



Disability Resource Guide: A Handbook for Students with Disabilities

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Disability Support Services reserves the right to exercise its judgment in establishing, administering, and interpreting all DSS procedures. DSS also reserves the right to modify or suspend any and all procedures, in whole or in part, at any time, and without notice.

The most current version is always available on the DSS website and in the DSS office. This handbook may be obtained in alternate formats upon request.

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Introduction

The University of Montevallo strives to assure accessibility of all programs, services, and activities for students, employees, and guests. This Resource Guide is made available to help students understand their respective rights and responsibilities under federal laws that prohibit discrimination based on disability. Please feel free to contact any of the offices listed within the guide for further information.

Postsecondary Disability Law

Individuals with disabilities are entitled to equal access to postsecondary programs. There are three primary laws that protect persons with disabilities in postsecondary education: the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008. These laws define an individual with a disability as someone who has a physical or mental impairment; has a history of impairment; or is believed to have a disability that substantially limits a major life activity such as learning, speaking, seeing, hearing, breathing, walking, performing manual tasks, or performing self-care tasks.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504)

Title V of The Rehabilitation Act is generally regarded as the first civil rights legislation on the national level for people with disabilities. Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act is a program access statute. It prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in any program or activity offered by an entity or institution receiving federal funds. Section 504 states (as amended):

No otherwise qualified person with a disability in the United States...shall, solely on the basis of disability, be denied access to, or the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity provided by any institution receiving federal financial assistance.

The Americans with Disability Act of 1990 (ADA)

The ADA is a federal civil rights statute that prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities. There are four main sections of the law: employment, government, public accommodations, and

telecommunications. The ADA provides additional protection for persons with disabilities in conjunction with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The ADA is designed to remove barriers, which prevent qualified individuals with disabilities from enjoying the same opportunities that are available to persons without disabilities.

Postsecondary institutions are covered in many ways under the ADA. Employment is addressed by Title I, accessibility provided by public entities in Title II, accessibility provided by private entities in Title III, telecommunications in Title IV, and miscellaneous items in Title V.

The ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA)

The ADAAA was passed by Congress with the stated intent of restoring some of the original purpose of the ADA, specifically overturning a series of Supreme Court decisions which had put significant limits on the 1990 law. The ADAAA broadened the definition of the disability by:

- Expanding the definition of “major life activities” to include all major bodily systems such as digestion, respiratory, endocrine system, etc., and activities such as thinking and working
- Redefining who is “regarded as” having a disability
- Modifying the definition of “substantially limits”
- Specifying that “disability” includes impairments that are episodic or in remission, if they substantially limit a major life activity when active
- Prohibiting consideration of ameliorative effects of mitigating measures in most situations

The ADAAA also clarified those individuals who meet only the “regarded as” prong of the disability definition are not entitled to accommodation. The passage of the new legislation required many companies and agencies to re-examine their disability policies.

Reasonable Accommodations

Federal disability laws call for provision of reasonable accommodations or academic adjustments as necessary to ensure that academic requirements do not discriminate or have the effect of discriminating, on the basis of disability, against a qualified applicant or student. Accommodations will be provided based on the specific request and disability documentation provided to the university. Accommodations will not be provided retroactively. A request may be deemed “unreasonable” if it:

- Creates a direct threat to the health or safety of others
- Causes a substantial change in an essential element or a substantial alteration in the manner in which the university provides a program or service
- Causes undue financial or administrative burden

University Policy

The University Board of Trustees’ approved policy (Disability Compliance Policy 01:130) states:

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, as well as the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), the University is committed to making its services, facilities, programs, and accommodations accessible to employees, students, visitors, qualified applicants for employment and qualified applicants for enrollment, including people with disabilities.

The Director of Disability Support Services is responsible for making recommendations and assisting in the provision of services and reasonable accommodations for the needs of students with disabilities and for monitoring their effectiveness. The Director of Physical Plant is responsible for identifying physical barriers and for maintaining accessible buildings and grounds. The Special Assistant to the President for University Events coordinates accommodation requests related to University events and

programs. The Director of Human Resources and Risk Management is responsible for identifying and implementing employee-related accommodation needs and for monitoring their effectiveness. The Director of Disability Support Services coordinates University compliance as related to ADA/Section 504 matters. Last Revised 5/09

Disability Support Services

The Disability Support Services (DSS) Office serves as the central contact point for students with disabilities (SWD). The office strives to ensure equal access to all services, classes, and events for students with disabilities and provides guidance as needed to meet the needs of employees or guests with disabilities. DSS is considered the primary office on campus with specialized knowledge and experience in disability issues and serves as the central location for maintaining confidential disability documentation.

DSS is located in Main Hall, rear lower level, and is fully accessible from the public entrances at the rear of the building. There is convenient accessible parking off of Vine Street. (Note: Main Hall is also a residence hall, and therefore has multiple front and side doors which are locked, accessible only by Main Hall residents.) DSS is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

In accordance with both the University and Student Affairs Mission Statements, DSS seeks to assist SWD as they participate in the "Montevallo experience." We define this as a nurturing, life-enriching, "small college" public higher education experience, with an emphasis on quality, diversity, liberal studies, and social justice. DSS realizes this mission in the following ways:

- Provides and coordinates direct services for SWD. Services are individualized to meet the access needs of students, based on documentation and professional judgment.
- Provides consultation for staff, faculty, and administrators to increase awareness of the needs of individuals with disabilities and to reduce programmatic, attitudinal, and physical barriers.
- Provides support and information for student and faculty/staff development. DSS encourages students, staff and faculty to increase knowledge of effective means of accommodation without altering essential functions or purposes of a program or course. "Reasonable" accommodations should create equal opportunity to participate, learn, and express what has been learned.

In all its activities, DSS seeks to establish and maintain a balance of rights and responsibilities for both SWD and the University. Furthermore, DSS seeks to develop and use non-adversarial methods to resolve problems of accessibility and accommodation.

University Admission

The Office of Admissions processes applications for all undergraduate programs. The standards for admission to all areas are outlined in the Bulletin and on the University's website: www.montevallo.edu. For application forms or more information, please contact:

Office of Admissions
205-665-6030
admissions@montevallo.edu

Admission to all graduate programs is handled directly by the individual departments. Contact information and application details are found on departmental websites.

Qualified persons with disabilities must meet the University's admissions standards. Admission decision appeals are considered on a case-by-case basis, but the University does not have an obligation to lower academic standards. Qualified applicants with disabilities will not be denied

admission solely on the basis of their disability. Students do not need to disclose their disability in the initial application process, however if a student requires any accommodations during the admission process, such as during a visit or tour, they should advise the Admissions of that need.

Once admitted, SWD requiring accommodation should contact DSS to request services. Disclosure of a disability to Admissions staff but does not obligate DSS to provide services or accommodations beyond those that might be requested during the application process (such as requesting a sign language interpreter in advance of a campus visit). Students should always contact DSS to make housing or academic accommodation requests.

Self-disclosure

Students legally have the right to choose when or if they want to self-disclose a disability and/or request accommodation. There may be times when a student may choose not to self-disclose when they first enroll, or, they may decide to delay requesting accommodations. This is the student's decision and will be respected. However, accommodations are not retroactive and requests must be made with timely notice. The University is not responsible for accommodating undisclosed disabilities.

