



Accommodations Request Involving Written Examinations For Applicants With Disabilities

**South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy
Instructional Standards & Support Section
Academic Testing Unit
5400 Broad River Road
Columbia, SC 29212-3540
(803) 896-7956
(803) 896-8746 (fax)**

INTRODUCTION

The South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy (Academy) provides reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Amended Americans with Disabilities Act (AADA) for individuals with documented disabilities who demonstrate a need for accommodation, when such accommodation can be provided without compromising the Academy's training or certification standards.

The following information is provided for applicants, qualified disability evaluators, and others who may be involved in the process of documenting a request for examination accommodations so the appropriate documentation can be assembled to support the request.

The AADA and accompanying regulations define a person with a disability as someone with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities or an individual with a record of a substantially limiting impairment (functional limitation). **Functional limitation refers to the manifestations of a disability that impedes an individual's ability to function.** The purpose of documentation is to validate that the individual is covered under the ADA as a disabled individual, that the disability is such that it necessitates an accommodation, and that the requested accommodation can be made without compromising the Academy training or certification standards.

An applicant's requested accommodations must be related to the identified functional limitation so that the area of impairment is alleviated by the requested accommodation, typically an auxiliary aid or an adjustment to the examination procedure. It is essential that the documentation submitted provide a clear explanation of how or why a specific impairment results in the identified functional limitation(s) and how the requested accommodation will alleviate the identified functional limitation(s).

While presumably the use of accommodations in the examination activity will enable the individual to better demonstrate his/her knowledge mastery, accommodations are not a guarantee of improved performance, examination completion, or a passing score.

EXAMINATION ACCOMMODATIONS

Examination accommodations may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- * Assistance in completing answer sheet(s);
- * Extended examination time;
- * Large print examination;
- * Private testing area.

HOW TO REQUEST EXAMINATION ACCOMMODATIONS

Prior to any testing an applicant must notify the Academy's Academic Testing Unit that he/she has a disability and is requesting examination accommodations. Applications for accommodations can be obtained on the Academy website – www.sccja.sc.gov – or by contacting the Academy - **Academic Testing Unit at 803-896-7956.**

1. Submit a completed *Application for Written Test Accommodations*, Part I and Part II. Be sure to sign the application where indicated.
2. Attach documentation certifying the disability from a qualified licensed professional appropriate for evaluating the disability.
3. The completed *Application for Written Test Accommodations* and appropriate documentation **MUST** be mailed to the:

**South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy
Instructional Standards & Support Section
Attention: Manager, Academic Testing Unit
5400 Broad River Road
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To protect your confidentiality, always send examination accommodation information separately to the above address. DO NOT include these materials with any other correspondence.

4. **The completed application and accompanying documentation MUST be received by the Academic Testing Unit at least 30 calendar days prior to the start of training program. Failure to submit the completed application and accompanying documentation at least 30 calendar days prior to the start of the training program may result in an individual's inability to attend the scheduled training program.** If there is a need for further verification of the disability or the need for the requested accommodations, it is possible that the decision whether to provide the requested accommodations will delay participation in the scheduled training program. Any documentation submitted to the Academy related to a request for written test accommodations may be referred to disability experts (medical and legal) for a fair and impartial professional review of the request.

COMPLETING AN ACCOMMODATIONS REQUEST FOR LEARNING DISABILITIES

The following additional guidelines are provided to assist applicants in documenting a need for accommodation based on functional limitation caused by a learning disability.

To support a request for examination accommodations due to a functional limitation caused by a learning disability, please submit the following information/documentation:

1. A completed *Application for Written Test Accommodations*.
2. A detailed, comprehensive written report prepared by an evaluator qualified to make such a diagnosis describing the learning disability in terms of how the learning disability impacts a specific major life activity, resulting in the need for the requested accommodation(s).

a. Relevant Assessment Batteries:

A neuropsychological or psycho-educational assessment may be necessary in order to determine the individual's pattern, strengths, and/or weaknesses in order to determine whether there are patterns indicative of any learning disorders.

b. Specific Diagnosis:

- (1) The report must include a specific diagnosis of the learning disability based on diagnostic criteria;
- (2) Individuals who report problems with organization, test anxiety, memory and concentration only on a situational basis do not fit the prescribed diagnostic criteria for learning disability;
- (3) Given that many individuals benefit from prescribed medications and therapies, a positive response to medication by itself is not supportive of a diagnosis, nor does the use of medication in and of itself either support or negate the need for accommodation(s).

c. Clinical Summary

A well-written diagnostic summary based on a comprehensive evaluative process is a necessary component of the assessment. The clinical summary should include:

- (1) Demonstration of the evaluator's having ruled out alternative explanations for the symptoms of the diagnosed learning disability as a result of psychological or medical disorders or non-cognitive factors;
- (2) Indication of the substantial limitation to learning presented by the diagnosed learning disability and the degree to which it impacts the individual in the context for which accommodation(s) is/are being requested (e.g., impact on an examination situation);
- (3) Indication as to why specific accommodation(s) is/are needed and how the effects of diagnosed learning disability symptoms are lessened by the accommodation(s);
- (4) Specific recommendations for accommodation(s);
- (5) A detailed explanation must be provided as to why each accommodation is recommended and should be correlated with specific identified functional limitation;
- (6) Prior documentation of a diagnosed learning disability may be useful in determining appropriate services and/or accommodations in the present. Therefore, please include any record of prior accommodation(s), including information about specific conditions under which the accommodation(s)

was/were used (e.g., standardized testing, final exams, subject exams, etc.);

- (7) **If no prior accommodation has been provided, include a detailed explanation as to why no accommodation was provided in the past and why accommodation is needed at this time.**

CHANGE IN DISABILITY OR ACCOMMODATIONS REQUESTED

If there are any changes in the nature or extent of your disability or if the accommodations will differ from previously provided accommodations, you must submit an updated application as soon as possible prior to the start of training and provide detailed documentation explaining the change.

ALL MATERIALS AND ALL INQUIRIES MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS

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