

# Handbook for Students with Disabilities

The purpose of the Access Center: Office for Students with Disabilities at Lee College is to assist individuals with disabilities with accommodations and services that will promote their success and integration into college and college related activities. The Counselor for Students with Disabilities works with students, faculty, and staff to ensure equal opportunity to all programs. For credit courses, continuing education, and community events, individuals will be provided equal access.

## General Information

Lee College provides services and assistance to any individual who has a physical and or learning disability which substantially limits one or more of his or her life activities.

The following are common services available to students with disabilities:

- Advocacy to faculty, staff, and administration
- Volunteer classroom note-takers
- Peer tutoring
- Sign language interpreters
- Testing accommodations
- Access to textbooks in alternative formats
- Readers and/or scribes
- Assistance with registration
- Loan of tape recorders
- Use of closed-circuit television
- Referral for diagnostic evaluation and community resources
- Loan of portable FM loop listening device
- Other services as needed

The Office for Disability Services works closely with Texas Workforce Commission (Vocational Rehabilitation). The following policies and procedures were written to ensure compliance with state and national law and consistency of services. Policies and procedures may be occasionally updated to better serve students with disabilities and the College.

## The Law: Section 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 states that:

*"No otherwise qualified individual in the United States ... shall, solely by reason of ... handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."* A "qualified person" is defined as one who meets the requisite academic and technical standards required for admission or participation in the post-secondary institution's programs and activities. Section 504 protects the civil rights of individuals who are qualified to participate and who have disabilities such as, but not limited to, the following:

- Blindness or visual impairments

- Cerebral palsy
- Chronic illnesses (to include AIDS, arthritis, cancer, diabetes)
- Deafness or hearing impairments
- Drug or alcohol additions (Section 504 covers former users and those in recovery programs)
- Epilepsy or seizure disorders
- Intellectual disability
- Neurodevelopmental disabilities
- Orthopedic limitations
- Specific learning disabilities
- Speech disorders
- Spinal cord or traumatic brain injury

## **Americans with Disabilities Act**

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) is the civil rights guarantee for persons with disabilities in the United States. It provides protection from discrimination for individuals on the basis of disability. The ADA extends civil rights protection for people with disabilities to employment in the private sector, transportation, public accommodations, services provided by state and local government, and telecommunication relay services.

## **Commonly asked Questions Regarding the ADA and Section 504**

May colleges deny services if a student refused to document his or her disability?

Yes. A college has no obligation to provide services to a student who refused to provide documentation of his or her disability.

Can a college be held liable under the ADA if it is unaware of a student's disability?

No. The college's obligation to provide a reasonable accommodation applies only to known disabilities.

Does an institution have any obligation to lower its admissions standards for individuals with disabilities?

No. An applicant's disability should play no part in an admission decision, and the institution has no obligation to lower its admissions standards to admit an applicant with a disability.

What is the scope of the college's obligation to provide auxiliary aids or services to students with disabilities in the classroom?

An educational institution has a duty to provide reasonable accommodations in the classroom for students with known disabilities when services have been requested in a timely manner.

Does a college have any obligation to provide personal services or devices?

No. An educational institution is not required to provide a student who has a disability with personal or individually prescribed devices.

Must an institution lower its academic standards to accommodate a student with a disability?

No. But it should be noted that a college may be required to make some modifications to its academic requirements to ensure that such requirements do not discriminate or have the effect of discriminating on the basis of the student's disability.

Does an institution's obligation extend to providing accommodations during a test to a student with a disability?

Yes. Reasonable accommodation must be provided if appropriate notice is given.

Must an institution's library materials be accessible to students with disabilities?

Yes. The institution has an obligation to ensure that students have effective access to library materials.

Do I have to apply for accommodations to bring a service animal on campus?

No, you do not need to apply to bring a service animal on campus. However, we do appreciate it if you could provide the Access Center a courtesy notice about your service animal. Not only does this help prepare us, but there may also be other accommodations and/or services that would benefit you. Please note that emotional support animals (ESA) are not permitted on campus.

## Establishing Services

A variety of support services are available to individuals with disabilities. **All services must be requested each semester of attendance.**

1. To request services, the following steps should be taken:
  - Individuals needing special services should meet with the Counselor for Students with Disabilities to request any assistance or accommodations. The student should bring appropriate documentation of the disability to this meeting, if necessary
  - The counselor will discuss the services and accommodations that are the most appropriate for the individual and will acquaint the student with the process for securing those services.
2. Several forms will be completed at this For first time meetings, an initial *Intake Form* will be completed indicating personal information, the disability, and possible outside resources that the student is receiving.
  - The *Accommodation Request Form* lists the accommodations necessary based on the student's This form is completed at the beginning of each semester.
  - Release of information form in order to give students control of what information is released to whom.
  - If the student is a client of TWC-VR, a form is completed to assist the agency in proper payment of tuition.
3. To ensure consistency, all accommodations should be requested through the Office for Students with Accommodations given directly from the instructor are not considered part of disability services.

