



BlueRidge

COMMUNITY AND
TECHNICAL COLLEGE

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES

2020-2021 Handbook

Purpose

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities. Blue Ridge Community and Technical College must provide reasonable accommodations to ensure the participation of students in college classes and student activities to all qualified students with disabilities.

The Office of Disability Support Services prepares students for their transition to college and helps them develop self-management skills. We assist students with goal-setting, study skills, time management and organizational skills, and help students hold themselves accountable academically.

In post-secondary settings, it is the student's responsibility to request accommodations, if desired. It is important to remember that not every student with a disability needs an accommodation. It is equally important to remember that even though two individuals may have the same disability, they may not need the same accommodation(s).

Disability Support Services provides, arranges, and coordinates accommodations for students in courses, programs, services, activities, and facilities. The Disability Support Services staff maintains disability related documents, certifies eligibility for services, determines reasonable accommodations and develops plans for the provision of such accommodations for students with disabilities.

MISSION

Disability Support Services provides a variety of student services to foster the educational and personal growth of all students. To complement the institution's mission, the Office of Disability Support Services will support student engagement, academic support and career services as well as service to the community at large.

MANDATES

There are two legal mandates that protect students with disabilities from discrimination and ensure that they have equal access to all aspects of college life. These laws include Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act states: "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States...shall, solely by reason of his or her disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

Title II of the ADA states: "A public entity shall make reasonable modifications in policies or procedures when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of

disability, unless the public entity can demonstrate that making the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity.”

In our efforts to provide appropriate services, the Disability Support Services office works to make sure services are in compliance with the law.

Rights and Responsibilities

Students with disabilities at Blue Ridge CTC have the right to:

- Request reasonable accommodations ensuring equal access to courses, programs, services, jobs, activities and facilities available through the college.
- Appropriate confidentiality of all information regarding their disabilities and to choose to whom information about their disabilities will be disclosed, except disclosure that are required or permitted by law.
- Request information available in accessible formats.
- File a grievance according to the Grievance Procedure, if s/he believes they have been treated unfairly.

Students with disabilities at Blue Ridge CTC have the responsibility to:

- Meet qualifications and maintain essential institutional standards for courses, programs, services, jobs, activities, and facilities.
- Identify themselves as an individual with a disability when an accommodation is needed and to seek information, counsel, and assistance within a reasonable amount of time.
- Document and/or demonstrate (from an appropriate professional) how the disability limits their participation in courses, programs, services, jobs, activities, and facilities.
- Follow policies and procedures for obtaining reasonable accommodations and services as defined by the Disability Services Handbook.
- Arrange testing accommodations with each faculty member a minimum of one week prior to each test/exam, and utilize Register Blast to schedule a proctored exam in the office of Disability Support Services.
- Maintain communication throughout the semester with MK Francisco, Student Development Coordinator (Disability Services).

If changes to an individual's accommodations are needed after the start of a term, arrangements can be made to provide appropriate accommodations; however, these accommodations will not be retroactive. To modify accommodations, a student needs to schedule a meeting with MK Francisco, Student Development Coordinator (Disability Services).

Disability Support Services is responsible for:

- Evaluating and maintaining disability-related documents
- Certifying a student's eligibility for services
- Determining reasonable accommodations
- Developing plans for the provision of accommodations
- Removing physical and programmatic barriers for students with disabilities
- Maintaining student confidentiality

Faculty and Staff will:

- Refer students to Disability Support Services as appropriate
- Provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations as recommended by DSS
- Consult and partner with DSS regarding student and community welfare
- Promote and maintain an accessible community

COUNSELING AND AUXILIARY AIDS SUPPORT

The primary goal of the Student Development Coordinator in DSS is to make sure that students with disabilities have equal access to an education at Blue Ridge Community and Technical College. This counselor can also assist instructors with making decisions about reasonable accommodations, curriculum modifications, class adjustments, and instructional strategies for working with students who have specific disabilities. The following are some of the job duties of the Student Development Coordinator:

Counseling: Students are assigned to the Student Development Coordinator who is trained and knowledgeable about specific disabilities. The counselor will work with students on issues of academic accommodations, disability adjustment, advocacy skills, learning strategies, and transition. The Student Development Coordinator may act as an advocate for students to ensure access to appropriate accommodations/auxiliary aids. The counselor will serve as consultants to faculty and staff on disability-related issues and provide in-service training.

