

Texas Christian University

Documentation Guidelines for TCU Students with Disabilities

Auditory/Hearing Impairment

Auditory or Hearing Impairment generally refers to a physical condition manifested by a lack of sensitivity to sound related to loudness. Hearing impairment typically is categorized by the loss of hearing sensitivity, that is, how soft a listener can hear sounds. A hearing impairment can affect only one ear (unilateral) or both ears (bilateral). The severity of a hearing impairment can vary in degrees, including mild, moderate, severe, or profound. The configuration (shape) of hearing impairment reveals the hearing sensitivity for specific pitches across a frequency range.

In order for a hearing impairment to be considered a disability under ADA it (1) must substantially limit a major life activity; (2) substantially limit a major life activity in the past; or (3) the person with the hearing impairment must be regarded (treated) as if his or her hearing impairment is substantially limiting. The determination of whether a hearing impairment is substantially limiting must be made on an individualized, case-by-case basis.

Documentation:

In order to fully evaluate requests for accommodations or auxiliary aids and to determine eligibility for services, Student Disabilities Services requires comprehensive documentation of your disability. The documentation should be presented to the Student Disabilities Services office and should include an evaluation by an appropriately licensed and certified professional who has direct experience in working with an adult population. The documentation must make evident the current impact of the disability as it relates to the accommodation(s) requested and include a description of all functional limitations. Specific accommodations will be approved to ensure that students with disabilities have equal access to activities and programs at Texas Christian University.

Confidentiality:

Information concerning a student's disability is treated in a confidential manner in accordance with University policies as well as applicable state and federal laws. Appropriate University professionals who serve on the Disabilities Services Documentation Review Committee (DSDRC; the "Committee") shall review documentation to verify the existence of a disability and to determine appropriate accommodations. If accommodations are authorized, they are not retroactive. Accommodations begin when the student both delivers the letter(s) of accommodations to and conferences with the professor.

Qualifications of professionals:

Professionals conducting assessments and rendering diagnoses and documentation must be qualified to do so. Such documentation should be on letterhead and contain the professional's state license number, business location, contact information, and original signature, along with the professional's business card. The evaluator must be impartial and not related to the person being evaluated, their parents, or business partners.

The general guidelines listed below will assist you in working with your treating/diagnosing professional(s) to prepare the information needed to evaluate your request(s). If, after reading these guidelines and reviewing the disability-specific information provided below, you have any questions, feel free to call the office at **817-257-6567 (voice)** or via Relay Texas at **1-800-RELAY TX (735-2989)**.

Current functional limitations:

In order to receive accommodations, documentation must be submitted in advance of need and must be current. Documentation validates the current functional limitations, which allows consideration for accommodation requests. In order for documentation to be current, one must focus upon the nature of the hearing loss. Thus, if the condition that leads to the loss of hearing is progressive, we may request documentation that is within the last two years. Documentation for non-progressive hearing impairments should be five years or less; however, we evaluate each request on a case-by-case basis.

Documentation should include, but is not limited to, the following:

- a clear statement of a hearing impairment with supporting data;
- a summary of present symptoms that meet the criteria for diagnosis of a hearing impairment;
- medical information related to the student’s needs, the status of the student’s hearing (static or changing) and the impact on the demands of the academic and housing/residence life programs, including current functional limitations;
- previous accommodations in high school 504 Plan or IEP; and
- verification of accommodations received at another college or university.

Functional limitations should be determined without consideration of mitigating measures (i.e. hearing aids, etc.) Narrative or descriptive text providing both quantitative and qualitative information (i.e. audiogram) about the student’s abilities helps to understand the student’s profile, including the student’s use of auxiliary aids and/or hearing aids (when appropriate).

Suggestions for reasonable accommodation(s) appropriate at the postsecondary level are important. The diagnosis and functional limitations must support the recommended accommodations. Listed below are recommended forms of documentation and appropriate professionals to complete the documentation. TCU reserves the right to request additional documentation if necessary.

Types of Documentation

- Audiogram
- Certificate of Deafness (if applicable)
- Speech Language Pathologist Evaluation

Qualified Professional or Organization

- Licensed and Certified Audiologist
- Licensed and Certified Speech Language Pathologist

Once we receive documentation, appropriate University professional(s) shall review it to verify the existence of a disability and to determine appropriate accommodations. Additional and/or updated documentation may be requested.

Note to student: The Miller Speech & Hearing Clinic (MSHC) provides a variety of evaluation and therapy services for clients with Auditory Impairments. Contact 817.257.7620 for more information. MSHC does not file insurance but will give you documentation to submit to your insurance company.