Students wishing to self-disclose a disability and/or request accommodations should do so through DSS. Disclosure of a disability to other staff or other offices may appropriately prompt a referral to DSS, but the obligation for accommodation begins when the student contacts DSS and completes eligibility process. Contact information for DSS is available on every course syllabus, on the website, in orientation materials, and in the Bulletin (catalog) and the Fledgling (handbook). DSS also maintains a presence on multiple social media platforms.

Eligibility and Documentation

The determination of eligibility is made by DSS staff based on documentation and professional judgement. Under Section 504/ADA, an individual with a disability is defined as "having a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities." Documentation serves two primary purposes: 1) Protection from discrimination, and 2) Determination of accommodations to which an individual may be entitled. Documentation to establish the former may be very brief and serves only to assure that an individual will not be excluded or harassed based on perceptions. Documentation intended to support the need for accommodations must not only provide evidence of a disability, but also provide sufficient information regarding the functional impact of that disability.

The University has developed documentation guidelines that are found in this document and on the DSS website (www.montevallo.edu/dss). These guidelines follow best practices published by the Association on Higher Education and Disability. University guidelines are disability-specific and address type and recency of the documentation, and the rationale for recommendations. Student and/or parent input is also considered a vital part of the documentation process.

While a clear diagnosis is requested, the name of the diagnosis alone may not be enough to require accommodations/auxiliary aids. Documentation should address the functional limitations – the substantial impact on major life functions - while attending Montevallo. Please note that a high school IEP or 504 Plan may or may not be sufficient on its own, but students are encouraged to send them as part of documenting the history of accommodation use.

All documentation will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. If the documentation provided is deemed insufficient for determination of disability and reasonable accommodations, additional documentation

may be requested. Montevallo has no responsibility for the cost of obtaining such documentation. If documentation is acceptable, but the University wishes to obtain a second opinion, Montevallo reserves the right to request such at its expense. Final determination of appropriate and reasonable accommodations rests with the University.

Students should also be aware that approval for accommodations while enrolled at Montevallo **does not assure** the sufficiency of that same documentation for transfer to another institution, or for the standards of various professional and graduate school testing agencies (GRE, LSAT, Praxis, etc.) Every school and agency has the right to set their own standards and time frames. Similarly, approval of any specific accommodation during high school or at another university does not guarantee its approval at Montevallo

When documentation is received from a prospective student/parent, along with an application or other communication indicating date of enrollment, DSS will respond by contacting the student within three (3) weeks to acknowledge receipt and determine next steps. If documentation is received from a third party only (e.g., high school, doctor, another university), the documentation will be kept on file until there is contact from the student or family. After such contact the file will be reviewed and notice will be sent to the student. Currently enrolled students who complete an application and submit documentation after the beginning of a semester will generally be able to make an intake appointment within five (5) business days.

Students should keep all original documents, including school records and medical reports, providing the DSS office with copies. Documentation received on prospective students, who then do not actively enroll, will be kept for a minimum of two years. DSS files on enrolled students are kept for a minimum seven (7) years after last date of enrollment at the University.

Confidentiality

Disability documentation and the records related to DSS services shall be considered confidential and shall be shared with others within the University only in very restricted circumstances. The Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) allows for extremely limited sharing of information on an “academic need-to-know” basis.

Students should be aware that their select information from their DSS file may be shared with appropriate University officials in situations such as emergencies, internal or external student grievances (if related to disability or the accommodation process), court order, or subpoena. In any such cases, all University personnel involved will continue to maintain the student’s confidentiality.

The nature of the student’s disability is not contained within the faculty accommodation letters prepared for students, unless a student requests to disclose specific information, such as emergency medical information. Generally, faculty members only have access to information regarding the accommodation(s) that are appropriate and necessary to meet the student’s needs. Parents do not have access to any disability information, nor to information regarding grades, attendance, use of accommodations, etc., without specific written release from the student.

Transition from High School to College

The transition process from high school to college can be a difficult one for students and parents. The federal laws protecting SWD change from one environment to the next, and the rights and responsibilities also change. At the college level, students may have had a very minimal role in their educational services or no role at all, with parents and school administrators coordinating all

accommodations and services. When students reach Montevallo, they are responsible for communicating with DSS if they wish to make requests or they experience difficulties. They will talk to faculty regarding the need for accommodations. DSS can assist, but does not handle this for students. DSS does not provide student accommodations based solely on requests from parents. DSS strives to assist students and parents as they transition into these new roles.

Responsibilities of the Student

It is the student's responsibility to make accommodation requests. The student is also responsible for his/her own work and grade in each course. In order to obtain disability-related services and accommodations, the student should:

- Disclose the disability to DSS (complete an application)
- Provide documentation as required for determination of access or accommodation
- Make requests for specific accommodations or services in a timely manner

The student is responsible for requesting accommodation letters and delivering them to faculty (email may be used for online or anytime when face-to-face contact is limited). Students should communicate with faculty to review the accommodation requests- in person or via phone or email. Faculty are responsible for contacting the DSS office if they have any concerns with or objections to a recommended accommodation, or if they have questions about the process. Students can contact DSS for assistance as well.

University and DSS policies and procedures can be found on the University website and in written form, such as the Bulletin, the Fledgling, and Disability Resource Guide. Faculty will also have written procedures and expectations which will be outlined in their syllabi. Students are responsible for becoming familiar with all regulations. Also, the University will use the student's university email account as the official means of contact and students should check this regularly, even during breaks.

Responsibilities of Faculty

Faculty members are responsible for indicating their willingness to discuss (in person or via phone or email) accommodation needs in a timely fashion with any student who has provided an accommodation letter. A faculty member who feels an accommodation substantially alters an essential element of their course should contact DSS for guidance.

The procedure for requesting classroom accommodations is included at the end of this handbook, and additional resources for faculty can be found on the DSS webpage. Faculty are expected to include the following University ADA statement (approved by the VPAA and Deans) on all class syllabi.

ADA Statement:

The University of Montevallo provides equal opportunity to qualified students. If you have a disability (medical, physical, learning, psychological, etc.) and wish to request disability-related accommodations to complete course requirements, contact Disability Support Services (located in Main Hall, rear entrance; 665-6250). Course requirements cannot be waived, but reasonable accommodations may be provided based on disability documentation and course objectives. Accommodations cannot be made retroactively.

Accommodations and Services

This section describes some of the more commonly requested accommodations and services. It is not intended to be an all-inclusive list, nor is it designed to include every detail regarding a DSS process or procedure. For more details on a specific service or accommodation, contact the staff (DSS@montevallo.edu or 205-665-6250).

Priority Registration

SWD who qualify for this service can register on the first day of undergraduate pre-registration. Priority registration allows SWD more flexibility in scheduling classes in a manner that meets disability-related needs (e.g., timing of medication or treatments, mobility concerns, excessive fatigue or the need for extended time on tests). It also allows DSS to coordinate services more efficiently, such as early notice when needing to hire sign language interpreters or obtain alternate format materials.

Students eligible for priority registration should contact DSS (in person, phone, or email) as soon as the academic advisor has entered the student's Banner registration PIN prior to each registration period. DSS will then authorize the earlier registration date. Financial or other holds on the student account may block registration, so student should check for any holds. Eligibility is determined on a case-by-case basis, but typically, students not requiring/using any other services or accommodations are not eligible for priority registration only.

