

Disability Services Statement of Confidentiality

Disability Services (DS) treats as confidential, any written and/or electronic information obtained to verify a disability, plan for appropriate services, or any information used to provide assistance to students registered with Disability Services.

Students who have a disability are not required to register with DS, but are encouraged to do so in order to receive academic accommodations. Due to the confidential nature of a student's disability, specific information cannot be released by DS staff unless authorized to do so by the student.

All disability-related information including documentation, accommodation letters, correspondence, and consultations are considered confidential and will be managed in accordance with The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, (FERPA) regulations.

In addition to fulfilling legal obligations, maintaining a high standard of confidentiality also serves to maintain an environment in which students with disabilities feel respected, safe, supported, and protected.

Disability Services strives to respect the privacy of our students and will advocate in favor of confidentiality whenever possible. Please read this carefully, as there are instances that may necessitate student documentation being released without consent. This includes electronic, paper, verbal, and any other types of communication.

Disability Services may release information to other University faculty and staff when a "need to know" is established. The need to know must be based on compelling and legitimate educational reasons for the information disclosure, and only under the strictest confidentiality protections. FERPA does not allow faculty access to disability related information, however, DS may communicate to faculty, information that a student has a documented disability and a need for accommodations. Students who request Disability Services/accommodations acknowledge that some level of disclosure to select faculty may be necessary to provide the requested accommodations.

Breaches of confidentiality are taken very seriously by DS Staff. Unauthorized disclosures of student information may violate state privacy laws and may subject the university and the individual to liability.

Written authorizations to release confidential information to persons or entities outside of the University will be obtained from the student before any such information is released, including parents. On occasion, third parties such as courts of law, civil rights investigators, etc. may

legally order Disability Services to release information with or without a signed authorization from the student.

For each student served, DS creates a paper file and keeps electronic information that contains internal and external documents. Documentation maintained in a student paper file or stored on internal DS databases are confidential and used by DS staff or authorized personnel only. Disability Services encourages students to obtain and keep copies of their documentation for future use. Students may receive copies of their files upon request.

All documentation included in a student's paper or electronic file is the property of Disability Services. All materials included in a student's paper file will be destroyed within five years after a student's last date of enrollment.

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the information provided to me as included in the Disability Resource Center Statement of Confidentiality.

Student Name (Printed)

Student Signature

Date

DS Staff Member Signature

Date