



**Student Disability Services Handbook  
2024-2025**

## Table of Contents

Section One: Registration and Implementation.....	3
Registration with Disability Services Office for Accommodations .....	3
Implementing Approved Accommodations .....	5
Section Two: Rights and Responsibilities .....	5
Confidentiality and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).....	5
Students, Disability Services, and Faculty .....	5
Section Three: Differences Between High School and College .....	7
Audio Recording of Lectures .....	8
Temporary Medical Conditions .....	8
Timeframes for Alternative Format Requests.....	8
Section Five: Resources .....	9
Campus Resources.....	9
Local Resources .....	9
South Dakota Resources.....	9
National Resources.....	9

*This handbook is primarily designed to help students, faculty, and staff understand the Student ADA & Section 504 academic accommodation process. For more information on student accommodations, please refer to WDC Policy 4008 – Student ADA\Section 504, WDC Policy 4013 – Service Animals, and WDC Policy 4017 – Emotional Support Animals. Faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to discuss questions with the Disability Services Office [disability.services@wdt.edu](mailto:disability.services@wdt.edu).*

## **Section One: Registration and Implementation**

Students with disabilities are not required to Register<sup>1</sup> with the Disability Services Office if they are not seeking accommodations. Students with disabilities who are seeking accommodations are strongly encouraged to work with the Disability Services Office prior to the start of the semester as accommodations are not retroactive and the process to become Registered can be lengthy. With that said, students can Register at any time during the semester. Disclosure by the student to a faculty or staff member does not qualify as self-identification to begin this process.

### Registration with Disability Services Office for Accommodations

Students in higher ed are required to self-identify to the Disability Services Office to request accommodations. The steps a WDC student must take to self-identify and for accommodations to be implemented include the following:

1. Complete the Disability Services Request Form<sup>2</sup> –
  - a. Access the form by logging into My.WDC <https://my.wdc.edu/ics> with your username (student ID#) and your password;
  - b. Click on Student Forms (located under the Resource Hub section);
  - c. Click on Disability Services Forms
  - d. Under the “Start the Disability Service Request” heading, Click on the Disability Services Request Form link;
  - e. Read the form and complete required fields; and
  - f. Click Submit
2. You will receive an email from the Disability Services Office shortly after you submit your request that will explain your next steps which will include providing relevant documentation from external sources to help establish your eligibility for accommodations and meeting with the Disability Services Office.

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<sup>1</sup> Registered – for WDC Disability Services, this term means a student has completed all steps required through the Disability Services Office to be approved for specific accommodations in a given semester. A student’s Registered status is valid for one semester, and therefore, the student must ensure they have received “Registered” status with the Disability Services Office each semester that they are requesting accommodations. A student will not be granted requested accommodations until they are Registered through Disability Services.

<sup>2</sup> This process may vary if for students Registered with the Disability Services Office in the prior semester. Follow the instructions sent to you via your school email account by the Disability Services Office. Also, individuals who are requesting accommodations for Placement Exams should first reach out to the Disability Services Office for instructions as the process may vary.

Documentation should include –

- Description of the disability, including the diagnosis, history, significance, and expected duration when applicable.
- The current impacts of the disability in an educational setting.
- Past use and effectiveness of accommodations.
- Recommendations that are related to the impact of the disability.
- Date of evaluation/assessment. The age of acceptable documentation is dependent upon the disability.

Types of documentation that may be helpful include –

- Reports and/or assessments created by healthcare providers, psychologists, or the educational system (e.g., a psychoeducational evaluation).
- Documents that reflect education and accommodation history, such as an Individual Education Program (IEP), Summary of Performance (SOP), and teacher observations.

Please keep the following in mind –

- Documentation must come from a reliable third-party<sup>3</sup> who is not a family member.
  - You should keep a copy of the documentation for your personal records. Disability Services may destroy/delete documentation and other disability-related information seven years after a you leave the college.
  - Disability Services may ask you to provide additional information if necessary.
  - Documentation accepted by Western Dakota Technical College might not be accepted by other institutions, agencies, and/or programs (e.g., testing agencies, licensure exams, and certification programs). Please check with the specific organizations and/or programs to determine their documentation requirements.
  - Disability Services will make the final determination of reasonable accommodations.
3. Meet with WDTC Disability Services. After your request is received, Disability Services will reach out to you to start the interactive process to guide you through the process and to determine what accommodations will be granted. This process can involve multiple conversations with you and your faculty, if needed.
  4. If accommodations are granted, you will receive an "ADA Accommodation - Notification" that you will sign electronically and return to Disability Services. After the signed form is returned to Disability Services, you're considered Registered for the semester with Disability Services and approved accommodations go into effect (accommodations are not retroactive).

