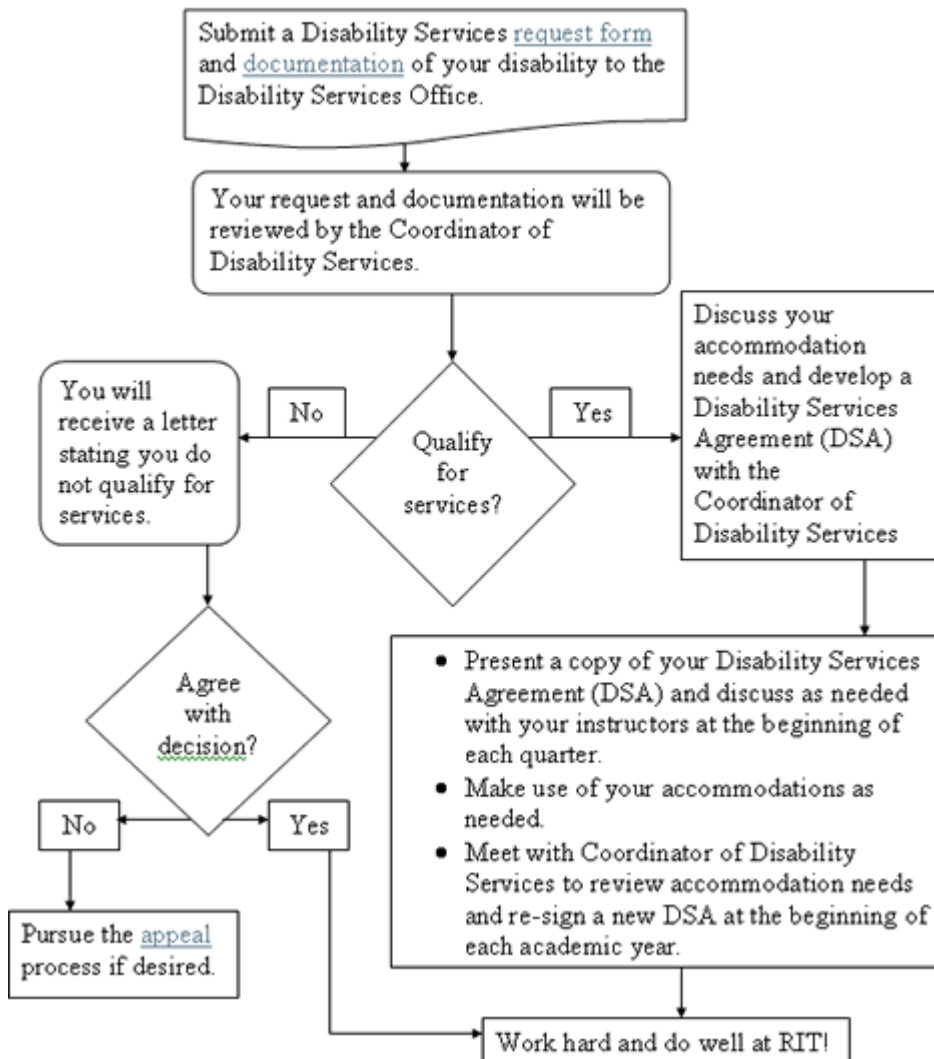


Disability Services Process

DISABILITY SERVICES PROCESS HOW TO OBTAIN ACCOMMODATIONS AT RIT



RIT is committed to fostering an environment where students with disabilities have the same access to academic programs, support services, social events, and physical facilities as every other student.

- Procedures for disability services are based on the following principles:
- Accommodating students is a shared student/faculty/staff responsibility,
- Faculty, staff and students need structured assistance in making decisions,
- Policies and procedures must be reasonable and understandable,
- Students' rights to confidentiality must be protected to the extent possible within the accommodations process and
- An appeals process must be trustworthy and timely.

Eligibility for Accommodations

All students with disabilities who would like to request accommodations must submit appropriate documentation of the disability to the Disability Services Office (Eastman Building, Room 2342, phone 475-7804 v/tty). The “Services for Students with Disabilities” request form and documentation guidelines outline the requirements to be used in determining eligibility for services. These materials are available online or from the Admissions Office or the Disability Services Office.