## Appropriate Documentation

In order to ensure appropriate accommodations, documentation is required. The documentation must be from an appropriate professional capable of diagnosing a particular disability/disorder. Confidentiality of records is required by law and all records are kept within the Office for Students with Disabilities. The following are guidelines for such documentation.

1. The report must include a definitive diagnosis and should list the functional limitations associated with the diagnosis.
2. Individuals with sensory, physical, or other health impairments are required to provide written documentation in the form of medical reports or a letter from a medical doctor detailing the disability.
3. A letter from a TWC-VR counselor outlining the disability and possible educational recommendations will be accepted for those individuals with sensory, physical or other health impairments.
4. Individuals with learning disabilities may present one of the following:
  - A copy of the Comprehensive Individual Assessment from their high school
  - A letter or report from a licensed psychologist, diagnostician or other professional knowledgeable in learning disabilities. This document should clearly state the presence of a learning disability and list the recommendations for the particular student.
5. Individuals with psychiatric disabilities may present a letter from a licensed psychologist or psychiatrist or clinical social worker with an explanation of the disorder and educational recommendations.
6. Individuals with Attention Deficit Disorder may present a letter from a licensed psychologist, a psychiatrist, or medical doctor.

## Eligibility

- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the ADA mandates institutions to provide appropriate and reasonable accommodations based on disability and individual need.
- Eligibility for services must be determined prior to providing accommodations to any
- Individuals participating in any college function may be eligible to receive accommodations appropriate to their needs.

## Grievance Procedures

Any problems with services or accommodations should be reported to the Counselor for Students with Disabilities. If unsatisfied with this resolution, it is the student's right to file a formal grievance. As stated in the Lee College catalog, there are four levels in the grievance policy. The student should refer to his or her catalog for specific information. To file a formal grievance, please submit concerns via the [Bias/ Discrimination Online Reporting form](#).

# Handicapped Accessible Parking

Handicapped parking is available for individuals near the front of each building on campus. Lee College recognizes permits issued by the state for the use of these areas. For more information, contact the security office at 281.425.6475.

## Special Accommodations

### Registration Assistance

Registration assistance is available to any student with a disability needing such support. This may include priority registration or assistance during walk-in registration. Students with TWC-VR may also need additional paperwork to process their registration and ensure proper payment. TWC-VR students should see the Counselor for Students with Disabilities to complete the appropriate forms.

### Use of Tuition Exemption Forms for Students who have a Visual or Hearing Impairment

The Texas State Legislature gives TWC-VR authority to certify deafness as part of a Tuition Exemption program. The financial aid offices of the various Texas colleges and universities issue the tuition exemption to qualifying individuals. The purpose of this tuition waiver is to allow students who are visually impaired or hearing impaired an opportunity to improve employability by completing specific courses for professional enhancement or by pursuing specific certificates or degrees. **The tuition waiver may not be used for Continuing Education Courses.** The exemption covers the cost of tuition and fees. The student is responsible for any books or supplies needed for the class.

For students who use American Sign Language (ASL), or are hard of hearing, the following procedures are to be followed.

1. Students are to complete the Verification of Deafness form. These forms may be obtained by request through the Access Center at Lee College or through TWC-VR. The completed application is mailed to TWC-VR. If approved, the student will receive a Certificate of Deafness by mail.
2. The Certificate of Deafness is presented to the Counselor for Students with Disabilities prior to In addition, the following information is required.
  - The student's written statement of purpose indicating the certificate or degree program being pursued or the professional enhancement form the course of study for that certificate or degree program.
  - A letter of recommendation from the student's high school principal, a public official, or some other responsible person who is willing to serve as a reference.
  - A Lee College permit to register.
1. With the file complete with the Counselor for Students with Disabilities, a memo will be sent to the Financial Aid Office to post the tuition exemption for the semester. With each subsequent semester, the student is to meet with the counselor to ensure that the degree plan is followed.

2. Only those courses on the degree plan will be covered by the tuition exemption. The counselor will work with the Financial Aid Office in awarding the tuition
3. Student may pick up a receipt at the cashier's window during designated times of the registration period.
4. If the student changes majors, the student must submit a new written statement of purpose, letter of recommendation, and permit to register.

For students who are visually impaired, a tuition exemption voucher will be issued by TWC-VR.

- The student is required to present this document to the Counselor for Students with
- For subsequent semesters, the student should inform the counselor of their enrollment to ensure that the exemption is noted for that semester.
- The student may pick up a receipt at the cashier's window during designated times of the registration period.

## **Loan of Equipment**

Lee College provides a variety of equipment to loan to students based on individual needs and the availability of equipment.