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<sup>3</sup> A trained professional who by virtue of their expertise, scope of practice, and familiarity with the person with a disability, can verify that their accommodation request is directly related to their disability, that it would alleviate one or more of their symptoms or effects of their disability, and that it is necessary to provide that individual equal access.

## Implementing Approved Accommodations

After you are Registered with Disability Services, you are required to communicate with your faculty members in advance when you would like to use specific accommodations as accommodations are not retroactive. This communication needs to be done as early as possible (not right before the due date in a course). Also, some specific accommodations require a minimum additional 5-working day's advance notice by your faculty member to the Student Success Center which includes accommodations for extended test time, reduced-distraction testing, and reading of tests. WDTC cannot guarantee that we will be able to implement the testing accommodation the date/time you request. Flexibility in scheduling may be required if requested by faculty or support personnel.

## **Section Two: Rights and Responsibilities**

### Confidentiality and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

FERPA governs the confidentiality of students' educational records which includes services and student records related to WDTC disability services. Please see Policy – 4004 FERPA for details

<https://www.wdt.edu/about/policies-and-procedures/>.

Disability records that contain diagnosis and treatment information are kept in a separate secure file. Unless there is an educational need to know under FERPA, Disability Services personnel are unable to release information about you without your written consent. If you discontinue your enrollment at WDTC, you may contact Disability Services and request your file be destroyed. If you are not enrolled in courses for 3 years, your file, including any paperwork, will be destroyed.

Please note, there is a limitation of confidentiality for the following: threats of violence and/or suicide are taken seriously, and the appropriate steps completed. The law mandates any reports of child abuse or adult abuse reported to the local Social Services Office. Disability Services will adhere to the required mandated reporting law.

### Students, Disability Services, and Faculty

- Students with disabilities rights include:
  - Equal access to services, programs, facilities, and employment at WDTC.
  - Accessible digital materials including videos, third-party software, and other items.
  - Reasonable and appropriate accommodations and auxiliary aids determined on an individual basis.
  - Confidentiality of information related to disability issues.
  - Have the VP for Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success do a second review if they do not agree with the Disability Services Office accommodation decision(s) (appeal the decision)
- Students with disabilities responsibilities include:
  - Self-identify disability status to the Disability Services Office.
  - Complete all required steps to be Registered with the Disability Services Office each semester, preferably in advance of the need for accommodations.
  - Meet WDTC academic and institutional standards.

- Comply with the WDC Student Code of Conduct.
  - Follow the specific guidelines established for obtaining reasonable and appropriate accommodations and/or auxiliary aids.
  - Notify the Disability Services Office of any changes to your schedule and/or status as a student at WDC.
  - Notify the Disability Services Office of any concerns or difficulties in the receipt of accommodations.
- Disability Services has the right to:
    - Maintain WDC's academic and institutional standards.
    - Request current documentation that adhere to disability eligibility guidelines to verify the need for reasonable accommodations and/or auxiliary aids.
    - Select effective communications and auxiliary aids in consultation with the student on individual basis.
    - Deny an accommodation request and/or auxiliary aids if the documentation fails to verify the need for the requested service or if the documentation is not provided in advance.
    - Refuse an inappropriate or unreasonable accommodation request and/or auxiliary aids that post a direct threat to the health and safety of others, constitute an alteration to an essential element of a course program, or pose an undue financial or administrative burden to WDC.
- Disability Services responsibilities include:
    - Provide approved reasonable accommodations for students' disclosed disabilities to ensure students have equal access to courses, activities, and programs.
    - Provide appropriate supportive services to students, faculty, and staff.
- Faculty members have the right to:
    - Establish course content and academic standards.
    - Request written notification from the Disability Services Office of a student's need for accommodation. Faculty and staff do not have the right to access disability documentation.
    - Contact the Disability Services Office to clarify student requests for accommodation and/or auxiliary services.
- Faculty members responsibilities include:
    - Provide recommended reasonable accommodations and/or auxiliary aids in a timely manner.
    - Work with the Disability Services Office and respective offices to facilitate recommended accommodations both within and outside of their classroom.
    - Meet with students who have provided a faculty notification letter to discuss requested accommodations and establish the procedure for providing accommodations and/or auxiliary aids in the course.
    - Maintain confidentiality regarding disability issues.
    - Alter the form of a testing procedure to measure proficiency in course knowledge based on ability of the student, not the disability. There may be an exception when the purpose of the test is to measure a specific skill.
    - Make course materials on reserve in the Student Success Center available in alternative formats for students with disabilities when requested by Disability Services.
    - Ensure software and "new" technology is accessible before implementing into a course.

- Contact the Disability Services Office for consultation regarding students with disabilities and accommodation concerns.

