNH experience.

Students have the right (and responsibility) to self-disclose and make use of the services available. To begin this process, students are encouraged to contact DSS to discuss what services, resources, and accommodations exist.

The University will provide appropriate accommodations and auxiliary aids and services to afford an individual with a disability an equal opportunity to participate in all the school's programs and activities.

INITIAL CONTACT WITH DSS

- Self-identifying with DSS is the first step in both gathering information – what DSS offers & what other resources exist – and establishing accommodations. Information provided to UNH and DSS regarding a disability is confidential. Any documentation provided is kept on file with DSS for the purpose of providing accommodations.
- Student contact with the office may be made in any of the following ways:
 - **Phone call:** 603-862-2607; TTY 711; 800-735-2964 (Relay NH)
 - **Drop-in:** 201 Smith Hall
 - **Email:** disability.office@unh.edu
 - ClockWork Intake <https://clockwork.unh.edu/ClockWork/user/Intake>
- DSS hours are posted:
 - On the DSS website <http://www.unh.edu/disabilityservices>
 - Monday – Friday, 8:00am – 4:30pm
- DSS provides students with information on:
 - Services
 - Procedures for obtaining accommodations
 - Auxiliary Aids
 - Other campus resources, as appropriate
- To obtain accommodations, students will need to:
 - Self-identify with DSS,
 - Provide documentation, and
 - Make an appointment for documentation review and meeting.

Creating a faculty accommodation letter is part of the Intake process.

Please see the *Documentation Guidelines* (<http://www.unh.edu/disabilityservices/documentation-guidelines>) for direction on what to provide. If you are unsure, submit/bring whatever you may have so we can review and evaluate it. “Documentation” includes (1) self-report, (2) professional judgment, and (3) 3rd-party information.

- Appointments may be made in the same ways listed above. Some available hours will be indicated on the ClockWork calendar, while other time will be kept open/flexible in order to better address drop-in and other short-notice needs.
- The expectation is that students will be seen as quickly as possible. Scheduling and availability for both DSS and the student will determine expedience; however, DSS' schedule should allow for an appointment within 7-10 days (during peak times, i.e. start of semester).

ESTABLISH DOCUMENTATION WITH DSS

- Providing documentation and meeting with DSS staff will provide information about what services/resources exist, as well as begin the process for identifying accommodations – academic, housing, and other. Faculty accommodation letters are created once documentation is received, reviewed, and discussed with the student.
- Students will need to complete the **Intake Form** in ClockWork. This can be done once a student has a UNH ID and Username, and should be done prior to meeting with DSS staff. It may also be done at the time of the meeting, or afterwards. However, accommodation letters are generated through ClockWork and require a student to be 'in the system'.
- **Documentation** is also stored in ClockWork. Students should submit documentation (upload electronic file/s) when completing the Intake. Assistance with this process is available at DSS, whether explaining how it is done, providing direction and support, or scanning (as necessary).

DOCUMENTATION GUIDELINES

- The office serves students with documented disabilities ensuring appropriate academic accommodations. Review of documentation and a meeting with the student, through an interactive process, will determine appropriate accommodations. **Students with both permanent and temporary disabilities are served by DSS.** Accommodations are based on the impact of the disability and determined on a case-by-case basis. There is no cost for the provision of these academic accommodations.
- Students requesting disability-related accommodations must provide documentation establishing the presence of the disability and its current impact. This information is necessary to establish eligibility for services, and to identify appropriate accommodations. Documentation includes:
 - student self-report,
 - professional judgment, and
 - 3rd party assessments/reports.
- **Documentation serves 2 primary purposes:**
 1. **To establish protection from discrimination:**
Non-discrimination is an assurance that individuals with disabilities will not be excluded or provided lesser access to programs and activities based on assumptions rooted in stereotype or perception of ability that are not based in fact. Non-discrimination also provides freedom from harassment based on perceptions of disability.

Documentation needed only for protection from discrimination based on disability can be quite brief. A diagnostic statement from an appropriate professional, a past history of

recognition as a person with a disability or even self-identification that indicates how others might regard the individual as having a disability could suffice as the basis for protection from discrimination.

