

## Office of Disability Services

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Title IV of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (the “Disability Laws”) require that no qualified individual with a disability be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of any of Brunswick Community College’s (BCC) services, programs or activities on the basis of one’s disability. BCC strives to make all hard copy and electronic resources including website content accessible to all users.

The College complies with Disability Laws by providing reasonable modification in its rules, policies, and practices, by removing architectural, communication, and transportation barriers, and by providing auxiliary aids and services, when necessary to insure that individuals with disabilities who meet the College’s essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or participation in College programs or activities are afforded equal opportunities to those of non-disabled individuals.

We are committed to ensuring equal access for disabled students, staff and faculty, as well as guests and visitors to its campuses. BCC permits Service Animals and Service Animals-in-Training, in accordance with North Carolina General Statute 168-4.2.B and the provisions of College policy.

### A. Requesting Accommodations

The student or individual seeking accommodations should submit a Student Accommodation Request form to the Office of Disability Services. Accommodation requests may be submitted at any time; however, accommodations cannot be provided retroactively.

To allow adequate time to arrange accommodation services, Accommodation Requests, should be submitted at least 4-weeks prior to the start of class(es). Accommodation and modifications received in high school or other post-secondary institutions do not automatically transfer to BCC. Instead, it is necessary for students to request accommodations by submitting the following documentation:

- Student Accommodation Request Form (completed by the student).
- Current documentation prepared by a medical professional or health care provider that describes the student’s or applicant’s diagnosis, the functional limitations this diagnosis causes, and the accommodations/services necessary to address the diagnosis. Documentation guidelines based on the type of disability are provided on BCC’s website, <https://www.brunswickcc.edu/resources/accessibility-at-bcc/>.
- If applicable, provide a previous copy of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), Summary of Performance (SOP), or a 504 Plan.

## **B. Intake Counseling Session**

Students or potential students requesting accommodation services must schedule an Intake Counseling session with the Office of Disability Services. The purpose of the session is to discuss the College's accommodation policy, procedure, and practices. During the Intake Counseling Session, the Office of Disability Services:

1. provide the student with documentation requirements and answer any questions they may have in relation to disability services.
2. clarify the course(s) for which the student is seeking accommodations. Students must submit the required documentation to the Office of Disability Services to begin services prior to the start of classes.

Students are requested to share information about their disability and what accommodations they believe would be appropriate. The Office of Disability Services will review and discuss various aspects of college life including reading, writing, note taking, math, tutoring, testing, transitioning, becoming an active member of the campus community, as well as discussion regarding available campus resources and services (e.g. student activities, library services, career services, financial aid, etc.).

A formal decision in relation to accommodation services will be made once all required documentation is received and the Office of Disability Services has met with the student.

## **C. Determination of Accommodations**

Accommodations are determined on an individual basis. Students must provide appropriate verification of the disabilities for which they seek accommodation. Students must be willing to discuss the disabilities they want accommodated with Disability Services staff members.

The accommodation must be reasonable, must be effective for the student, and must fit both the disability and the educational setting. Determining what is effective may require discussions between the student, the Office of Disability Services, and College personnel (including faculty), and other experts. The Office of Disability Services determines accommodations. Any modification to accommodation services must be approved by the Office of Disability Services.

Reasonable accommodations for qualified students must comply with the academic and technical standards required for participation in any educational program or service. According to Federal regulation, colleges are not required to alter the purpose and nature of the program, course, and/or service as part of the reasonable accommodation process. Reasonable accommodation does not negate requirements for successful completion of a program, course, service and/or activity or adherence to academic, accreditation, and behavior standards. Rather, reasonable accommodation allows access to full participation in a program. Any time a student requests additional accommodations, he/she must notify the Office of Disability Services for consideration. All relevant documentation will be reviewed and follow the guidelines and processes described above.

#### **D. Provisional Accommodations**

Provisional accommodations may be provided for one semester for students who can establish a history of a disability (not a condition or illness) but lack current documentation. The Letter of Accommodation should indicate these accommodations are provided on a temporary basis.