Testing Accommodations

If a student qualifies for extended time, distraction-reduced testing environment, or adaptive technology, and faculty cannot provide the accommodation themselves, DSS is available to proctor tests, quizzes, in-class writing, etc. The student and faculty will need to complete/sign the Proctor Form and return it to DSS. This form is available in the office or may be printed from the DSS website. The student is responsible for reserving a testing room, preferably the same day and time as the class. **DSS requests notice from the student of two business days during the semester and at least two weeks for final exams.** The testing procedure is as follows:

Student responsibilities:

- Schedule the test with DSS (phone, email, or in person)
- Obtain faculty's signature on the DSS Proctor Form (for each test).
- Bring the completed proctor form to DSS before or at the time of the test.

Faculty responsibilities:

- Sign the DSS Proctor Form when provided to him/her by the student.
- Send the test to DSS via DSSTest@montevallo.edu or in person. No hand mail please.
- Include any charts, formulas, extra credit, maps, etc., that others will have in the classroom and indicate permission to use those or other resources on the proctor form.

DSS responsibilities:

- Proctor/Read/Scribe the test as appropriate.
- Return the test to the faculty member. (Obtain receipt signature)

Students taking exams in the DSS office are expected to adhere to the University's Student Code of Conduct. All testing rooms have video recording/surveillance, which is noted via signage and on the Test Proctor Form. Students caught using unauthorized resources (including notes, phones, or use of other unauthorized technology) will have their test stopped and returned to the faculty member. Individual decisions regarding that incident are completely up to the faculty member, but DSS will file a Maxient incident report. Copies of any authorized notes or paper, plus the testing video if pertinent, will be available for the faculty or Director of Student Conduct to review.

Accessible Parking

All students must register their vehicle through the online system. Students, faculty, or staff who have a state disability parking placard or license tag should obtain the disability (blue) permit from the DSS office. In order to protect the use of accessible spaces for eligible individuals, the office requests a copy of the receipt/registration for the state placard/license plate to confirm the individual's need for the campus blue tag. (It is not legal to misuse a parking placard or car tag issued for a different family member.) After receiving the regular commuter or resident decal, students should bring/mail those permits to DSS to swap out for the blue hangtag. Disability parking permits are provided at no additional cost over the registration for any student vehicle.

Temporary disability parking due to injury or illness is also provided through DSS. Individuals should bring some documentation from their medical professional indicating the diagnosis/reason for the temporary permit and the expected duration of the need. Injured student athletes needing temporary accessible parking should provide documentation from their trainer or coach specifying injury, length of need, etc. Anyone needing campus accessible parking longer than approximately 2 months are encouraged to obtain the temporary state permit (State of Alabama red placard – good for up to 6 months).

Disability-Related Housing and Dietary Requests

Students with long-term or permanent disability conditions may need accommodations related to their housing assignment or meal plan. Any medical or disability related exception to usual policy will be considered an accommodation request. Students should complete the housing application and pay the housing deposit while sending the necessary information to DSS. Students should respond "Yes" to the Housing application question regarding medical or disability-related needs and then contact DSS to provide documentation. Housing will not inquire as to the nature of the needs, but a positive response to the application questions will trigger a referral to DSS.

Documentation should be from an appropriate professional. Documentation should describe the disability, medical condition, or dietary concern. If not obvious, the documentation should describe the severity and/or impact of the disability. The documentation should provide a recommendation for the housing and/or meal plan accommodation, indicating those that might be preferable versus items that are medically necessary. When appropriate, it should also address how the student will manage the condition or symptoms in settings other than housing, such as in classrooms or the dining hall. Depending on the type of request, details such as when age when first diagnosed, history of hospitalizations or treatment, specific allergen triggers, current social or behavioral needs, or current medication or therapy may be helpful in obtaining approval for request. See later sections of handbook for details regarding any request for an animal in Housing (service or emotional support).

Requests for accommodations related to housing and dietary needs will be reviewed by DSS, and when necessary, by appropriate staff from Health Services, Counseling Services, and/or Housing and Residence Life. All requests are reviewed on a case-by-case basis, but students should be aware that

a very high volume of requests are received every year for private rooms based on diagnoses of mild depression, anxiety, and/or ADHD. Without a very clear professional description of severity and the medical necessity of that particular accommodation, it is unlikely to be approved.

Any student dissatisfied with a decision or action concerning a housing or dietary accommodation may appeal by contacting the Dean of Students.

Required Forms and Deadlines

To maximize the university's ability to consider requests, students should submit the following information by the deadlines below:

- 1) DSS Application for Service
- 2) Disability Documentation
- 3) Disability-Related Housing and Dietary Request Form (including Documentation Guidelines)

Fall Deadline

Returning Students: April 1

New Students: May 1

Spring Deadline

October 1

May/Summer Deadline

March 1

Late requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, but cannot be guaranteed. Below is a summary of the factors considered when evaluating housing and dietary requests:

Severity of Condition

- Is the impact of the condition life threatening if the request is not met?
- Is there a negative health impact that may be permanent if the request is not met?
- Is the request an integral component of a treatment plan for the condition in question?
- What is the likely impact on academic performance if the request is not met?
- What is the likely impact on the student's level of comfort if the request is not met?

Timing of Request

- Was the request made with initial housing request?
- Was the request made before the deadline for housing requests for semester in question?
- Was the request made as soon as possible after identifying the need? (Based on date of diagnosis, receipt of housing assignment, change in status, etc.)

Feasibility and Availability

- Is space available that meets the student's needs?
- Can space or procedures be adapted to provide the requested configuration without creating a safety hazard (electrical load, emergency egress, medical emergencies, etc.)?
- Are there other effective methods or housing configurations that would achieve similar benefits as the requested configuration?
- How does meeting this request impact housing commitments to other students?

Please send requests and supporting documentation for housing and dietary requests to DSS- not to Housing and Residence Life or Dining Services. DSS will review and then communicate student needs to the Directors of Housing and Dining Services.

Notetaking Support

Notetaking support is approved for students whose documentation indicates an inability to effectively take their own notes in class. Students who qualify for notetaking support may recruit their own notetaker or may request that this be done through faculty. Notetaking support is considered a supplement to a student's own notes, and students are expected to take responsibility for taking notes when physically able, and/or for using a back-up method, such as recording, when appropriate. Notetaking support is generally not considered a substitute for participation/attendance, and notes may be withheld in situations involving excessive or unexcused absences.

Alternative Format Materials

Students who qualify for this service may request that print materials (e.g., textbooks, notes, tests) be converted to a format such as e-text, Braille, or audio. The University may obtain texts from Learning Ally, Bookshare, or publishers. If the text is unavailable through those sources then the alternative format may be produced in-house or ordered through a contract service.

It is the responsibility of the student to notify DSS of specific book requests as early as possible. DSS will attempt to obtain appropriate information about each requested text (title, author, publisher, copyright date, etc.) from the bookstore, but students should check their email regularly in case there are questions about specific books or formats.

All requests will be processed as quickly as possible regardless of when they are received, however, DSS does request a minimum of three (3) week notice in order to provide alternative formats in a timely manner. More notice is recommended. Late requests may result in delayed materials. If a book must be produced in-house, the student is responsible for providing DSS with a copy of the book. Proof of purchase (a receipt) is required to provide alternate formats produced in-house or obtained from a publisher or contractor.