2. **To determine the accommodations to which you may be entitled:**

Reasonable accommodations include modifications to policy, procedure or practice and the provision of auxiliary aids and services that are designed to provide equal access to programs and services for qualified individuals with disabilities. Accommodations are reasonable when they do not fundamentally alter the nature of a program or service and do not represent an undue financial or administrative burden.

- Modifications may include, among other things, changes in the length of time permitted for the completion of degree requirements, substitution of specific required courses, and adaptation of the manner in which courses are conducted. However, academic requirements that the University can demonstrate are essential to the program of instruction being pursued or to any directly related licensing requirement will not be regarded as discriminatory.

ACCOMMODATIONS

- It is the student's responsibility to initiate contact with DSS and make a request for accommodations (e.g., extended exam time). Accommodations are only provided upon request. Once accommodations and the faculty letter are established, the *student* initiates sending letters *each semester* via **ClockWork**. The student determines which faculty receive the letter.
- A determination is made regarding appropriate accommodations through review of the documentation, an interactive process with the student, and an assessment of the essential elements of the program/activity. A student is held to the same standards, requirements, and expectations that exist for all students.
- After an accommodation is authorized, additional interactive conversations may be necessary to clarify questions or address any problems that arise. DSS may also ask a student to communicate with his/her instructor concerning implementation of an accommodation in the classroom. However, it is not the student's responsibility to convince the instructor to implement the authorized accommodation or justify the need for it. That remains the responsibility of the DSS office or another UNH administrative unit.
- A requested accommodation is considered unreasonable if it fundamentally alters an essential element of the academic program or results in an undue administrative or financial burden.
- Provisional ('temporary') accommodations may be provided for 1 semester while additional documentation is sought to better clarify the needs and appropriate accommodations. These provisional accommodations will be based on the available information at the time.

ACCOMMODATION LETTERS TO FACULTY

- Faculty accommodation letters are created once documentation is received, reviewed, and discussed with the student. Creating a faculty accommodation letter is part of the Intake process and meeting with the student.
- Once accommodations and the faculty letter are established, the student initiates sending letters each semester via **ClockWork**.

- Sending the letters is a 2-step process:
 1. Send the letters via ClockWork. (*done by the student each semester*)
 2. Meet with each faculty member to determine how those accommodations will be implemented in his/her specific course.

It is essential that you meet to discuss the logistics early enough to ensure the accommodations can be implemented. There is no need to disclose the nature of the disability. We recommend talking with your professor 7 days prior to an exam; otherwise, it may be too little time to put things in place. Reasonable notice is necessary to ensure provision of accommodations.

There is no deadline to request accommodations or send accommodation letters. However, there are no retroactive accommodations.

COMPLAINTS

- Concerns about classroom accommodations should be directed to DSS (603-862-2607; 711 TTY, 800-735-2964 Relay NH).
- If you have unresolved concerns or disagree with a decision made by DSS contact the Affirmative Action and Equity Office, EEO/ADA Compliance Officer (603-862-2930, 711 TTY)
- Students may also register complaints regarding discrimination, physical, programmatic, or attitudinal barriers they encounter at UNH to ADA Compliance or by using the anonymous “Report It!” system found on various UNH websites. (<http://reportit.unh.edu/>).
- While it is generally expected that issues are addressed and resolved through the established UNH complaint/grievance process, students may contact external agencies at any time.

External Agency Contact Information:

- Disability Rights Center—NH
64 North Main Street, Suite 2, 3rd Floor
Concord, NH 03301-4913
603-228-0432; 1-800-834-1721 FREE V/TTY; fax: 603-225-2077
Website: advocacy@drenh.org
- Office for Civil Rights, Boston Office
U.S. Department of Education
5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor
Boston, MA 02109-3921
(617) 289-0111; FAX (617) 289-0150; (617) 223-9695 (TDD)
Email: OCR_Boston@ed.gov
Website: <http://www.ed.gov/ocr>
- U. S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Civil Rights Division, Disability Rights Section—NYA
Washington, D. C. 20530
800-514-0301 (V), 800-514-0383 (TTY)
Website: <http://www.usdoj.gov/>