The procedures for the loan of equipment is as follows:

1. The student must indicate a need based on documentation or approval from the Disability Services Office.
2. An Equipment Loan Form is completed with the Disability Services
3. The student is responsible for the return of the equipment no later than the last day of finals each semester. Failure to return the equipment will result in a hold placed on the student's records.

## **Elevator Keys**

Keys operate elevators in John Britt Hall. These keys are issued through the Access Center and must be returned at the end of the semester. Elevators in all other buildings do not require a key.

## **Other Available Equipment**

- A Video Phone is available for student's use through the Access Center
- A closed-circuit television (CCTV) is available for students with low It is located in the Access Center and can be used during regular office hours.

## **Testing Accommodations**

Depending on the student's need, testing accommodations are available to include extended test time, individualized testing, marking on the test instead of using a Scantron, and/or utilizing a scribe for the test. The Counselor for Students with Disabilities will determine appropriate modifications for the student based on the disability, documentation received, and the structure of the course.

- For any student with a learning disability, attention deficit disorder, or mobility, the following procedures should be followed:
- Students should provide documentation to the Access Center describing the disability and documenting the need for the accommodation. Students with mobility impairments may self-identify their disability in requesting the accommodation.
- The Counselor for Students with Disabilities will approve any testing accommodations and inform the instructors of the accommodation.
  - # Individualized testing may be done in small groups or in a separate office.
  - # Extended test time will be time and a half. Additional time may be approved based on the individual's need.
- Testing arrangements maybe made with the instructor or the student may test in the Counseling Center. For those students testing in the Counseling Center, the instructor will be responsible for delivering and picking up the exam.
- For students using scribes, the student should inform the Counselor for Students with Disabilities at least three days in advance to arrange for the Scribes will be assigned by the Counselor.
- Occasionally, other testing accommodations may be approved depending on the individual need of the student

## Note-Taking Services (Student Volunteer)

Note-taking services are available for students with learning disabilities, mobility impairments, or hearing impairments. The following procedures should be followed in requesting such services.

1. The student should request the note-taking services from the Counselor for Students with Disabilities.
2. The counselor approves or denies the service based on the Documentation is required for students with learning disabilities.
3. Note-takers are hired as student assistants and must meet the requirements of the Student Assistant Policy. Occasionally volunteers are used.
4. The Counselor will work with the student to find an appropriate note-taker for the class. The paid note-taker is required to read and sign the "note-taker's agreement" for consistency of service.

## Books in Alternative Formats

For students with visual impairments or learning disabilities, Lee College will assist in obtaining books in alternative formats. The following procedures should be followed to obtain this service:

- The student requests [books in alternative format](#) through the Counselor for Students with Disabilities. At the time of the request, he or she should also have the list of books needed to include title, author, and edition of each book.
- Students with learning disabilities must show documentation of their The counselor will approve or deny the service based on the disability.

The Counselor will order the textbooks through various sources. Alternative format texts should arrive in two to three weeks. For books not already formatted, the wait will be longer.

# Sign Language Interpreting Services

It is the College's responsibility to provide a qualified interpreter for any individual with a hearing impairment who requires such service at no cost to the individual. The following procedures should be followed in requesting such service.

1. The individual needing the service is responsible for requesting a sign language interpreter. **The request should be made no later than two weeks prior to the beginning of the course or event.** Requests for less than two weeks will be covered depending on the availability of Requests may be made in writing or by completing the Accommodation Request Form with the Disability Services Office.
2. The Counselor for Students with Disabilities will be responsible for the assignment of the While a specific interpreter may be requested, the counselor will make the final assignment decision.
3. To best utilize interpreters, students must notify the Access Center if they are to miss a class or activity in which an interpreter has been assigned. Missing classes for any reason without notifying the Access Center is considered a "No Show." Also arriving late to class after a specified waiting time is considered a "No Show." If the student misses two classes in any semester without notifying the Access Center, the interpreter will be removed from the class. The "No Show" agreement outlines this policy.

Interpreters will not be placed on assignments that could compromise their commitment to their Code of Ethics. This may include interpreting for family members, close friends, or romantic interests. As stated in the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) Standard Practice Papers, "the relative may have attitudinal or emotional issues that could affect objectivity and impartiality and prevent accurate communications." Interpreters will maintain a professional relationship with all students and faculty.

## Important Telephone Numbers and Info

- Access Center: Office for Students with Disabilities, 281.425.6217 — Email [disability@lee.edu](mailto:disability@lee.edu) — [K-leigh Shaw Villanueva](#), 281.425.6217 or 832.556.4069
- Student Success and Advising Center — 281.425.6384
- Business Office — 281.425.6321
- Business Office fax — 281.425.6206
- Records and Admissions — 281.425.6393
- Financial Aid Office — 281.425.6389
- Security — 281.425.6475 or 281.425.6888
- TWC-VR — 1.800.628.5115
  - # Baytown — 281.837.0079
  - # Liberty — 936.336.8063
  - # Pasadena — 713.576.2580

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