Sign Language Interpreting/Captioning

Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing students may request interpreting or captioning services as appropriate and necessary. Sign language interpreters interpret/transliterate from spoken language into the appropriate sign mode and from sign into spoken language. Real-time captioning or other speech to text services may be provided to D/HOH students who do not use sign language or in situations where an interpreter is unavailable or when word-for-word English terminology is deemed essential.

A separate handbook is available that provides more details and services for students who are D/HOH. This additional resource contains more detailed information and can be obtained in the DSS office or online. A copy of this document is provided to all D/HOH students upon registering for services. Please note that while all efforts will be made to meet any request regardless of notice, DSS does request a *minimum of three (3) weeks* to arrange interpreters or real-time captioning for academic classes (registration or drop-add changes) or any complex or lengthy event (full day activities, lengthy weekend events, etc.). For an interpreter or captionist for activities and events such as group work, faculty or advising meetings, etc., *a minimum of three (3) days* is requested.

Closed Captioning Procedure

The University relies on administrators, faculty, and staff to provide equal access to all programs and activities for individuals with disabilities. Effective access for individuals who are deaf or have a hearing loss often includes the use of captioned media. The use of captioned media also provides benefits to individuals with learning, attention, or cognitive limitations on auditory processing.

Students have a responsibility to communicate their captioning needs to their faculty and DSS with as much notice as possible. DSS will attempt to notify faculty in advance of the need for captioned media in the course, but as university policy allows any student to register through the first week of class, there may times when very limited notice is available. Faculty should proactively ensure that online and in-class media have closed captioning, particularly any video, narrated PowerPoint, etc., that will be used routinely for direct instruction.

To ensure requested materials are transcribed in a timely manner, it is preferred that materials are submitted one semester in advance, but a minimum of 4 weeks is requested. All requests are captioned in the order they are received, with priority given on an as-needed basis for immediate student needs.

Captioning requests are handled through the Malone Center for Excellence in Teaching. Questions can be addressed to Barbara Ann Lewis, Assistive Technology Specialist (blewis3@montevallo.edu or malonecenter@montevallo.edu).

Reasonable Modification of Attendance or Tardy Policy

Attendance is considered essential for long-term and consistent academic success. Requests for modification of attendance or tardy policies are reviewed on a case-by-case basis and must be well-supported by the medical evidence. This is typically only approved in cases where a student has a chronic disability condition which could flare up on an unpredictable or intermittent basis, but not require a visit to the doctor, and therefore the student may not have a required medical excuse for the date of the absence. Examples include seizures, diabetic swings, migraines, severe GI distress of colitis or Crohn's Disease, or a flare-up of symptoms of panic disorder or major depression. Any of these situations would be familiar to the student and doctor and their appropriate treatment may be to take their prescribed medications, get additional sleep, etc. A medical visit might be unnecessary and costly.

There may be situations where no modification, or very limited modification, of the attendance policy will be possible. DSS will request a copy of the attendance and make-up policies from the syllabus and then follow up with a phone call or email to faculty to discuss. The determination of whether there can be additional flexibility will be an interactive process between DSS and the faculty. It is difficult to "make up" events such as interacting with guest speakers, science labs, group presentations, or performances, etc. There may be times when no "penalty" might be applied, yet due to the absence no participation points can be earned (Examples include policies that "drop" student a letter grade for exceeding a specified number vs. policies that simply provide 2 points for each class attended).

The syllabus will be assessed in regards to how they treat other "university approved" absences (such as class field trips, athletic participation, theater or music performances, etc.). Students should carefully examine attendance and tardy policies on each syllabus, and then discuss their specific needs with the DSS office. In the event that attendance modification is recommended, students have the obligation to contact faculty regarding each absence – before the absence if possible, or as soon as possible afterward. The type of contact can be specified by the faculty (phone message, email, etc.) The student is responsible for contacting faculty regarding any missed assignments, and must

turn in such work within agreed-upon deadlines. Faculty should contact DSS in the event that this modification appears to fundamentally alter the nature of the course or the requirement, or if the number of absences exceeds the stated modification.

Tardiness, or the need to occasionally leave class unexpectedly, may also be addressed in the modification statement for students dealing with a disability condition with unpredictable flare-ups such as Crohn's, migraines, or diabetes. The student might be slightly late, or need to leave in the midst of class, without having to provide a medical explanation in front of other students. Modification of tardy policy might also be applicable when a student is dealing with an unusual mobility issue (having to use a different wheelchair route due to construction, or an unusually heavy thunderstorm impacting a power wheelchair user.)

Third Party Documentation (Graduate Testing, Certifications, Licensure)

Some programs require or encourage students to take examinations for entry or completion of the degree, and other students will take exams for admission into graduate school, for licensure or certification after graduation from our programs.

Each agency will have their own processes and documentation guidelines, sometimes having detailed requirements as to the nature and age of documentation, and may require letters from the student and/or the DSS office. Some agencies have deadlines for test accommodation requests that may be earlier than the typical deadline. Commonly requested accommodations could include extended time, distraction-reduced environment, sign language interpreter, paper vs. online format, large print, scribe to fill in scantron forms, etc.

In order to effectively meet such needs, DSS requests notice of five (5) business days to prepare paperwork for the various academic and professional tests. Students should contact DSS well in advance of deadlines and research what documentation is needed. Efforts will be made to meet all requests, but late requests cannot be guaranteed.

Personal Care Attendant Procedures

Due to the nature or severity of their disability, some students may need assistance in areas such as getting to/from classes, toileting, feeding, dressing, or help with social cues. The University will consider requests to allow access for such personal care attendants (PCAs) as necessary, but it is not responsible for providing assistance with personal care needs. See PCA procedures in the Appendix.

Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals

See procedures for each in the Appendix.

Temporary Disabilities

Students who experience an illness or injury that may be considered temporarily disabling and request an accommodation (recognized as a modification of typical attendance policy or assignment deadlines, or assistance with tests, notes, etc.) should be referred to DSS. Federal law requires that the University use a case-by-case approach in determining the need for accommodation based on expected duration, severity, and impact on "major life activities". DSS staff will assess each situation and provide the student with accommodations when appropriate. DSS does not need to be involved in reviewing or collecting medical excuses for the typical short-term medical situations (flu, bronchitis,

etc.) but will be happy to advise if a situation becomes significant. DSS does not provide transportation but can coordinate accessible parking permits for short-term use.

Pregnancy

The University is dedicated to supporting the academic success of pregnant and parenting students. This includes prohibiting discrimination against pregnant and parenting students in all academic, educational, extracurricular, athletic, and other programs or activities.

Pregnant or parenting students needing assistance with appropriate Title IX accommodations can contact the Title IX Coordinator, Ms. Barbara Forrest, at 205-665-6055, Deputy Title IX Coordinator, Mr. Tony Miller, Jr., at 205-665-6020, or the Dean of Students, Dr. Tammi Dahle at 205-665-6020.

Expectant students who may need to miss class or other activities due to pregnancy related issues should discuss their situation with involved faculty and/or the staff members listed above so that alternative arrangements can be planned. Breastfeeding students may request access to the University's lactation room located in Ramsay Hall by contacting the Title IX Coordinator, Ms. Barbara Forrest at 205-665-6055.

Although healthy pregnancies without complications are not considered a disability covered within the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), complications or other medical issues that may result from pregnancy may be. An expectant student needing temporary accommodations for a medical situation related to pregnancy, including preferential parking, may contact the Disability Support Services office at 205-665-6250 for assistance and documentation guidelines.