#### **E. Students with Temporary Physical Impairments**

Students with short-term impairments may be granted accommodations for the duration of their condition. Some examples of temporary physical impairments may include, but are not limited to, the temporary use of crutches, wheelchairs, or walkers. However, pregnancy alone is not a disability and does not qualify a student for the use of handicapped parking. Appropriate documentation addressing the length of the impairment must be provided before any accommodations can be granted. Any temporary accommodations will be noted on the Letter of Accommodation with an expiration date.

It must be understood that by voluntarily providing or arranging such help, BCC does not suggest that temporarily injured or impaired students qualify as "individuals with a disability" under the ADA.

#### **F. Enrollment at Satellite Campuses**

Assistive equipment may vary between campuses. If a student plans to attend courses at the Leland or Southport Center(s), he/she needs to notify the Office of Disability Services to arrange for equipment accessibility.

#### **G. Letter of Accommodation – Student Responsibilities**

The Letter of Accommodation provides the student with a tool for arranging accommodations with faculty and staff. Although the Letter of Accommodation states that the student has a disability, it does not contain a description of the disability due to confidentiality issues. Accommodations contained with the Letter of Accommodation should not be compromised, and any significant departure should be discussed with the Office of Disability Services.

Faculty members are not required to provide accommodations if they have not received an accommodation letter prepared by the Office of Disability Services. For every accommodation, a student must initiate services. He or she must give the accommodation letter to the instructor indicating what his or her needs are. When a test is near and accommodations are allowed, the student must request the desired and appropriate accommodations for each exam from his/her instructor. If needed the student can make an appointment with the Office of Disability Services (at least 3 days in advance) for those

accommodations he/she is requesting. If that student is allowed a note taker, he/she must communicate to the instructor about how that request is fulfilled.

These guidelines and procedures are provided to help students with disabilities develop self-advocacy skills. If at any time a student feels that he/she is having trouble or did not get what he/she needs, the student should return to the Office of Disability Services for additional assistance.

## **Documentation and Verification Guidelines**

### **A. General Guidelines**

To receive disability-related accommodations students are required to submit documents of disability to verify eligibility under the Americans with Disabilities Act, the ADA Amendments Act (ADA AA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Brunswick Community College Disability Services policy.

For these purposes, disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more life activities. Major life activities include, but are not limited to, caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working.

Documentation of disability assists the Office of Disability Services in collaboration with the student to determine reasonable accommodations and/or services, which are provided on a case-by-case basis. If the submitted documentation is incomplete or does not support the student's request for accommodations and/or services, the student may be asked to provide additional documentation. The cost of obtaining all documentation is the responsibility of the student. Documentation, along with the Request for Accommodation Services form should be submitted to Disability Support Services at least 4-weeks in advance of class start date to allow arrangement of appropriate accommodation and/or services.

Students are encouraged to contact Student Disability Services for guidance on the documentation needed for their individual situations. In general, documentation should include the following:

1. **Qualifications of Clinician/Provider:** Documentation must be typed on office or practice letterhead, dated and signed by a professional who is licensed or certified in the area for which the diagnosis is made. Name, title, and license/certification credentials must be stated and shall not be family members or others with a close personal relationship to the individual.
2. **Diagnosis & History:** A diagnostic statement identifying the disability including ICD or DSM classification along with any relevant personal, psychosocial, medical, developmental and/or educational history.
3. **Description of Diagnostic Methodology:** A full description of the diagnostic methodology used, including data and measurements from appropriate evaluation instruments. The results obtained should draw a direct link to the diagnosis and the

functional limitations of the disability. For cognitive disorders, evaluations should use adult norms.

3. **Current Impact and Functional Limitations:** A clear description of the level of severity along with the current impact and functional limitations of the condition pertaining to the academic and/or residential settings. Information regarding if symptoms are constant or episodic, and the frequency and/or duration should be addressed. Changing conditions and/or changes in how a condition impacts the individual may warrant more frequent updates.

Any treatments, medications, and/or assistive devices/services currently prescribed or in use, should include a description of the mediating effects and potential side effects from such treatments.

4. **Recommendations:** Recommendations are welcomed and considered, however the Office of Disability Services makes the ultimate determination on eligibility and reasonable academic adjustments necessary to provide equal access for participation in academic courses, programs and activities. Recommendations should be directly linked to the impact or functional limitations associated with the disability, or medication prescribed to control symptoms and include a clear rationale based on level of impairment.

