



**A Handbook  
for  
Students with Disabilities**

Office of  
Student Support Services



## **A Handbook for Students with Disabilities**

### **URBAN COLLEGE OF BOSTON ADA & 504 STUDENT SERVICES**

#### **POLICY STATEMENT**

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Urban College of Boston consistently undertakes to provide, by every reasonable effort, assistance and appropriate accommodations to qualified students with disabilities. We are committed to ensuring that all students receive equal opportunity and equal access to educational programming and services here at the College. The College prohibits discrimination against any qualified student, employee, or applicant on the basis of physical or mental disability, or perceived disability.

#### **ADA DEFINITION OF DISABLED**

The ADA protection applies primarily, but not exclusively to individuals with disabilities. Any one of the following conditions must be met in order for a person to be considered disabled:

1. He or she has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of his/her major life activities.
2. He or she has a record of such an impairment.
3. He or she is regarded as having such an impairment.

Persons with disabilities at Urban College are encouraged to contact the Office of Student Services to request appropriate services.

#### **NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

##### **Self-Disclosure:**



All students seeking modification under the Americans with Disabilities Act must self-identify with the Office of Student Services and a written request must be submitted to this office.

### **Documentation:**

It is the responsibility of students to submit documentation of physical, mental, or learning disabilities from qualified and licensed medical or testing personnel. This documentation should include suggested accommodations. Any expenses incurred in the obtaining of such professional verification are the individual's responsibility. The following documentation criteria should be used in forwarding assessments to the Office of Student Services:

### **Physical, Sensory and Health-related Disabilities**

1. A qualified, licensed health care professional, currently or recently associated with a student must submit verification of the disabling condition.
2. The diagnosis should reflect the present level of functioning of the major life activity affected by the disability.

### **Psychological Disorders or Attentional Disorders**

1. A qualified professional (e.g., psychiatrist for ADD/ADHD, psychologist or psychiatrist for other psychological disorders) must provide verification of diagnosis and severity of a disabling condition.
2. Qualified professionals must provide a detailed description of the ways in which this impairment significantly limits a major life activity in an educational setting for a student.

### **Learning Disabilities**

1. Urban College requires that a professional, qualified in the diagnosis of learning disabilities (e.g., licensed psychologist, learning disabilities specialist, neuropsychologist), prepare the evaluation. It



may be necessary to collaborate with other educational and reading specialists, in addition to speech and language clinicians, in order to provide a comprehensive assessment.

2. Students should submit the result of clinical interviews, along with descriptions of testing procedures, instruments used, and test and sub-test results reported in standard scores.
3. Comprehensive evaluations are required and should include test results in the following areas, where applicable: intelligence, reading, mathematics, spelling, written language, language processing and cognitive processing skills. Testing should reflect an examination of areas of concern and weakness, as well as areas of strength.
4. Evaluation results should include a clear diagnostic statement based on test results and personal history of the student.
5. Evaluations should be no more than three years old. However, this requirement may be waived if deemed not medically necessary.

## **PROVISION OF SERVICES & REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION**

Each institution of higher learning is a unique environment, and the ADA is designed to allow for individual responses to the needs of students and the public. What may be a successful accommodation in one setting may not be appropriate or required in another. The ADA does not seek to change fundamental methods of ensuring a sound education and successful completion of an academic program. It is designed to ensure that students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to access academic programs and successfully complete their studies (ADA Compliance Guide, 1990).

Any decisions on accommodation are a collaborative undertaking between the students concerned and appropriate Urban College staff. The Office of Student Services coordinates services for students with disabilities and assists in registration, advisement, parking, referrals, adapted classroom activities, and other special needs. It is the responsibility of the student to identify him/herself as disabled and to request assistance from this office.



## **Confidentiality**

Students are protected from discrimination under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 in the United States. Embedded in these governmental mandates for nondiscrimination are rules regarding the confidential treatment of disability related information. These rules protect students with disabilities from possible discrimination due to attitudinal barriers, negative connotations about specific disabilities, or general misconceptions about disability. The confidentiality rules at Urban College are as follows:

1. Disability information is to be treated as medical information and held to the same strict rules of confidentiality as is any other medical information. This rule applies to both the comprehensive documentation that students are required to produce in order to establish the existence of a disability and the students' need for accommodation.
2. The disability documentation that students provide to the College is kept in secure files with limited access.
3. Disability documentation is shared on a very limited basis within Urban College and only when there is a compelling reason from faculty or staff regarding some specific aspect of this confidential information.

## **Undue Hardship**

Urban College applies the ADA definition of "undue hardship" as an action that results in significant difficulty for the College and/or requires significant expense. The following factors are considered in determining whether undue hardship exists:

1. Accommodations that are judged to have a negative impact on the academic integrity of the education program (e.g., those that would fundamentally alter the program of study) will not be honored.



2. The financial resources of the College that are involved in providing the requested reasonable accommodation.
3. The impact of the accommodation on the operational, geographic, physical, and administrative aspects of the College and its facilities.
4. The number of students involved.

### **ADA CONCERNS AND APPEALS**

Any concerns or appeals related to the provision of reasonable accommodations by Urban College should be directed to:

Nancy Daniel, Dean of Academic Affairs

Urban College of Boston

178 Tremont Street, Boston, MA 02111.

Tel: (617) 449-7068.

Email: [nancy.daniel@urbancollege.edu](mailto:nancy.daniel@urbancollege.edu)

### **STATE ADVOCACY AGENCIES:**

- Massachusetts Office on Disability  
One Ashburton Place, Room 1305  
Boston, MA 02108  
<http://www.mass.gov/mod/>

(617) 727-7440 (V/TTY)

(800) 322-2020 (V/TTY)

(617) 727-0965 (FAX)

- Attorney General's Disability Rights Project:  
The Office of the Attorney General's Civil Rights Division:  
One Ashburton Place, 19th Floor  
Boston, Massachusetts, 02108  
<http://www.ago.state.ma.us/sp.cfm?pageid=1195>

(617) 727-2200 (V)

(617) 727-4765 (TTY)



The office is open from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. In order for the office to evaluate your claims properly, they request that they be submitted in writing to the above address.

Disability Law Center (DLC)

DLC is a private, non-profit organization responsible for providing protection and advocacy for the rights of Massachusetts residents with disabilities.

11 Beacon Street, Suite 925  
Boston, Massachusetts, 02108  
(617) 723-8455 / (800) 872-9992 Voice  
(617) 227-9464 / (800) 381-0577 TTY  
(617) 723-9125 Fax  
<http://www.dlc-ma.org/index.htm>

For information about agencies in other states, students should consult their local site directors.

**NATIONAL ADVOCACY AGENCY:**

- National Disability Rights Network (NDRN)  
900 Second Street NE, Suite 211  
Washington, DC 20002

Phone: (202)-408-9514  
Fax : (202)-408-9520  
TTY: (202)- 408-9521

Email: <http://www.napas.org/index.htm>