****Note: The Student Development Coordinator cannot provide mental health counseling, but can provide emotional support during challenging times. This support should not take the place of mental health counseling. The Student Development Coordinator cannot provide tutoring, but can provide help with transitional academic skills to encourage independence in students enrolled in Disability Support Services.****

Accommodations/Auxiliary Aids Staff: The Student Development Coordinator may assist students in accessing exam accommodations, getting printed materials converted to accessible formats, and learning how to use assistive technology.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Students with disabilities are expected to meet the same level of academic standards as all other students. Accommodations are frequently required which may alter the method of instruction or evaluation. The purpose of an accommodation is to minimize the impact of the disability, not to “water down” a course or requirements. To do otherwise would decrease the credibility of the institution and would also be unfair to the student.

Policies and Procedures

Who qualifies for disability accommodations?

A qualified individual with a disability is one who can provide documentation of such a disability. Acceptable documentation includes an I.E.P from high school, 504 plan, or documentation from an appropriate qualified, licensed professional. All documentation must be less than 5 years old; however, special circumstances may be arranged with approval from the Student Development Coordinator. If documentation cannot be provided, the Student Development Coordinator may be able to arrange for formal testing.

Common Disabilities (Including but not limited to)

- Psychiatric / Psychological disorders
- Blindness / Low Vision
- Deaf / Hard of Hearing
- Learning Disabilities
- Emotional or Mental Illness
- Chronic Medical Illnesses
- Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder
- Mental / Physical Disabilities
- Speech Disorders
- Spinal Cord / Traumatic Brain Injury
- Autism Spectrum Disorders

HOW TO REGISTER WITH DSS

1. Contact MK Francisco, Student Development Coordinator (Disability Services), by phone or e-mail to request a Disability Services Registration Form.

EMAIL: disabilities@blueridgectc.edu

PHONE: (304)260-4380 ext. 2117

2. Submit the completed form with documentation of the disability.
3. Once approved for services, schedule an appointment with the Student Development Coordinator to discuss goal(s)/objective(s) and the Disability Support Services Student Handbook.
4. Appropriate accommodations and the DSS policies and procedures are discussed.
5. The Student Development Coordinator provides the instructors and student with an electronic copy of the accommodation letter.

Accommodation Examples

DSS will determine accommodations as mandated under federal law. Please remember that student needs are highly individualized and what works for one student with a particular disability may not be effective for another student with the same disability. Examples of accommodations are numerous. Below is a list of some common accommodations:

- Extended time for exams
- Reduced distraction environment for exams
- Large print exams
- Test reader/writer
- Interpreters
- Notetaking assistance
- Copies of overheads and/or PowerPoint
- Taping lectures
- Accessible room and/or desk
- Calculator

Documentation Guidelines

For Learning, processing, or a cognitive related disability you will need to submit one of the following:

- A high school Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- A 504 Plan
- A psychoeducation evaluation

This documentation must be dated within the last 5 years prior to the time of enrollment. Please contact our office with any questions.

For physical or sensory disabilities of a permanent or unchanging nature you will need to submit documentation of that disability, but it does not need to be within any timeframe.