### Section Three: Differences Between High School and College

The following chart highlights primary differences between high school and college ADA/504 accommodations including laws, required documentation, self-advocacy, and the parental role.

Laws	
High School	College
IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)	ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Title II) ADAAA (Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008)
Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973	Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973
<b><i>IDEA is about success.</i></b>	<b><i>ADA is about access.</i></b>

Required Documentation	
High School	College
IEP (Individual Education Plan) and/or 504 Plan	Interactive Process
Students are provided evaluation at no cost to the student or family.	Student first works with the Disability Services Office.
Documentation focuses on determining whether student is eligible for services based on specific disability categories in IDEA.	3 <sup>rd</sup> Party documentation must provide information on specific functional limitations and demonstrate the need for specific accommodations in an academic environment.
	Documentation must provide clear rationale for each accommodation being requested. Please keep in mind not all recommended accommodations may be approved.

Self-Advocacy	
High School	College
Student is identified by the school and is supported by the parents and teachers.	Student must self-identify to the Disability Services Office.
Primary responsibility for arranging accommodations belongs to the school.	Primary responsibility for self-advocacy and arranging accommodations belongs to the student.
Teachers approach you if they believe you need assistance.	Faculty are usually open and helpful, but most expect you to initiate contact if you need assistance.

Parental Role	
High School	College
Parent has access to student records and can participate in the accommodation process.	Parents do not have access to the student records without student's written consent.

Parent can speak to educators regarding student.	Conversations regarding the student will take place as allowed by FERPA consent.
Parent advocates for the student.	Student self-advocates.

## **Section Four: Other Useful Information**

### Audio Recording of Lectures

If an accommodation allows for audio recording of lectures, the student will be required to sign an audio recording agreement with the Disability Services Office. In some cases, faculty may allow any student to record lectures at their discretion, confirm with your faculty regarding their classroom policy. Students are responsible for purchasing their own audio recording devices.

### Temporary Medical Conditions

Students experiencing short-term or temporary changes in their medical, functional or mobility status are advised to meet with the Disability Services Office. Temporary disability accessibility and accommodations will be discussed to determine if WDTC can meet your needs.

A temporary medical condition may not legally qualify as a disability. Therefore, it may not be covered either under the ADA of 1990 or under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. It is possible that students experiencing temporary medical conditions will not qualify for legally mandated accommodations.

### Timeframes for Alternative Format Requests

If your accommodations require alternative formats of textbooks or materials, please make your request as soon as possible (before the semester starts is best) to help ensure you have the resources you need when needed.

Students will be required to show proof of purchase prior to any request for alternative textbooks granted. The accommodation notice includes usage guidelines for alternate textbooks. Students that violate this agreement could face a WDTC Code of Conduct.

### WDTC Policies

Student ADA/Section 504 is addressed in WDTC Policy 4018

<https://www.wdt.edu/assets/docs/uploads/about/policies/4018.pdf>

Service Animals are addressed in WDTC Policy 4013 – Service Animals.

<https://www.wdt.edu/assets/docs/uploads/about/policies/4013.pdf>

Emotional Support Animals are addressed in WDTC Policy 4017 – Emotional Support Animals.

<https://www.wdt.edu/assets/docs/uploads/about/policies/4017.pdf>



## Section Five: Resources

### Campus Resources

*WDTC Disability Services*

Email: [Disability.Services@wdt.edu](mailto:Disability.Services@wdt.edu)

### Local Resources

*Communication Services for the Deaf*

Website: <https://www.csd.org/> and <https://sddrop.org/>

Phone: 605.394.6864

*DakotaLink*

Website: <https://www.dakotalink.net/>

Phone: 605.394.6742

*Transition Services Liaison Project – Western Region*

Website: [www.tslp.org](http://www.tslp.org)

*West River Mental Health*

Website: <http://www.bmscares.org>

Phone: 605.343.7262

### South Dakota Resources

*Disability Rights South Dakota*

Website: <https://drsdlaw.org/>

Phone: 800.658.4782

*South Dakota Department of Human Services Division of Rehabilitation Services*

Website: <https://dhs.sd.gov/en/rehabilitation-services>

Phone: 605.773.3195

*South Dakota Regional Office*

*Kansas City Office; Office for Civil Rights; U. S. Department of Education*

Phone: 816.268.0550; TDD: 800.877.8339; Email: [OCR.KansasCity@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.KansasCity@ed.gov)

Address: One Petticoat Lane, 1010 Walnut St., Third Floor, Suite 320, Kansas City, MO 64106

### National Resources

*Academic Software, Inc (ASI)*

Website: <https://www.acsw.com/>

*Americans with Disabilities Act*

Website: [www.ada.gov/](http://www.ada.gov/)

*National Federation of the Blind*

Website: <https://nfb.org/resources>