Employment Disability Issues

Students should know that many employers, including the University of Montevallo, are covered under the provisions federal disability law. Covered employers may not discriminate on the basis of disability and work-related accommodation requests must be considered. Reasonable accommodation occurs when a modification in job requirements or structure can be made without causing the employer undue hardship and when doing so will allow the employee to perform the essential functions of the job. Student employee accommodation requests or concerns should be directed to the Manager of Student Employment (Human Resources, 205-665-6071, Will Lyman House).

- Accommodations must be offered for every phase of employment (e.g. pre-employment testing, on-the-job accommodations for task performance, training, consideration for promotions).
- Accommodations are based on the needs of the individual and the requirements of the job.
- The University is not responsible for accommodating disabilities of which it is unaware.
- The University may ask applicants/employees if any reasonable accommodation is needed to perform the essential functions of the job if the disability is obvious or if a disability is disclosed.
- An accommodation, if implemented, is intended to allow the employee to be better able to perform the tasks of the job in question, but does not guarantee success.

Voter Registration

The Alabama Secretary of State has stated that disability services offices in public institutions of higher education fall within the agency-based voter registration provisions of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA). The provision designates voter registration agencies as “...all offices in the State that provide State-funded programs primarily engaged in providing services to persons with disabilities.” [42 USC 1973gg-5(a)(2)(B)]

Students (or Faculty/Staff) may obtain voter registration materials at both DSS (Main Hall) and the Office of Student Life (Farmer Hall).

Student Advocacy

DSS has created the current procedures with an emphasis on creating opportunities for students to learn the basics of self-advocacy. One of the goals of the University involves teaching students how to self-advocate. DSS is always available to students and faculty if issues arise which necessitate assistance.

DSS staff can and will intervene as needed to mediate when there are disability-related needs or accommodations that cannot be resolved by the student and faculty. Students may need assistance in articulating what they need, or students may not understand why a faculty member has raised a concern about alteration of essential elements of a course. The student or faculty member may not be familiar with disability law or the accommodation process. DSS always seeks to help the student and faculty work more effectively with each other.

In the event that the usual interactive process is not effective, students may follow the Student Disability Grievance Procedure, as found in the Appendix of this handbook. The procedures outline an alternative process should the complaint or concern be about the effectiveness of services provided by the staff of the DSS office. Students may also contact the Office of Civil Rights if they wish to pursue an external grievance under Section 504.

APPENDIX

General Documentation Guidelines

The University has developed reasonable documentation guidelines as allowed by Section 504/ADA/ADAA. It is hoped that guidelines will assist current and prospective students, and their medical or treatment professionals, in gathering information that will be used by DSS in the process of determining appropriate accommodations. The guidelines are designed to provide flexibility to the DSS office in reviewing each student's request on a case-by-case basis, while also ensuring consistent and effective services. Please contact DSS with any questions.

Please forward documentation or any questions to:

Disability Support Services
University of Montevallo
Station 6250
Montevallo, AL 35115-6250

(205) 665-6250
(205) 665-6255
DSS@montevallo.edu
www.montevallo.edu/dss

Disclaimer regarding Documentation: Approval for accommodations at the University does not assure the sufficiency of the documentation for transfer to another institution, or for the standards of various professional/graduate school testing agencies. Documentation will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. If the documentation provided is deemed insufficient, additional documentation may be requested. The University has no responsibility for the cost of obtaining such documentation. If documentation is acceptable, but the University wishes to obtain another opinion, the University reserves the right to request such at its expense. Final determination of appropriate and reasonable accommodations rests with the University.

Documentation will be held in a confidential manner. There are circumstances, allowable under FERPA, which might necessitate that some student disability information be shared with select University officials (if relevant in an emergency or if related to a student grievance). Court orders, subpoenas or complaints filed outside the University may also result in files provided to Administrators or University counsel. In any such cases, any University personnel involved will continue to maintain the student's confidentiality. Students must sign a written release for any records to be forwarded to any other institution or agency. Student files will be kept for a minimum of seven years past the last term of enrollment.

Documentation Guidelines for Learning Disabilities

Documentation should come from an appropriate professional. The type and recency of documentation is reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Information is also gathered through the DSS Application and the intake interview with the student. DSS reserves the right to request updated documentation as appropriate, depending on the age of the student (currently and at the time of the evaluation/diagnosis), and/or the type of accommodations being requested.

To determine eligibility for services, the University requests the following information about the disability and how it impacts major life activities:

- Description of the diagnosis and need for accommodation, which may include relevant medical, social, or educational impact. History of the use of educational accommodations is not required but is often helpful. Copies of high school IEPs or 504 Plans can also be useful.
- Description of the impact of this condition on major life activities such as learning, seeing, hearing, etc. This may be provided by thorough description of current impact (in the classroom, while taking tests, etc.). A generic statement such as “student has learning disabilities and needs appropriate accommodations” may not be sufficient. Students are encouraged to contact DSS to determine if updated evaluation information is needed. Note that testing data may be required to approve some academic accommodations (such as extended time beyond 1 ½ time or provision of alternate format materials such as e-text).
- Documentation typically involves tests in the area of intelligence/aptitude and academic achievement. DSS requests that reports contain applicable subtest scores, with standard scores and percentiles. Achievement testing may include assessment of reading comprehension, math, and/or written language. Formal inventories or classroom/testing observations and a summary of the achievement testing addressing significant strengths or weakness may be helpful in providing a complete picture of the accommodation needs.
- Recommendations for accommodations. Please provide rationale for any recommendations that may not relate directly to the testing or educational history described.

Documentation Guidelines for Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

Documentation should come from an appropriate professional. The type and recency of documentation is reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Information is also gathered through the DSS Application and the intake interview with the student. DSS reserves the right to request updated documentation as appropriate, depending on the age of the student (currently and at the time of the evaluation/diagnosis), and/or the type of accommodations being requested.

To determine eligibility for services, the University requests the following information about the disability and how it impacts major life activities:

- Description of the diagnosis and need for accommodation, which may include relevant medical, social or educational impact. History of the use of educational accommodations is not required but is often helpful. Copies of high school IEPs or 504 Plans can also be useful.
- Description of the impact of this condition on major life activities such as learning, seeing, hearing, etc. This may be provided by thorough description of current impact (in the classroom, while taking tests, etc.). A generic statement such as “student exhibits 7 DSM criteria” may not be sufficient. Results of checklists/ratings scales, and/or psycho-educational (aptitude, achievement, processing) testing can also be useful. Note that testing data may be required to approve some academic accommodations (such as extended time beyond 1 ½ time or provision of alternate format materials such as e-text). Students are encouraged to contact DSS to determine if an updated evaluation may be needed.
- Current treatment/medication, including side effects, when relevant.
- Recommendations for reasonable accommodations. Please provide rationale for any recommendations that may not relate directly to symptoms or testing described.

Documentation Guidelines for Medical, Mobility or Sensory Disabilities

Documentation should come from an appropriate professional. The type and recency of documentation is reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Information is also gathered through the DSS Application and the intake interview with the student. DSS reserves the right to request updated

documentation as appropriate, depending on the age of the documentation, the type of accommodations being requested, and/or the type of disability.

To determine eligibility for services, the University requests the following information about the disability and its impact:

- Description of the diagnosis and need for accommodation, which may include relevant medical, social, or educational impact.
- Description of the impact on major life activities affected by this disorder such as learning, seeing, hearing, sleeping, walking, etc.
- Current treatment/medication, including side effects, when relevant.
- Recommendations for reasonable accommodations. If accommodations may vary significantly based on episodic symptoms or be needed on a temporary basis, please describe.