For all other disabilities, the documentation must be printed on official letterhead and signed by a qualified, licensed professional in the appropriate area of expertise and must be current, *within the last 5 years prior to the time of enrollment.*

Guidelines for the qualified, licensed professional *:

- Must be printed on official letterhead**
- Provide a recognized diagnosis for the disability using the standard diagnostic criteria
- Describe the functional limitations as a result of the disability
- Provide evidence that the disability significantly impacts a major life function (see below***) relevant to performance in college.
- Identify and describe the current need for suggested accommodations relevant to performance in college.

**Professionals cannot evaluate members of their own families.*

Please note that the documentation **cannot be on a prescription pad.

All Documentation can be faxed, emailed, or sent by US mail and remains confidential at all times.

If you have questions, please contact MK Francisco, Student Development Coordinator (Disability Services), at disabilities@blueridgectc.edu or (304)260-4380 ext. 2117

****The term "disability" means with respect to an individual: (a) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life functions of such individual; The major life functions as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments of 2008 include, but are not limited to: caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, sitting, reaching, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, interacting with others; and the operation of a major bodily function, including functions of the immune system, special sense organs and skin; normal cell growth and digestive, genitourinary, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, cardiovascular, endocrine, hemic, lymphatics, musculoskeletal, and reproductive functions. The operation of a major bodily function includes the operation of an individual organ within the body system; (b) a record of such an impairment; or (c) being regarded as having such an impairment.*

Issues with Accommodations

Students are encouraged to speak to instructors immediately about any problems that arise during the semester. If the situation cannot be resolved, students should follow the Grievance Policy which can be found in this Disability Support Services Handbook.

All students who receive accommodations sign a receipt stating they have been provided a copy of the Disability Support Services Handbook. This handbook informs students of their rights, the law, and all policies within Disability Support Services. This can be found on the website or in the Office of Disability Support Services. It is the student's responsibility to know all information within the handbook.

Academic Accommodations Procedures

In order to receive academic accommodations the following steps must be completed each school year the student requests accommodations:

- 1. Complete the Disability Support Services Registration Form.** The accommodation process is student initiated and begins with the student completing the appropriate paperwork and submitting it to the Student Development Coordinator.
- 2. Before each fall semester, meet with the Student Development Coordinator for an Accommodation Review.** To ensure the most accurate and appropriate accommodations for each course, the student is required to meet with the Student Development Coordinator to discuss accommodations needed.
- 3. Accommodation letters are processed.** The Student Development Coordinator will email accommodation letters the first week of classes to appropriate faculty members.
- 4. A meeting between the student and instructor is arranged.** Faculty and students are encouraged to set up individual meetings to discuss the implementation of appropriate accommodations for the particular class; however, it is possible that not all accommodations will apply to each class.

Test Proctoring

For students who need testing accommodations, a need may arise when the professor of the course will not be able to provide those accommodations (i.e. extra time, separate setting, alternate format) within the department. The student and professor may request test proctoring from Disability Support Services if no other alternative will suffice. In order to assist with test proctoring services, Disability Support Services requires that the professor upload a digital submission to Register Blast at least 5 business days prior to the test date. This is necessary for staff to make all necessary arrangements and for the student to have suitable time to schedule

their exam. Disability Support Services has the right to schedule the exam up to 1 week from the date Disability Support Services received the request to proctor.

Student Responsibilities

- Finding out when all tests are scheduled
- Arrange a meeting with your instructor to discuss testing
- Schedule a time to take your exam with accommodations via Register Blast
- Show up on the appropriate test date and time.

Instructor Responsibilities

- Meet with student and discuss testing and uploading test submissions to Register Blast.
- Provide test in alternate format (if noted on accommodation letter).
- Provide Disability Support Services a copy of the test (24 hours in advance) or personally take the test to the Student Development Coordinator at 8:00 a.m. the morning of the scheduled test date.

Interpreters

Disability Support Services provides sign language interpreters to qualified Deaf and Hard of Hearing students. Interpreters can be provided for both academic and non-academic courses and/or activities. It is the students' responsibility to provide Disability Support Services with ample notice when an interpreter is needed.

