

Psychological Disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorders

A psychological impairment or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) can manifest itself in a variety of ways among individuals. The condition can also present a wide array of symptoms and functional limitations to any given individual over a lifetime.

Testing is not required for a diagnosis of a psychological impairment or ASD. However, test results can be helpful as supporting documentation for accommodation requests.

Documentation should be

- on letterhead,
- typed,
- dated,
- signed and otherwise legible

Documentation

- should include verification of diagnosis and discussion of the severity of a disabling condition
- must be provided by qualified treating professional (licensed psychologist or psychiatrist)
- must include a detailed description of how this impairment significantly limits a major life activity in an educational setting

The documentation should include:

- A **clear** statement of the DSM-IV diagnosis, including pertinent symptomatology and any fluctuations in the individual's condition
- A description of the individual's current level
- A description of the current functional limitation(s) within an educational setting, and the severity and longevity of the condition (temporary/ongoing)
- A description of the effectiveness of current treatment
- Recommendations for additional treatment/assistance; information on how best to accommodate the student within an educational or residential setting.