

Checklist for Visual Impairments or Blindness

_____ Documentation should be prepared by a person who is an unrelated, neutral professional qualified, by training and practice, to diagnose and treat the impairment leading to the disability.

_____ For visual impairments, an ophthalmologist, optometrist or appropriate medical physician should make the diagnosis. If students have not secured a professional, they should look in their insurance company's provider directory, the Yellow Pages or should ask a family physician for referrals.

_____ Include name, title, professional credentials, licensure/certificate information, original signature and contact information. Reports should be written in English or translated into English by a qualified translator.

_____ The report must be typed on dated letterhead of either the practitioner or the agency hosting the practice. Access Services will not accept handwritten notes on prescription pads, photocopies of physician's notes or hospital discharge papers.

_____ In most cases, documentation should date within the last three years unless condition is static and permanent. The determination of what is current may vary according to the nature of the disability or disorder.

_____ Identify the medical condition causing the visual impairment and identify when the diagnosis was first made.

_____ Note the current degree of visual acuity, including with corrective lenses, and the extent of visual fields.

_____ Indicate whether the impairment is static or progressive.

_____ Is the degree of impairment negligible, moderate or substantial?

_____ Indicate whether assistive devices mitigate the condition.

_____ State the specific functional limitations relating to an academic environment and/or academic performance.

_____ Include information on any current medication(s) to treat the condition and side effects on the student's ability to face college-level academic demands and stressors.

_____ Provide service and academic accommodation recommendations; the goal is to minimize the impact of the functional limitations on the student's academic performance or participation in programs & activities.

Without such written documentation, a student will be unable to receive appropriate academic accommodations that may be critical for his or her success.