



Published on *Accessibility Resources & Service* (<https://ars.unc.edu>)

[Home](#) > [Printer-friendly PDF](#) > [Documentation Guidelines and Information applicable to ESA Accommodation Requests](#)

---

# Documentation Guidelines and Information applicable to ESA Accommodation Requests

## Documentation

Documentation must substantiate the fact that the condition (disability or chronic medical condition) is present, limiting a major life activity or major bodily function with impacts upon functioning.

ARS utilizes flexibility and discretion in determining how recent documentation must be. Changing conditions and/or changes in how a condition impacts the individual may warrant more recent documentation or periodically updated documentation. Generally, sufficient documentation includes: detailed documentation from a medical provider or a psychological/psycho-educational evaluation including the below numbered items as a minimum:

### 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 the diagnostic methodology/methodologies used:**

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.

### **4. Current Impact and Functional Limitations:**

A clear description of the level of severity along with the current impact and functional limitations 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.

Please also include information about 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.

### **5. Recommendations:**

Recommendations are welcomed and considered, however ARS 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.

#### ***Please note:***

- Students requesting an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) as an accommodation and providers of documentation recommending an ESA should refer to this [additional information available about Emotional Support Animals.](#) <sup>[1]</sup>
- Medical providers/diagnosticians may use the [Documentation of Disability Form](#) <sup>[2]</sup> to share documentation with ARS.
- If you have any questions or concerns about the process please refer to our [policies](#) <sup>[3]</sup> or [contact us](#) <sup>[4]</sup>.
- Accommodations cannot be provided retroactively.
- In order for ARS to consider requests for reasonable accommodations including academic, housing and dining accommodations, students must submit the documentation discussed, within the applicable section of the Policy, to ARS at least 14 calendar days prior to the start of the course or the event or time for which the student is seeking accommodations. Please note, returning students with

agreed accommodations do not need to submit a Self-ID form for accommodations for any subsequent semesters but must issue notifications to their instructors.

- Similarly, applicants needing accommodations for a selection process or event for admission to an academic program at the University must submit the documentation discussed within this section of the Policy to ARS at least 14 calendar days prior to the need for accommodations.
- Under certain circumstances ARS may be able to identify provisional accommodations pending receipt of further supportive documentation; upon receipt of appropriate documentation ARS will make a final determination.
- Students seeking accommodations in relation to an assistantship or paid position are advised that such a determination is made by the [Equal Opportunities and Compliance Office](#) [5].

---

**Source URL:** <https://ars.unc.edu/students/documentation-guidelines-and-information-applicable-esa-accommodation-requests>

#### Links

[1] <https://ars.unc.edu/accommodations/animals-campus-service-animals-and-emotional-support-animals>

[2] <https://ars.unc.edu/students/request-forms/student-documentation-accommodations-and-modifications-committee>

[3] <https://ars.unc.edu/about-ars/policies>

[4] <https://ars.unc.edu/about-ars/contact-us>

[5] <https://eoc.unc.edu/>