

**York University**  
**Mental Health Disability Services**  
**Counselling & Disability Services**  
**Documentation Guidelines for Students with Mental Health Disabilities**

**Background**

Consistent with the *Ontario Human Rights Commission's "Policy on preventing discrimination based on mental health disabilities and addictions"*, students are not required to disclose their mental health disability diagnosis in order to register with Mental Health Disability Services (MHDS) and to receive academic accommodation.<sup>1</sup> The *Ontario Human Rights Commission* recognizes that Disability Services Offices have expertise in dealing with accommodation issues in the academic environment, and as such, can play a vital role in assisting with the accommodation process. Students who want to disclose their diagnosis to their MHDS counsellor may do so.

**Documentation Requirements**

1. Students seeking academic accommodation for mental health disabilities will be required to provide MHDS with written documentation from a licensed medical/psychological professional. MHDS provides assistance to students who may require interim accommodation pending receipt of medical documentation.
2. The medical/ psychological documentation should clearly indicate that the student has been diagnosed with, or is being assessed for a disability as defined by the *Ontario Human Rights Code*. See definition attached.
3. The documentation should reflect current functional restrictions and limitations that may impact the student's academic performance, and where possible, suggest reasonable academic accommodations that relate specifically to those restrictions and limitations.
4. The licensed professional should be an independent, impartial individual who is not personally related to the student. The documentation should be on letterhead and stamped or signed by the licensed professional.

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<sup>1</sup> Note: evidence of a specific medical/ psychological diagnosis of disability may be required for the purpose of establishing eligibility for certain federally or provincially-funded bursaries and grants, and privately funded external scholarships and financial award

5. Academic accommodations may need to be re-visited over time to ensure that they continue to meet the student's needs appropriately and as such students may be asked to provide updated medical/ psychological documentation.
6. With the express, informed consent of the student MHDS may consult with the practitioner who supplied the documentation when the accommodation needs are complex or where there is a need to clarify the information that has been provided regarding functional restrictions and limitations.

### **Privacy & Confidentiality**

7. MHDS considers the privacy and confidentiality of students to be of paramount importance. Accordingly, all information provided to us and a student's involvement with MHDS is considered private and confidential.
8. Documentation is maintained within locked filing cabinets within the offices of MHDS and in an encrypted database accessible only by staff in Disability Services. With certain very limited exceptions outlined in the *Counselling & Disability Services Client Privacy Statement* (see attached), information will be disclosed to others outside of Disability Services (including Faculty Teaching Assistants, and university staff) only with the express, informed consent of the student.
9. Students' involvement with MHDS or the fact that they have received academic accommodations will never be identified on the student's official university records or academic transcripts.

### **Policy References and Resources:**

[\*Counselling & Disability Services Client Privacy Statement\*](#)

[\*York University Policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities\*](#)

[\*York University Centre for Human Rights\*](#)

[\*Ontario Human Rights Commission, Policy and guidelines on disability and the duty to accommodate\*](#)

[\*Ontario Human Rights Commission, Policy on preventing discrimination based on mental health disabilities and addictions\*](#)

[\*Ontario Human Rights Commission, Guidelines on accessible education\*](#)