Blue Ridge CTC is committed to providing quality interpretation services to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community. As such, the College provides qualified interpreters for all assignments. Interpreting services are assigned and provided through the Disability Support Services Office. Any concerns regarding interpretation services should be directed to the Student Development Coordinator.

***Video Relay Interpreting Services are available at times when an interpreter is not available. A laptop is located in both Security Offices at HQ and TC for use. Please contact MK Francisco, Student Development Coordinator (Disability Services), if you have questions regarding VRI.

Accommodations Policies Policy for Service Animals

What is a service animal?

Service animal means any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals for the purposes of this definition. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the handler's disability.

Examples of work or tasks include, but are not limited to:

- Assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks.
- Alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds.
- Providing non-violent protection or rescue work.
- Pulling a wheelchair.
- Assisting an individual during a seizure.
- Alerting individuals to the presence of allergens.
- Retrieving items such as medicine or the telephone.
- Providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities.
- Helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors.

The crime deterrent effects of an animal's presence and the provision of emotional support, wellbeing, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks for the purposes of this definition.

The following are requirements of service animals and their partners:

1. Blue Ridge Community and Technical College considers service animals to be an accommodation, and therefore requires any individual who intends to have a service animal on campus on a regular basis have a valid accommodation letter. Disabled students desiring to use a service animal on campus must contact Disability Support Services to register as a student with a disability. At this point Disability Support Services will evaluate the disability and recommend any additional accommodations appropriate to the functional limitations of the disability. A service animal is permitted to accompany the individual with a disability to most areas on campus where students are normally allowed to go. Some areas on campus may not be safe for service animals; therefore, these areas may exclude service animals. Certain

labs and/or areas that require protective clothing may exclude service animals. An instructor in a classroom or teaching area with moving equipment or machinery, may grant or deny admission to an area on a case-by-case basis. This denial or granting of admission to an area will be made based on the nature of the machinery and/or on the nature of the research.

2. An individual with a service animal may not be segregated from other students.
3. A service animal may be excluded from a facility, including a classroom, if that animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others.
4. A service animal may be excluded from a facility, including a classroom, if that animal's behavior is disruptive to the other participants within the facility.
5. The service animal must be clean, in good health, with current rabies vaccination.
6. All service animals must be on a leash or harness at all times.
7. All students and college employees must abide by current city ordinances/laws pertaining to licensing and vaccination requirements for service animals. It is the responsibility of the owner and/or user of the animal to know about these ordinances and/or laws.
8. All owners and/or users of service animals are responsible to clean up after and properly dispose of their animal's feces while on campus.

Infraction of any of these behaviors or policies may result in the exclusion of the service animal from campus property.

Extended Test Time Procedure

Time Allotment: The extended time should be time and a half of the original time allotted for the test (unless otherwise noted by appropriate documentation).

Class Instruction: It is the student's responsibility to schedule a time to take their test that does not interfere with any of their other courses/schedule. If class is scheduled to have lecture after a test, the instructor should do so as planned. If the student has missed class to complete an exam, it will be the student's responsibility to speak to the instructor or another classmate to get caught up on the lecture. Disability Support Services is available to proctor exams, and has set aside multiple times each week day to proctor so that the student does not miss class lecture.

American Sign Language Procedure

Acquiring an Interpreter: To request ASL interpreting services in the classroom, it is the student's responsibility to contact the Student Development Coordinator in the Disability Support Services office to request ASL services. In order to receive ASL services, the student must be registered with Disability Support Services. The student is required to submit a copy of their schedule for that semester. Once the schedule has been provided, the Student Development Coordinator will contact the company providing ASL services to secure interpreters for the semester.

