

504 FACT SHEET FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

1. What is Section 504?

- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act is a civil rights law that is designed to prevent disability discrimination in programs and activities that receive federal funds, such as public school districts.
- It was enacted to eliminate barriers that exclude students with disabilities.

2. Who is eligible as disabled under Section 504?

- Any student who is determined to have a physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, seeing, speaking, hearing, breathing, eating, learning, sleeping, reading, walking, concentrating, standing, thinking, lifting, communicating, bending, and working, as well as major bodily functions.

3. Who determines whether a student is disabled under Section 504?

- A multidisciplinary team, which includes the parents, is convened by the school. If appropriate, the team may include a member from the school's health services department.

4. How is the eligibility determination made?

- The team will draw from a variety of sources to evaluate each student on a case-by-case basis. A medical or mental health diagnosis is not required as one of the sources of information, however a medical or mental diagnosis from a medical professional is highly recommended.
- A student's medical or mental health diagnosis will be considered by the team but is not determinative.
- Not all students with a medical or mental health diagnosis are eligible under Section 504.

5. What information is needed from you?

- Although a diagnosis is helpful, more detailed information about the student's condition and its impact is often extremely beneficial to the team in determining eligibility and developing a program for the student.
- Parents are strongly encouraged to sign an authorization permitting the school to communicate with health care providers in order to obtain this information.

6. What services does the student receive if eligible under Section 504?

- A student may be eligible under Section 504 and not require accommodations and services.
- In some cases, an already existing plan, such as a health plan or allergy action plan, may be sufficient to address the student's needs.
- If a student requires academic accommodations and services, the team will develop a written plan to address them.