Documentation Guidelines for Psychological Disabilities

Documentation should come from an appropriate professional. The type and recency of documentation is reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Information is also gathered through the DSS Application and the intake interview with the student. DSS reserves the right to request updated documentation as appropriate, depending on the age of the documentation, the type of accommodations being requested, and/or severity of symptoms.

To determine eligibility for services, the University requests the following information about the disability and its impact:

- Description of the diagnosis and need for accommodation, which may include relevant medical, social, or educational impact.
- Description of the impact on major life activities affected by this disorder such as learning, seeing, hearing, sleeping, walking, etc.
- Current treatment/medication, including side effects, when relevant.
- Recommendations for reasonable accommodations. If accommodations may vary significantly based on episodic symptoms or be needed on a temporary basis, please describe.

Documentation Guidelines for Traumatic Brain Injury

Documentation should come from an appropriate professional. The type and recency of documentation is reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Information is also gathered through the DSS Application and the intake interview with the student. DSS reserves the right to request updated documentation as appropriate, depending on the age of the student (currently and at the time of the accident/injury), the type of accommodations being requested, and the length of time since the accident/injury occurred.

To determine eligibility for services, the University requests the following information about the disability and its impact:

- Description of the diagnosis and need for accommodation, which may include relevant medical, social, or educational impact.
- Description of the impact of this condition on major life activities such as learning, seeing, hearing, sleeping, walking, etc. This will often be provided through a neuropsychological report or other psychoeducational testing that address cognitive processing concerns (reading rate, fluency, attention, memory, etc.), but documentation may also address physical, sensory, or emotional impacts resulting from the TBI.

- Current treatment/medication, including side effects, when relevant.
- Recommendations for reasonable accommodations. If accommodations may vary significantly or be needed on a temporary basis, please describe.

Procedure for Academic Accommodation Requests

1. Student provides appropriate documentation of disability, requests accommodation, meets with Disability Support Services (DSS) staff for an intake appointment, and, when appropriate, completes a Request for Accommodation Letters Form. DSS staff will review documentation and request, consult with faculty when necessary, and make recommendations.
2. If student agrees with DSS recommendations for accommodation, then accommodation letters will be prepared. (If student disagrees with DSS recommendations for accommodations, then the student may appeal the decision using the Student Disability Grievance Procedure.)
3. Student picks up accommodation letters from DSS office and then meets with each faculty member. The accommodations are discussed, and if agreed upon, the letters are signed. One copy is kept by the faculty and the other copy is returned to DSS. (Process may alternatively be handled via email and phone, especially for online courses.)
4. If the faculty and student cannot agree upon one or more accommodation(s) or has questions regarding implementation, DSS should be notified by the student. (Faculty are also encouraged to contact DSS.) DSS will engage in an interactive process with the student and faculty member, reviewing the accommodation recommendations and the impact on essential functions of the course.
5. If a resolution cannot be found, then the request is forwarded to Chair and/or Academic Dean for review. Chair/Dean will continue the interactive process with all parties and make a recommendation.
6. Student may appeal to the VPAA/Provost, who may review request, all supporting documentation, and meet with involved parties as necessary.
7. VPAA/Provost makes decision and notifies all parties in writing. The decision of the VPAA/Provost is final.

Procedure for a Request for Disability-Related Modification or Substitution of Academic Requirements

1. Student contacts Disability Support Services, and provides documentation of disability and makes a request for modification/substitution of an academic program requirement.
2. DSS Staff will confer with Department Chair and/or Dean to review the request, including a case-by-case review of the essential elements/technical standards of program and/or course.
 - A. If documentation supports the request, and DSS agrees that the request does not because a substantial alteration of the essential elements/technical standards, DSS Staff will forward the request, as well as the recommendations of the Chair/Dean, to the VPAA/Provost. (See 3.)
 - B. If documentation does not support the request or DSS and Faculty/Administrators believe there will be substantial alteration of essential elements/technical standards, request will be denied. The student may appeal this decision to the VPAA/Provost.

3. VPAA/Provost reviews the request, recommendations, supporting documentation if needed, and may consult with DSS Staff, Faculty, and/or Administrators as necessary. Provost makes a decision and notifies all parties in writing. The decision of the VPAA/Provost is final.

Service Animals

The University of Montevallo recognizes that service animals can play an important role in facilitating the independence of some individuals with certain types of disabilities. Therefore, an appropriately trained animal, under the control of its owner (“handler”), may be allowed in campus facilities where animals/pets are not permitted.

Definition

The 2008 Amendments to the Americans with Disabilities Act re-defined a service animal as: “...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..... 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, and helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors”.

Key changes include the following:

- The law clarified that animals other than dogs, such as cats, ferrets, monkeys, etc., are not recognized as service animals. (Miniature horses are defined as appropriate for some settings, but would not generally be appropriate on campus based on the needs of the animal.)
- Service animals are required to be leashed or harnessed except when performing work or tasks where such tethering would interfere with the dog's ability to perform.

Existing policies that were clarified or formalized include the following:

- Dogs whose sole function is “the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship” are not considered service dogs under the ADA.
- “The crime deterrent effects of an animal's presence” do not qualify that animal as a service animal and “an animal individually trained to provide aggressive protection, such as an attack dog, is not appropriately considered a service animal.”

A dog that meets the ADA definition is permitted to accompany the individual with a disability to class meetings, administrative offices, programs, field trips, or in residence halls. Handlers who plan to use a service dog in UM facilities are strongly encouraged to contact DSS, who can assist in providing any other needed accommodations (alt formats, classroom accommodations, etc.) and can make recommendations on how to handle any inquiries regarding the dog.

UM officials may appropriately ask the handler to answer: a) whether the service dog is required because of a disability, and b) what work or tasks the dog is trained to perform. It is helpful for DSS to know the type of service dog, a description of the service dog (e.g. weight, breed, etc.) and the dog's name. The University does require up-to-date vaccination records for service dogs that will be living in University Housing as a public health/safety issue.

Requirements for Service Animals

Infraction of any of the following behaviors or policies may result in the temporary or permanent exclusion of the service dog from campus property.