Within the Classroom: Arrange seating that allows for appropriate viewing of the interpreter. The interpreter is not to be involved in a dual role inside the classroom. The student should not request an interpreter to engage in the following roles: counselor, tutor, friend, confidant, in class assistant, note taker, transportation provider, professor, or other roles that are unrelated to interpreting services. The student is responsible for all course content, exams, assignments, and other course requirements. The interpreter is not responsible for the grade the student receives. If the student has questions about course material, grades, or related course aspects, he/she should speak to the instructor. Personal conversations with the interpreter are inappropriate during class time. Students should reserve personal communications to times before or after class.

Scheduling an Interpreter: If the student needs to speak with the instructor or with other students after class for a meeting or tutoring, the student must inquire if the interpreter is available. If the interpreter is not available, the student will need to schedule an appointment for a later date. If interpreting services are needed for an institutional related activity or program other than academic classroom interpreting, the student should contact the Student Development Coordinator to request interpreter services at least one week (five business days) in advance.

Problem Resolution: Discuss any issues regarding interpretation services that arise with the interpreter and Student Development Coordinator. All issues regarding class material are to be first directed to the instructor. Should the interpreter be absent from class or another scheduled event, the student will need to report to the Disability Support Services Office immediately.

If the interpreter does not show up for a regularly scheduled class time, the student is to notify the Student Development Coordinator immediately. If the student will be absent, the student must notify the Student Development Coordinator at least 24 hours in advance so that arrangements may be made.

**** We understand that emergencies occur, but it is important that you notify the Student Development Coordinator (disabilities@blueridgectc.edu or (304)260-4380 ext. 2117) when you will be absent.**

Notetaking Procedures

Finding a Notetaker: Instructors will assist students in finding a competent note taker. If the student is not able to secure a note taker at the end of the first week of classes, or as soon as possible, then instructors are asked to provide photocopies of their own notes. The instructor may provide feedback to the note taker on the quality and consistency of their notes.

Recording Lecture Procedure

Recording the Lecture: Students are required to let the instructor know that they will be recording the class lecture.

Recordings: The recordings are sources which are governed by rules of academic conduct. All academic integrity policies are in effect for this accommodation.

Respect for Instructor: Upon the request of the instructor, the student will delete the recordings when they are no longer needed for academic work. The class lecture is property of the instructor and should not be used for anything other than the purpose of the specific class. Students are held to Academic Integrity and are subject to academic actions if violations occur.

Test Reader Procedure

Test Reader: Due to wordage and a better understanding of the criteria on the test, it is best if the instructor can do the test reading. This may have to be done at a separate time from the original testing time. Should an instructor be unable to read the test for the student, a member of Disability Support Services may read the test for the student. Notification must be submitted to Disability Support Services at least one week prior to the test. Disability Support Services utilizes a read aloud software (NaturalReader) for read aloud exams. At no time is a student permitted to provide their own test reader.

Test Items: Students will not be permitted to have any other items with them during the test (cell phones, backpacks, iPods, purses, etc.).

Completed Test: Once the student has completed the test he/she should leave the test with the test reader. The test reader will submit the test back to the instructor via his or her mailbox in their respected division. Students should never keep a test in their possession after it has been completed.

Testing in Private Procedure

Testing Area: The student may come to Disability Support Services or to another assigned place to test in private. The student and instructor need to agree on a place for the testing to occur.

Completed Test: Once the student has completed the test he or she should leave the test with the test proctor. The test proctor will submit the test to the instructor via his or her mailbox in their respected division.

Testing Duration: Students are not permitted to receive help from any other person, including other faculty, staff members, or other students during the test. Students are simply leaving the room to test in private, not for assistance.

Testing Time: If students are taking the test with Disability Support Services they will schedule a time to do so using Register Blast. It is the student's responsibility to schedule their exam at a time that does not conflict with their course schedule to avoid missing class.

Waiver of Absence Procedure

Documentation: Students will need to submit proper documentation to Disability Support Services in order to receive the accommodation for Waiver of Absence. Documentation, when possible, should be submitted in advance or as soon as possible after the date of the class missed. The Waiver of Absence accommodation will not be provided to any student without documentation on file in Disability Support Services.