## **Types of Services Provided**

### ***Audio Book***

An audio book is an electronic textbook that has been converted into sound such as an MP3 file and recorded onto a flash drive. When a student requests an audio book they will receive MP3 files on a flash drive provided by student, no electronic visual material accompanies the MP3 files. MP3 files will play portable MP3 devices, home computers, and all BCC computers.

### ***Alternative Format Book***

Sometimes, a student's disability requires an enlarged textbook or access to both the visual material and audio files. This is referred to as an alternative format text book on flash drive. An alternative format textbook on flash drive will have Microsoft Word, Notepad, PDF files in place of MP3 files.

### ***E-Textbooks***

E-textbook is short for "electronic text", which is accessible on a computer in electronic format. This is typically accomplished by using software such as Microsoft Word, Adobe PDF Reader, or Note Pad. E-textbooks can be used in several different ways. With special software such as screen readers or document readers, e-text can be audibly "read" by a computer. E-text may also be converted into MP3 files, which can play on any computer or portable MP3 playing device.

### ***Book Scanning***

Some text books utilized in BCC are not available as e-textbooks, audio, or alternative book formats. When this is the case, students may request their textbook be scanned and provided to them in an alternative format. However, this should only be done when an e-textbook, audio, or alternative book format is not available for purchase through the publisher. Most e-textbooks are ordered directly from the publisher, who usually takes from one day to one month to send the e-text files. Scanning of books offered in alternative formats through the publisher is a violation of copyright law and may result in legal action.

Once BCC staff has verified that an alternative format of a textbook is not available, only then may staff provide book scanning services to students who receive such accommodations. Alternative format textbooks generally take anywhere from two weeks to a month to create. Below are guidelines for the book scanning process:

- The student must bring their textbook(s) and proof of purchase of the book(s) for which they are requesting to be scanned.
- Once the proof of purchase has been verified by the BCC staff, students must complete an Alternative Book Request Form. Be sure the students understand their book will be cut and rebound as part of the scanning process.

Students requesting book scanning services may request a specific file format. However, due to time restrictions and depending on the size, design, and content of the book, it may not be possible to provide one format over another. In all cases, the content students receive will be accessible and accommodating to their needs.

### ***Note Takers***

BCC, with faculty members, will coordinate the arrangements for note takers. When possible, note takers will be introduced confidentially to the student for whom the service is provided. Once the instructor has received an accommodate request for a note taker, a volunteer from the class should be requested to provide note taking services. Once a volunteer is secured, they are forwarded to the Office of Disability Resource Services to receive training and a carbonless note pad.

### ***Scribes and Readers***

BCC will provide scribe and reader services for course examinations when such services have been determined by BCC to be a reasonable accommodation. If a scribe is needed, students should make an appointment with the Office of Disability Services at least 5 days prior to the test date and notify the instructor that testing material/packet should be forwarded to the Office of Disability Services.

### ***Provisional Accommodations***

Provisional accommodations may be provided for one semester for students who can establish a history of a disability (not a condition or illness), but lack current documentation. All forms (Intake and Accommodation Notification Form) should indicate these accommodations are provided on a temporary basis.

### ***Assistive Equipment***

The College will provide reasonable modifications of College owned equipment utilized by students for class and study activities. The Office of Disability Services is not responsible for providing personal devices or services, including, but not limited to: wheelchairs, individually- prescribed devices such as prescription eyeglasses or hearing aids, readers for personal use or study, or services of a personal nature including assistance in eating or toileting. The Office of Disability Services will assist students, primarily by referral, in obtaining auxiliary aids or services from other agencies. Students who qualify may need to request Vocational Rehabilitation Services and/or Veteran's Affairs to supply them with special equipment and assistants.

Available assistive equipment includes:

- Tape Recorders
- Keyboards (Braille and/or Large Print)
- Screen Magnifier
- Earphones for quiet testing
- Large Calculators

Students will be required to sign an agreement to return borrowed equipment or pay the purchase price. A hold flag can be placed on a student's record for not returning College property.

### ***Tutoring***

BCC provides individual and group tutoring services for curriculum students. Students are encouraged to utilize in-person or online tutoring services through The Learning Center. For additional information, visit The Learning Center located within the college's Learning Resource Center, Building A, second floor.