- Compliance with City and State Ordinances/Laws: All individuals must abide by current city ordinances/laws pertaining to licensing and vaccination requirements for service dogs. It is the responsibility of the owner/handler of the animal to know about these ordinances and/or laws.
- Health and Immunization: Dogs to be housed in UM residence halls must have an annual clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian. Current rabies vaccination tags (as appropriate) must be attached to a collar or harness worn by the service dog, or provided to administrators upon request.
- Limited Documentation: Under the ADA, an individual with a disability with a qualified service dog does not have to show disability documentation nor training certification for the service animal. UM officials may, however, appropriately ask the individual a) whether the service animal is required because of the person's disability, and b) what work or tasks the animal is trained to perform.
- Control: A service dog must be under the full control of its handler at all times, typically on a harness or leash. If the handler is unable (because of the disability) to use a harness or leash, or if the use of a harness or leash would interfere with the service dog's safe, effective performance of work or tasks, then the dog must be otherwise under the handler's control (e.g., voice commands, signals, or other effective means).
- Care: The care and supervision of the service dog is the responsibility of the handler. Service dogs should not be left alone for extended periods of time, but should be crated or leashed if left in a residence hall room while the student is away from the room for more than a few minutes. A service dog may not be left unattended in a residence hall overnight, or during any university closing. Students will be fully responsible for the cost of any intervention on the part of the university should a dog be found unattended or neglected.
- Disruptive or Out-of-Control Behavior: This can include aggressive behavior, urinating or defecating in housing or other campus buildings, excessive barking, biting, or otherwise disturbing the living or learning environment.
- Hygiene and Cleanliness: Regular grooming should be utilized as appropriate to keep animal odor to a minimum. If a service dog's odor is strong and disruptive to other individuals, the handler will be directed to bathe the animal prior to returning to that facility (classroom, dining hall, offices, etc.). Adequate flea prevention and control must be maintained. Repeated occurrences may result in the service dog being temporarily barred from the facility until steps are taken to comply with the rules regarding cleanliness.
- Cleanup Rule: Service dog handlers must clean up after the animal, unless they are unable to do so because of a disability. If a disability prevents the handler from cleaning up after the dog, this information must be provided to DSS and/or Housing offices, as appropriate. The student handler may then be required to hire someone to provide this clean-up service. The university will notify handler of convenient locations of containers for disposal of animal waste.

Service Animals in Training

Alabama state law provide rights of access for individuals who are training service animals and Montevallo recognizes the value of training such animals. As Alabama state law does not clarify further its use of the term "in training," the University has established guidelines, based on accepted practices suggested by Assistance Dogs International (ADI).

For the purposes of these guidelines, a Service Animal in Training is defined as any dog that is undergoing a training program 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. The work or task a Service Animal in Training is being trained to accomplish must be directly related to a person's disability.

Only adult dogs (generally 15-18 months) are considered service dogs in training. Puppies being raised or dogs receiving socialization training (obedience training, being house broken, getting acclimated to public places and every day activities as pets) are not considered Service Animals in Training and are covered by policies or guidelines governing pets.

Emergency Response

In the event of an emergency, response teams should be trained to recognize service dogs, and it should be noted that service dogs and their handlers are considered a team. Every effort should be made to keep the handler and their animal together. Just as with humans, dogs can become disoriented from smoke, fire alarms, sirens, etc., and act outside their usual manner. In such instances, the dog may bark, appear nervous or act in a protective manner regarding its handler. The animal should be viewed as acting in the appropriate manner given an emergency and should not be considered harmful. While all reasonable efforts should be made to keep the handler with the service dog, the emergency responders' first responsibilities will be to students/employees, which could necessitate leaving the animal behind in certain evacuation circumstances.

Conflicting Disability Needs

Some individuals have severe allergies or extreme phobias to dogs that could rise to the level of disability. Should students, faculty or staff experience such concerns, they should contact DSS and/or Human Resources to disclose their needs and provide documentation. DSS and/or HR will attempt to document and accommodate the disability needs of all involved parties and explore solutions as quickly as possible.

Any student dissatisfied with a decision or action concerning a service animal may appeal by contacting the Dean of Students.

Emotional Support Animals

(Please read before obtaining documentation or making an ESA Housing request under the Fair Housing Act. Inquiries to allow an ESA in non-housing University buildings fall under a different law and should be directed to DSS.)

Required Paperwork

The forms listed below should be completed and returned to Disability Support Services (DSS) by the priority deadline for each semester to be considered for a request to have an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) in the residence halls as an accommodation under the Fair Housing Act.

- 1) DSS Application for Services
- 2) Disability-related Housing and Dietary Request Form
- 3) ESA Medical Verification Form (to be completed by student's current mental health treatment professional)

Request Deadlines

Fall	Spring	Summer
Returning Students: April 1 New Students: May 1	October 1	March 1

This University approval process applies to on-campus University Housing only; DSS does not provide documentation or approval for an ESA for commercial or any non-university housing situation. ESA approval for use in a residence hall follows a consistent case-by-case approach. **Students are subject to the usual housing policies and consequences if they bring animals outside of this approval.** As part of the approval process for an ESA there will be further paperwork that will be required, including a current statement of good health/appropriate vaccinations, an ESA Agreement, copy of the student ID, photo of the animal, and a Roommate Agreement where applicable. The additional agreements will be provided to the student upon approval.

Documentation of the mental health diagnosis and the associated need for an ESA should come from a mental health provider who knows and understands the difficulties and can explain how the presence of the animal may help to alleviate symptomology. Montevallo, along with many other universities across the country, is concerned about the growing number of questionable website services that offer to "certify" an ESA or to create "ESA letters" for a set price, often based on nothing more than answers to an online survey and/or phone call. There is no formal, recognized certification of ESAs, and no recognized state or national "registry" of ESAs. ESA certificates, ID badges, vests, online registries, etc., are not necessary nor considered in the approval process of an ESA. Please reconsider before spending money on the purchase of such letters, as they will rarely provide the information necessary to support your request for accommodation, and are not viewed by the institution as a reliable source of information.

Basic ESA Guidelines and Expectations (The list below may not be all-inclusive):

1. ESA verification (form completed by the current licensed mental health professional) is required to be updated annually, as mental health disorders are, by definition, variable conditions. Treatment professional should be licensed in Alabama or in the student's home state and should have a treatment relationship with the student.
2. Letters purchased from online doctors/companies (many of whom also sell letters for airline travel, apartment landlords, vests, ID badges, leashes and other specialty ESA merchandise) who have not personally evaluated/treated a student are very likely to be considered unacceptable documentation. All requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. If documentation is not sufficient, the university reserves the right to deny the request or to ask the student to submit additional information.
3. It is a class C misdemeanor under AL state law to misrepresent an animal as an assistance or service animal or to create or provide to others a document that misrepresents or falsely states that an animal is such for use in housing. Subsequent offenses are classified as class B misdemeanors.
4. A student may be found eligible for an ESA but the University still has the right to deny a specific ESA as requested. The University has a responsibility to consider the impact on an overall living

space, including roommates, hall mates, etc. Certain animals may be deemed unsuitable for a communal living environment, for example, farm animals, animals that are venomous or poisonous, exotic, non-domestic, or those that are clearly too large or inappropriate for a residence hall. Animals at risk of zoonotic diseases will not be permitted without specific medical clearance. A different animal may need to be chosen as the ESA.