Student's Responsibility: It is the student's responsibility to work with the instructor on any issues or concerns that arise with emergency situations or health issues. Disability Support Services will serve as a vessel in support for the student during the time of absence.

Class assignments: All work must be submitted by the end of the semester. Incompletes will be limited and will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. Students who miss class and fall behind are encouraged to work with Disability Support Services.

Scope and Application of Grievance Procedure

Any student who believes that he or she has been subjected to discrimination on the basis of disability or has been denied access or accommodations required by law shall have the right to invoke this Grievance Procedure. In general, this procedure is designed to address the following issues:

- Disagreements or denials regarding requested services, accommodations, or modifications to practices or requirements;
- Alleged inaccessibility of an institution program or activity;
- Alleged harassment or discrimination on the basis of a disability;
- Any other alleged violations of the ADA and / or Section 504.

The focus of this Grievance Policy does not and will not supersede any other institutional procedure or policy which may exist for addressing issues such as grade appeal or any other issue of concern in which the college has already established policies and procedures. Students are encouraged to consult MK Francisco, Student Development Coordinator (Disability Services), regarding the most appropriate procedure to address a particular concern.

With all due respect to the formal grievance procedure, Blue Ridge Community and Technical College expects all students to first attempt to resolve his or her complaint informally by meeting with the Student Development Coordinator, located at HQ in room 1400, or her designee, and filing an Informal Grievance Report. Such a meeting must take place within 15 business days of the original occurrence of the complaint. If the grievance is not resolved informally, then the student has the right to invoke the appropriate Formal Grievance Procedure.

Formal Grievance Procedure

Upon completion of the Informal Grievance Procedure, any qualified student with a disability, as defined by the ADA and the Rehabilitation Act, shall have the right to request that the Student Development Coordinator review the denial of any requested academic accommodation or service by fully complying with the procedure outlined below.

The student shall fully complete a Formal Grievance Report, obtained from Disability Support Services. The completed form must be submitted to the Student Development Coordinator, or her designee, within 15 business days of completion of the Informal Grievance Procedure. Please note a timely Formal Grievance Report will not be considered to have been filed unless it contains all of the required information regarding the complaint.

Upon receiving a timely, completed Formal Grievance Report, the Student Development Coordinator, or her designee, will arrange a time with both the student and the instructor in question to meet.

After meeting with both the student and instructor, the Student Development Coordinator, or her designee, will review all information necessary to render a written resolution. If requested, the student is responsible for providing any additional information/documentation as requested by the Office of Disability Support Services. The Student Development Coordinator, her designee, will issue the written resolution within 10 business days of the formal meeting. Furthermore, the Student Development Coordinator, or her designee, shall provide the student and instructor with a copy of the written resolution and take any steps necessary to implement his or her decision.

Within 10 business days following the receipt of the Student Development Coordinator's written resolution, the student has the right to seek review through the Vice President of Enrollment Management, Leslie See, at lsee@blueridgectc.edu.

If a student should exhaust all of Blue Ridge Community and Technical College's Grievance Procedures, he or she may contact:

Mid-Atlantic ADA Center 1-800-949-4232

Mental Health Services with EastRidge Health Systems

The College has contracted with EastRidge Health Systems for all mental health needs. These services are available for students, faculty, and staff. The first three sessions are at no cost. Should you require additional sessions, they would be charged to your medical insurance plan. Once the first three sessions have been utilized and charges are going to your medical insurance plan you would be responsible for any co-pay.

All students, faculty, and staff must have a current Blue Ridge student/employee ID with them at their first visit. The front desk at EastRidge is aware of this so they, too, will be checking for your ID.

At the first visit an initial clinical evaluation will be completed. The goal is to get the student/faculty/staff in to see someone as soon as possible after receipt of the referral from the College. Please note that there is a wait for services at times. If there is an emergency it can be treated as a crisis walk-in and they will be seen immediately.

