

SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH 504 PLANS: OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS RESOURCES

Glossary Section

OCR- The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) protects students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) by enforcing federal civil rights laws like Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act- A foundational civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in any program or activity that receives federal financial assistance. This includes public schools, higher education institutions, and healthcare facilities that accept federal funding.

ADA- The Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life. This includes schools, jobs, and transportation.

Medical Conditions and 504 Plans

Students with a health condition that substantially limits one or more major life activities may be eligible for accommodations through a section 504 plan. Examples include:

Asthma- Causes episodes of wheezing, breathlessness, chest tightness, coughing.

Diabetes- A disease where someone has too much glucose (or sugar) in their blood.

Food Allergy- an adverse health effect arising from a specific and reproducible immune response to certain foods.

Gerd- A chronic digestive disorder that occurs when stomach acid or digestive juices repeatedly flow back up into the esophagus.

Mental Health and 504 Plans

Students with a mental health condition that substantially limits one or more major life activities may be eligible for accommodations through a section 504 plan. Examples include:

Anxiety- Symptoms include difficulty concentrating, headaches, stomachaches, and fear.

Bipolar Disorder- A mental illness that causes unusual shifts in a person's mood, energy, activity levels, and concentration.

Depression- Persistent feeling of sadness, loss of interest in regular activities, or feelings of helplessness or pessimism.

Eating Disorder- Severe disruptions in an individual's eating behaviors and related thoughts and emotions.

English Language Learners (ELL)

Equal Access to Public Education for Students who are English Language Learners (ELL).

Students whose primary language is not English (English learners or EL students) may require language support in order to meaningfully participate in school.

Discriminatory Use of Discipline

This is the unequal or unfair application of school discipline based on a student's intellectual and developmental disability, resulting in different treatment than their peers. Click [here](#) for more information.

Individual Assessments for Students with Disabilities in Postsecondary Education

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act prohibits disability discrimination and requires postsecondary institutions, such as colleges and universities, that accept Federal financial assistance to provide academic adjustments. Some examples could be reasonable modifications and auxiliary aids or services.