5. Generally, no approvals will be granted for multiple ESAs. If the selected animal is bonded with another animal (or for whatever reason needs to live in pairs), then a different animal should be considered when the request is made.
6. ESAs are restricted to the student's immediate living space. They are not allowed in other students' rooms, Greek chapter rooms, or in other common areas of the residence hall. ESA approved for housing cannot be taken to class or other campus buildings. If a request is made that the animal be allowed in other environments, then additional documentation and discussion will be necessary, as that type of accommodation falls under a different federal law.
7. All ESAs must be contained (*leashed, caged, or crated*) at all times if the student is not in the room. This is an important consideration if the ESA is not used to being crated or contained and it could create significant stress for the animal, possibly resulting in excessive barking or behavioral problems. ESAs must be carried or leashed while being taken to and from the resident's room. The city of Montevillo does have a local leash law.
8. ESAs may not be left in the care of other on-campus residents. Animals should never be left unattended in a residence hall for extended periods (may vary based on type of animal), and may not be left alone overnight, on weekends, or during any university closing. It is a violation of Housing policy for students to give their key to other students, including to feed or care for the animal. Students will be fully responsible for the cost of any intervention on the part of the university should an animal be found unattended or neglected.
9. Emergency contact information must be provided to DSS/Housing in the event that the student owner of an ESA is hospitalized or has another unforeseen emergency and cannot care for the animal. These must be individuals who agree to remove the ESA from campus for temporary care. If the identified individuals decline or fail to remove the ESA, the University may relocate the ESA to a local boarding facility at the student's expense.
10. Appropriate vaccination and animal health records (which may vary depending on type of animal) must be submitted to DSS before the ESA can be brought to campus.
11. Students bringing ESAs to campus are fully responsible for the animal's behavior, and for any damage done. Student is responsible for emptying litter boxes and/or cleaning up outside animal waste and depositing it (bagged) in outside garbage bins. Animal waste may not be left in or near University buildings or on sidewalks or grass lawns. If the ESA is disruptive to the living environment for others (e.g., barking, growling, or other loud noises, or significant odor from the animal, litter boxes, or cages), or if there is damage done to University facilities, the ESA will need to be removed from the premises within 24 hours of notice being given. The student will be

responsible for paying for property damage. Students are fully responsible should the ESA bite, scratch, or injure another student or staff member.

12. Housing and DSS must be notified if approved animal is no longer in residence on campus. Students may not replace or substitute a new animal (even if same breed) for the originally approved animal without a request to DSS, as each request is individually assessed (vet records would need to be obtained, etc.)
13. Students may be told to remove the ESA from University Housing for any of the following reasons (A warning may or may not be given based on the circumstances):
 - Disruptive or out-of-control (aggressive behavior, excessive barking, or otherwise disruptive behavior in the residence hall).
 - Not house-broken or causing damage to any university property.
 - Determined to be very ill, neglected, in need of immediate medical care, or to have a substantial lack of cleanliness or odor.
 - Determined to be a direct threat to health and safety of others

Any student dissatisfied with a decision or action concerning an ESA may appeal by contacting the Dean of Students.

Personal Care Attendant

The University of Montevallo makes every reasonable effort to accommodate individuals with disabilities as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act, the ADA Amendments Act, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. However, the University is not responsible for providing services to meet personal needs (Including transportation to/from classes, toileting, feeding, dressing needs, or help with social cues). Personal Care Attendants (PCAs) may be necessary to address those personal needs of a student so that he/she can fully participate in the University's activities and programs. In order for the student who requires PCA services to have the same independent experience as all other college students, it may be in the student's best interest to hire a PCA who is not a family member or close friend.

An otherwise qualified student who requires personal attendant services must make arrangements to provide for his/her own care service. The University does not assume coordination or financial responsibilities for PCA services. Note that all enrolled students living on campus are responsible for paying their own housing costs. Although it is strongly discouraged, if a student requiring PCA services chooses to hire another enrolled student as their personal attendant, that employment relationship does not impact either student's financial responsibilities related to Housing or required meal plans, and the Student Code of Conduct and all other University policies apply to both as individual students.

PCAs who are allowed to stay overnight in University Housing are expected to abide by the Housing & Residence Life Policies and Procedures those students follow. A PCA who violates these policies and procedures may be asked to leave campus. If the PCA fails to abide by the procedures below, Disability Support Services (DSS) may make a determination that he/she will not be allowed to accompany the student elsewhere on campus, such as in classrooms and other university buildings.

It is the student's responsibility to:

- Submit appropriate documentation to DSS that supports the necessity of having a PCA.
- Secure a PCA prior to attending any university-related activity (i.e., orientation, housing move-in day, or class attendance). The University will not be responsible for meeting personal care needs or selecting or hiring a PCA.
- Ensure that DSS is provided name/contact information for all PCAs who will be working within University Housing or academic buildings. If the attendant is employed by an agency provide the name/contact information for the agency.
- Ensure that if personnel changes occur, updated information will be provided to DSS.
- Direct the activities of the PCA while at the University of Montevallo.
- Have a back-up plan or alternative plan of action should the regular PCA not be available to work with him/her on a particular day or in a particular class.
- Follow the University's policies and abide by the Student Code of Conduct.
- Pay for all PCA services or secure payment through a third party.

The Personal Care Attendant is expected to:

- Follow all applicable university policies, rules, regulations, and procedures.
- Request a guest/vendor parking permit if necessary. Vehicle information can be provided to the UM Police Department, which will verify need with DSS as appropriate.
- Make arrangements with student's professors as to where to sit in class (if needed to meet the needs of the student during class).
- Allow the student to take responsibility for his/her own progress in class.
- Refrain from participating in class discussions.
- Refrain from discussing any confidential information about the student with faculty, staff, or students.

***PCAs do not take notes for the student, nor are they allowed to proctor or be a scribe for in-class exams. DSS will handle such needs.*

The University is expected to:

- Establish reasonable policies and procedures and ensure that these are available to all students including those requesting PCA services.
- Address academic or program access needs for a student with a physical, sensory, learning, or emotional disability.
- Provide reasonable accommodations to address the student's disability within the classroom, housing, and other service areas of the University. Accommodations are determined through Disability Support Services based on documentation provided and student interviews.

Students needing housing or academic access for a PCA should contact DSS upon enrollment to document need and provide required information. Any student dissatisfied with a decision or action concerning a PCA may appeal by contacting the Dean of Students.

Student Disability Grievance Procedure

The University has adopted the following internal grievance procedure for students to provide for prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action prohibited by the U.S. Department of Education regulations implementing Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or the Department of Justice regulations implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008.

A complaint must be filed in writing, containing the name and contact information of the person(s) filing it, and a brief description of the alleged violation of the regulation(s), including relevant dates and university employees or locations.

Grievances should be addressed to the Disability Compliance Officer, Station 6250, University of Montevallo, Montevallo, AL 35115. If the grievance is regarding the Disability Support Services Office or specifically names the Disability Compliance Officer, also the Director of Disability Services, then the complainant may choose to address it to the Equal Opportunity Officer, Station 6055, University of Montevallo, Montevallo, AL 35115.

A complaint must be filed within 30 calendar days of the alleged act(s) of discrimination or the complainant becoming aware of the alleged violation.

An appropriate investigation shall follow filing of the complaint. The investigation shall be conducted by the Disability Compliance Officer and may include the Disability Compliance Committee or other University officials as appropriate. If the grievance names DSS or the Disability Compliance Officer, then the EO Officer will guide the investigation. Any University personnel named in complaint will be notified within 10 calendar days of receipt of the complaint.

The Disability Compliance Officer, or EO Officer as appropriate, shall issue a written determination regarding the complaint and the description of the resolution, if any, and a copy forwarded to the complainant(s) no later than 30 calendar days after its filing. The Disability Compliance Officer shall maintain the confidential files and records relating to grievances for seven (7) years.

The decision of the Disability Compliance Officer, or EO Officer, may be appealed within 15 calendar days to the senior administrator of the applicable University division. The senior administrator will review the complaint and issue a decision within 15 calendar days. The decision of senior administrator is final.

The right to a prompt and equitable resolution of a complaint filed shall not be impaired by the student's pursuit of other remedies, such as filing a Section 504 or ADA complaint with the appropriate state or federal department/agency.

This procedure shall protect the substantive rights of the interested persons to meet appropriate due process standards and to assure the University of Montevallo complies with the intent of Section 504 and the ADA and implementing regulations.