### ***Testing***

Testing accommodations include extra time on tests and testing in a reduced distraction environment. It is the instructor's responsibility to accommodate the student. The student is to be in a room by themselves with little to no distractions, including other students. The student or professor may choose to schedule proctored testing with The Learning Center (located in BCC's Learning Resource Center). It is the student's responsibility to schedule their exam with the Office of Disability Services. The instructor is responsible for contacting the Office of Disability Services at least 3 days prior to the exam and provide a testing packet.

The test packet should include:

- student and instructor name
- testing time limit
- any special testing instructions (including accommodations)
- preferred method of return

Where a particular accommodation results in a verbatim transcription or recording of a classroom lecture or presentation, students should recognize that such lectures or presentations are the intellectual property of the individual professor and/or BCC. Copying, publishing, or distributing transcripts to anyone, without prior written approval of the College and the professor, is strictly prohibited. When tape recording is determined to be an accommodation, the student must sign a form acknowledging the above statement.

### **Sign Language Interpreters**

Interpreter services, such as American Sign Language, will be provided for qualified students with proper documentation. Professional sign language interpreters will be provided by BCC. However, due to the limited availability of interpreters, it is strongly suggested that students who are in need of interpreting services, contact BCC each semester, at least one month before classes begin. Students requiring interpreters must submit printed class schedules to the Office of Disability Services.

Students needing interpreting services for appointments with student service areas should request services at least five days in advance. BCC will coordinate appointments by communicating time, location for student service area appointments. If there is a request by a student or faculty member to extend the time of the interpreting assignment, the interpreter must contact the Office of Disability Services for prior approval.

The interpreter should report to every class unless notified by the Office of Disability Services. Time will be rounded up the quarter hour for classes and for other assignments, such as appointments and conferences.

Students and interpreters must contact BCC if they will be absent from class. An absence from a class may be considered missing the entire class or missing thirty (30) minutes or more of any class period.

Both students and interpreters must contact the Office of Disability Services to inform them of the absence. Communication between the student and interpreter regarding an absence will not be considered valid notification to the College. Additionally, students and interpreters must provide at least 24-hours advance notice of an absence. If a student does not appropriately communicate with the Office of Disability Services and misses two (2) classes or misses thirty (30) minutes or more of any class period three (3) times during the semester, interpreting services will be suspended until the student meets with the Office of Disability Services to discuss the situation.

### ***Service Animals and Service Animals-in-Training***

Students who have a disability that require the assistance of a Service Animal are permitted to bring such animals to campus. Individuals who are animal trainers (handlers) are also permitted to bring a service-animal-in-training to campus as permitted in accordance with North Carolina General Statute 168-4.2.B and the provisions of College policy.

A Service Animal is any dog (or miniature horse) 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. A service-animal-in-training is any dog (or miniature horse) that is being trained to become a service animal for individuals with disability. A domestic animal kept for pleasure, companionship, or emotional support is not a service animal.

The owner/handler should contact the Office of Disability Services as soon as he/she is aware of plans to bring a Service Animal to campus. The Office of Disability Services will encourage the owner/handler to provide documentation of his/her disability and documentation for the need of the Service Animal.

The tasks performed by a Service Animal must be directly related to the handler's disability or for which the service animal is being trained. Examples of service tasks include but are not limited to, assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation, 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 of potential allergens, retrieving items such as medicine or the telephone, providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities, and helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors. [28 C.F.R. S35.104]

If the animal meets the ADA definition of a Service Animal or Service Animal-in-Training, then the student/handler may be asked two questions:

1. Is this a service animal that is required due to a disability? and
2. What work or tasks has the dog or miniature horse been trained to perform?

A Support Animal is a non-service animal selected or prescribed to an individual with a disability by a healthcare or mental health professional to assist with a significant part of a person's treatment process (alleviating the symptoms) and is therefore not supported as it does not assist a person with a disability with activities of daily living, and does not accompany a person with a disability at all times. [28 C.F.R. S 35.104: Fair Housing & Equal Opportunity Notice – HEO-2013-01]

#### **A. Documentation for a Service Animal**

The student requesting permission to have a Service Animal on-campus must provide (from a certified clinician) a letter which substantiates:

1. If the Service Animal is required because of a disability, and
2. What work or task the Service Animal has been trained to perform [28 C.F.R.S 35.136(f)].