*****In the event of a mental health crisis, the 24 hour hotline is 304-263-8954 ext. 0. Should this take place after hours you will dial the same number above and then press option #4. You will be immediately transferred to a person. At that time they will take your information and a counselor will call you back within 20 minutes.*****

For faculty and staff, should you need to arrange these services or be assisting a student, you will need to contact Sara Simpson (ext. 7052) at 304-263-8954. EastRidge Health Systems is located at 235 South Water Street, Martinsburg, WV 25401. If there is a serious issue please notify Leslie See, Brenda Neal, or MK Francisco.

Disability Counseling

Disability Support Services offers counseling to all students. This service is **free and all information is kept confidential**; however, faculty and staff at Blue Ridge Community and Technical College have a duty to report threats of harm to oneself or harm to another to the appropriate authorities. Sometimes students with disabilities, like many other students, have difficulty coping with the challenges that comes with being a college student. The counseling of disability students is available in order to provide support and offer an avenue for students to process their emotions.

****Note: The Student Development Coordinator cannot provide mental health counseling, but can provide emotional support during challenging times. This support should not take the place of mental health counseling. The Student Development Coordinator cannot provide tutoring, but can provide help with transitional academic skills to encourage independence in students enrolled in Disability Support Services.****

Mediation

The Student Development Coordinator is available to assist a student in self advocacy when his or her attempts have not been as successful as she would have hoped. We welcome meeting with students to discuss strategies to help interactions with faculty and staff be more successful. We are also available to meet with students and faculty/staff as a means of facilitating communication and understanding.

Mentorship

Disability Support Services will make every effort possible to pair students who may have similar interests or disabilities together, when requested. Confidentiality laws make this process somewhat difficult, but we are glad to connect students to one another once the student has given us permission to do so.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. As a student, how does one obtain a reasonable accommodation?

A. Obtain official documentation from an appropriate qualified, licensed professional that includes diagnosis, prognosis, and limitations imposed by the disability, maintenance plan, and recommended accommodation(s). A student may also request their IEP or 504 Plan from their previous high school. ***Please note that all documentation must be within 5 years prior to the time of enrollment. For specific documentation guidelines, please see the Student Development Coordinator.

Q. What are my responsibilities as a client of Disability Support Services?

A. Meet with the Student Development Coordinator at least once per year to update documentation. Once you begin receiving services from Disability Support Services, you need to assume the responsibility for self-advocacy by talking with your instructors about your accommodations, and keeping the Student Development Coordinator informed of your progress and concerns.

Q. As a student, I have a disability but I don't want any of my friends or classmates to know. Are the services confidential?

A. Your disability is confidential and you determine to whom and when to disclose it. No one in Disability Support Services will disclose information about you or your disability. All information is confidential, and you can be as discreet as you choose to be regarding your disability.

Q. Do all my instructors need to know about my disability?

A. No. None of your professors have to know that you have a disability. However, without disclosure, accommodations cannot be made. Your instructors need to know only that you have accommodation(s).

Q. Do I notify Disability Support Services prior to attending BRCTC and orientation?

A. Yes, if possible. You may make an appointment with Disability Support Services by calling the Student Development Coordinator as soon as you have been accepted for enrollment. Prior to orientation, we encourage all students to take math, and English placement tests. If you need accommodations to take these tests, Disability Support Services must have your documentation several weeks before you take the tests. If parents or students need any additional accommodations (such as interpreters or wheelchair access), please contact Disability Support Services at least ten business days before your arrival.

Q. What services can Disability Support Services provide for a student with a temporary illness?

A. We can explain the procedures, assist the student in obtaining the appropriate documentation, and notify instructors of the illness. However, if a student is able, we always recommend that he/she contact her instructors to discuss arrangements. Then, the instructors can make the necessary accommodations for the student. Accommodations are provided on a case-by-case basis.