Formal Appeal Process for Eligibility Determination

If the student does not agree with the decision of the coordinator of Disability Services due to either

a) being denied services or b) disagreement on the approved accommodations, and an agreement cannot be reached, the student may initiate a formal appeal. The appropriate steps are:

- An appeal must be submitted in writing to the interim coordinator of Academic Support and Special Programs (who serves as the direct supervisor for the coordinator of Disability Services). The appeal must set forth the specific action disputed and the specific accommodation sought by the student. The interim coordinator will notify the coordinator of Disability Services and obtain a copy of the student’s file, including the documentation of the disability and the need for accommodation, if any, recommended by the evaluator and the coordinator of Disability Services. The interim coordinator will convene a meeting with the student and the coordinator of Disability Services within two (2) weeks of receiving a written appeal by the student to discuss the appeal. The interim coordinator will make a decision on the appeal after meeting with the student and reviewing the file and documentation.
- If the student or the coordinator of Disability Services is dissatisfied with the decision made by the interim coordinator of Academic Support and Special Programs, a written appeal may be submitted to the vice president for Student Affairs. The vice president for Student Affairs will make the final decision after reviewing the student’s file and meeting with the student, the coordinator of Disability Services and the interim coordinator of Academic Support and Special Programs.

Arranging for Academic Accommodations

Students who are qualified to receive academic accommodations will discuss and sign a “Disability Services Agreement” (DSA) letter with the coordinator of Disability Services at the beginning of each school year. This letter will inform faculty that the student has a documented disability and set forth the academic accommodations approved by the coordinator of Disability Services. Students must present this letter to their instructors when requesting services.

Accommodations may include, but are not limited to, use of RIT’s disability services located in the Academic Support Center, i.e., use of the testing center for extended time, reader/scribe, or a distraction reduced setting, or note-taking. The college disability liaisons, department chair and/or the coordinator of Disability Services may be used as resources or mediators to assist in reaching an agreement between the instructor and the student on the proper accommodations. If the student or the instructor disagrees with the recommendations, either may proceed to the appeal process described below.

Formal Appeal Process for Academic Accommodations If student and faculty cannot reach an agreement through informal negotiations, either may initiate a formal appeal. The appropriate steps are:

An appeal may be made to the college dean of the faculty member involved. The dean (or dean’s designee) will convene a meeting within two weeks of receiving a written notice requesting an appeal hearing. The hearing will include the student, the instructor, the coordinator of Disability Services, and when assigned, the student’s primary disability services provider. The dean will make a decision on the appeal.

If the student or the faculty member is dissatisfied with the decision made during the first stage, a written appeal may be submitted to the provost within two weeks of the completion of the first stage. The provost will make the final decision after consulting with the appropriate parties.

While the academic appeal is in process, the student will be provided accommodations originally recommended by the coordinator of Disability Services unless otherwise arranged by the provost.

Arranging for Non-academic Accommodations

All arrangements for non-academic accommodations will be made directly through the coordinator of Disability Services. Non-academic accommodations may include, but are not limited to, issues related to housing, diet, health, equipment, communications or transportation.

Formal Appeal Process for Non-academic Accommodations

If a student and a service provider outside the colleges cannot reach agreement on accommodations, the following appeals process will be followed:

An appeal may be made to the chair of the department from which accommodations are being requested. The department chair will convene a meeting, which will include the student, the service provider in the department, the coordinator of Disability Services, and the student's primary disability service provider (if other than the coordinator of Disability Services). The department chair will make a decision on accommodations.

If the student or the service provider is dissatisfied with the decision made during the first stage, a written appeal may be submitted to the vice president of Student Affairs within two (2) weeks of the completion of the first stage. The vice president for Student Affairs will make the final decision after consulting with the appropriate parties.

While the appeal is in process, the student will be provided the accommodations originally recommended by the coordinator of Disability Services, unless otherwise arranged by the vice president for Student Affairs.

Role of the Coordinator of Disability Services At all stages of the appeals process, the coordinator of Disability Services will be available to provide information regarding 1) the student's needs, supported by documentation, 2) relevant legal guidelines and precedents, and 3) accommodations appropriate for given circumstances. The role of the coordinator of Disability Services is to assess the documentation of disabilities and to approve the appropriate accommodations in an objective manner on behalf of the Institute. The coordinator of Disability Services also assists faculty and staff in understanding the need for appropriate accommodations.