The letter must be dated, on the certified clinician's letterhead, and must provide information establishing the existence of an impairment. The certified clinician's letter should also provide sufficient information concerning the individual's functional limitation to show the work or tasks performed by the animal is related to those limitations. Documentation that does not fulfill the outlined requirements may result in accommodation delay or denial. The letter must also contain an explanation of the tasks or functions the animal has been trained to perform as a disability-related accommodation, and the type/description of the animal.

#### **B. Documentation for a Service Animal-in-Training**

The student requesting permission to have a Service Animal-in-Training on campus must provide (from the training organization) a letter which substantiates what work or task the Service Animal is being trained to perform.

### **C. Conflicting Health Conditions**

Students with medical conditions affected by animals (e.g., respiratory diseases, asthma, severe allergies) are asked to contact the Office of Disability Services if they have a health or safety related (fear) concern about exposure to a Service Animal. If possible, the College will address the concern or attempt to make suitable adjustments to assist the individual that has the concern, while protecting the rights of both individuals to a quality learning environment.

### **D. Guidelines for Maintaining an Approved Service Animal on Campus**

#### **1. Care and Supervision**

Care and supervision of the animal are the responsibility of the individual who benefits from the support of the approved animal. The person is required to maintain control of the animal at all times. The person is also responsible for ensuring the cleanup of the animal's waste and, when appropriate, must toilet the animal in areas designated (to be determined on an individual basis) by the College consistent within the reasonable capacity of the owner.

#### **2. Animal Health and Well-being**

**Vaccination:** In accordance with local ordinances and regulations the animal must be immunized against diseases common to that type of animal. Dogs must have current vaccination against rabies and wear a rabies vaccination tag.

#### **3. Health**

Animals must have an annual clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian. Documentation can be a vaccination certificate for the animal or a veterinarian's statement regarding the animal's health. The College has authority to direct that the animal receives veterinary attention.

#### **4. Licensing**

The College reserves the right to request documentation showing that the animal has been licensed if required in the local municipality.

#### **5. Training**

Service Animals must be properly trained.

#### **6. Leash**

If appropriate, the animal must be on a leash/harness unless the leash/harness would inhibit the animal's ability to be of service.

#### **7. Readily Identifiable as a Service Animal or Service Animal-in-Training**

It is recommended, but not required, that animals for individuals with disabilities wear some type of commonly recognized identification symbol indicating the animal is a working animal. However, a Service Animal-in-Training must wear a collar and leash, harness, or cape that identifies the animal as a Service Animal-in-Training.

#### **8. Other Conditions**

Disability Services may place other reasonable conditions or restrictions on the animal depending on the nature and characteristics of the animal.

### **E. Requirements for Faculty, Staff, Students, and Other Members of the College**

Members of the College community are required to allow a Service Animal or Service Animal-in-Training to accompany its owner at all times and in all places on campus; however, members of the College community shall refrain from:

1. Touching or petting a Service Animal unless invited to do so by the owner.
2. Feeding a Service Animal.
3. Startling a Service Animal.
4. Separating or attempting to separate an owner/handler from his/her Service Animal.
5. Inquiring about details of the owner's disabilities. The nature of a person's disability is confidential.

### **E. Removal of Approved Animal**

A Service Animal or Service Animal-in-Training may be excluded from campus, classrooms, or other facilities when:

1. The animal's behavior poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others.
2. The animal is out of control and the animal's handler does not take effective action to control it.
3. The animal is not housebroken.
4. The animal's behavior fundamentally alters the nature of the programs, services, facilities, privileges, or accommodations for other learners. If a Service Animal is properly excluded, the individual with a disability shall be given the opportunity to participate in the service, program, or activity without having the Service Animal on the premises [28 C.F.R. S 35.136(f)].

### ***General Complaint and Appeal Process***

If a student believes that he/she has been wrongly denied a requested academic adjustment or an accommodation they have the right to appeal that decision in accordance with the College's standard Appeal and Grievance Procedures. For additional policy and procedure information refer to BCC's Catalog and Student Handbook.