



Difference Between High School and College Disability Services

A quick comparison of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

A reference guide for students, families, and professionals.

High School	College/ University
Applicable Laws	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I.D.E.A. ▪ Section 504 ▪ Rehabilitation Act 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ADA ▪ Section 504 ▪ Rehabilitation Act
Required Documentation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Individual Education Program (I.E.P.) 504 ▪ School provides evaluation at no cost to student. ▪ School conducts evaluations at prescribed intervals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Varies depending on the disability. I.E.P. and 504 are not sufficient, must include the testing on which the accommodations are based. ▪ Student must get evaluation at own expense. ▪ Student generally not required to be re-tested after initial documentation approval unless additional accommodations warrant more documentation.
Student Role	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student is identified and supported by parents/teachers. ▪ Primary responsibility for accommodations belongs to the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student must self-identify to the Disability Services Office or designated office. ▪ Primary responsibility for accommodations belongs to the student.
Parental Role	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parent has access to student's records and participate in accommodation process. ▪ Parent advocates for student. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parent DOES NOT have access to disability-related records unless student provides written consent. ▪ Student advocates for self.
Teachers/Professors	
<p>Many modify curriculum and /or alter pace of assignments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use multi-sensory approach. ▪ Weekly testing, mid-term, final, and graded assignments. ▪ Attendance taken and reported. 	<p>Not required to modify curriculum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tend to rely on lecture. May or may not use multi-approach. ▪ Testing and assignment and frequency vary. ▪ Attendance often not taken; student is responsible for attending class.
Grades	
<p>Grades may be modified based on the quality of curriculum</p>	<p>Grades reflect the work submitted.</p>



LEGAL ISSUES

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Americans Disabilities Act Amended Act of 2008 prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities.

According to these laws, no otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall, solely by reason of their disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity of a public entity.

“Person with a disability” means any person who:

1. has a physical or mental impairment, which substantially limits one or more major life activities
2. has a record of such an impairment
3. is regarded as having such an impairment

What are major 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
 - communication
 - working
- A major life activity also includes the operation of major bodily function, but not limited to,
 - functions of the immune system
 - normal cell growth
 - digestive
 - bowel
 - bladder
 - neurological
 - brain
 - respiratory
 - circulatory
 - endocrine
 - reproductive functions
- An individual meets the requirement of “being regarded as having such an impairment” if the individual establishes that they have been subjected to an action because of actual or perceived physical or mental impairment whether the impairment limits or is perceived to limit a major activity or not.
- A transitory impairment is an impairment with an actual or expected duration of 6 months or less.