Q. As a student with a disability leaving high school and entering postsecondary education, will I see differences in my rights and how they are addressed?

A. Yes. Section 504 and Title II protect elementary, secondary and postsecondary students from discrimination. Nevertheless, several of the requirements that apply through high school are different from the requirements that apply beyond high school. For instance, Section 504 requires a school district to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to each child with a disability in the district's jurisdiction. Whatever the disability, a school district must identify an individual's educational needs and provide any regular or special education and related aids and services necessary to meet those needs as well as it is meeting the needs of students without disabilities.

Unlike your high school, your postsecondary school is not required to provide FAPE. Rather, your postsecondary school is required to provide appropriate academic adjustments as necessary to ensure that it does not discriminate on the basis of disability. In addition, if your postsecondary school provides housing to nondisabled students, it must provide comparable, convenient and accessible housing to students with disabilities at the same cost.

Q. May a postsecondary school deny my admission because I have a disability?

A. No. If you meet the essential requirements for admission, a postsecondary school may not deny your admission simply because you have a disability.

Q. Do I have to inform a postsecondary school that I have a disability?

A. No. However, if you want the school to provide an academic adjustment, you must identify yourself as having a disability. Likewise, you should let the school know about your disability if you want to ensure that you are assigned to accessible facilities. In any event, your disclosure of a disability is always voluntary.

Q. What documentation should I provide?

A. Schools may set reasonable standards for documentation. Some schools require more documentation than others. They may require you to provide documentation prepared by an appropriate professional, such as a medical doctor, psychologist or other qualified diagnostician. The required documentation may include one or more of the following: a diagnosis of your current disability; the date of the diagnosis; how the diagnosis was reached; the credentials of the professional; how your disability affects a major life activity; and how the disability affects your

academic performance. The documentation should provide enough information for you and your school to decide what is an appropriate academic adjustment.

An Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 plan may also be used as proper documentation.

***For specific documentation guidelines, please see the Student Development Coordinator.

Q. Who has to pay for a new evaluation or if I feel I have a learning disability?

A. The student and the Student Development Coordinator will meet and do a Disability Support Services Screening that will determine if an evaluation is needed. If an evaluation is needed, BRCTC will pay for testing.

Q. What can I do if I believe the school is discriminating against me?

A. Practically every postsecondary school must have a person—frequently called the Section 504 Coordinator, ADA Coordinator, or Disability Services Coordinator—who coordinates the school's compliance with Section 504 or Title II or both laws. You may contact this person for information about how to address your concerns.

The school must also have grievance procedures. These procedures are not the same as the due process procedures with which you may be familiar from high school. However, the postsecondary school's grievance procedures must include steps to ensure that you may raise your concerns fully and fairly and must provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints.

Q. Are my disability records made a part of my permanent file at BRCTC?

A. No. No information about your contact with Disability Support Services is kept in your permanent academic or financial record held by the college.

Q. What should I know about confidentiality if I am a parent or family member of a student using our services?

A. BRCTC is committed to providing an academic and living environment that fosters students' progress towards independence. While we welcome questions and can provide general information, confidentiality laws protect the privacy of all communications between a client and a counselor and we are often limited in the information we are able to share with families without the student's written authorization. Without written authorization, in an effort to protect your son or daughter's confidentiality, we will not be able to provide you with information about him or her. If you contact us with concerns, we will make every effort to contact your son or daughter. Our focus is on the student and assisting his or her in addressing her concerns as well as improving her communication with family, faculty, and peers. We will encourage your son or daughter to communicate directly with you.

**Contact the Office of Student Success Disability Coordinator to discuss specific situations
or need for clarification about accommodations.**

Blue Ridge Community and Technical College

Disability Support Services
13650 Apple Harvest Drive
Martinsburg, WV 25403
304-260-4380 Phone
304-260-4376 Fax

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