

Section 504 – Students with Disabilities Act

THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973—SECTION 504: IT’S IMPACT ON STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Subpart E of Section 504 is applicable to all postsecondary educational programs and activities which receive federal financial assistance. In brief, schools offering postsecondary programs must be free from discrimination in their recruitment, admissions, and treatment of students. Reasonable accommodations in the academic program must be made by the educational institution to insure maximal participation by all students with disabilities. Under the provision of Section 504, a school may not:

1. Limit the number of students with disabilities admitted.
2. Make pre-admission inquiries as to whether or not an applicant is disabled. (An exception is permitted if the institution is trying to overcome the effects of prior limitations on enrollment of disabled students, and an applicant is willing to provide information about his/her disability.)
3. Use admissions tests or “criteria that inadequately measures the academic level of visually impaired, hearing impaired, or otherwise disabled applicants” because special provisions were not made for them.
4. Exclude a student with a disability from any course of study solely on the basis of his/her disability.
5. Counsel students with disabilities toward a more restrictive career than non-disabled students, unless such counsel is based on strict licensing or certification requirements in a profession.
6. Measure student achievement using modes that adversely affect disabled students such as the barring of tape recorders from the classroom. Auxiliary aids must be permitted in the classroom when they will help to ensure full participation by students with disabilities.

Students with disabilities may be entitled to reasonable accommodations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. In order to receive accommodations, the student must initiate the process by requesting services in writing (along with supporting documentation) to the Tri-County Continuing Education Director. A 504 meeting is held to determine the accommodations needed by the student. The approved accommodations are shared with the student's teachers and are used to minimize the impact of the student's disability to the greatest extent possible.