

Section 504 May Include Conditions

Such As:

- ◆ Dyslexia
- ◆ ADD/ADHD
- ◆ Hearing Impairments
- ◆ Neurological Impairments
- ◆ Visual Impairments
- ◆ Muscular Dystrophy
- ◆ Orthopedic Impairments
- ◆ Cerebral Palsy
- ◆ Epilepsy
- ◆ Asthma
- ◆ Emotional Illness
- ◆ Learning Disabilities
- ◆ Diabetes
- ◆ Other disorders of major bodily functions

Placement

In the context of 504, “placement” usually refers to the regular education classroom with individually planned accommodations listed in the eligible student’s Individual Accommodation Plan (IAP).

Examples of Accommodations

- ◆ Oral testing
- ◆ Accommodated tests
- ◆ Shortened assignments
- ◆ Handicap accessibility
- ◆ Dyslexia services, as eligible
- ◆ Behavior plans
- ◆ Health plans
- ◆ Supplemental materials



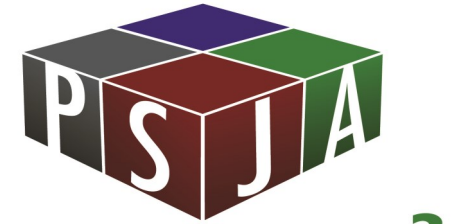
PARENT’S RIGHTS UNDER §504

1. An appropriate education designed to meet his/her individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of non-disabled students are met.
2. Free educational services except for those fees that are imposed on non-disabled students or their parents.
3. Placement in the least restrictive environment.
4. Facilities, services, activities and programs that are comparable to those provided for non-disabled students.
5. An evaluation prior to an initial Section 504 placement and any subsequent significant change in placement based on evaluation information that comes from a variety of sources.
6. Placement decisions made by a group of persons, including persons knowledgeable about your child, the meaning of evaluation data and appropriate placement options.
7. Periodic re-evaluations.



For more information, please contact:

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A Parent Awareness Guide to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973



It is the policy of the Pharr-San Juan-Alamo ISD not to discriminate on the basis of sex, disability, race, color, religion, national origin, or age.

Pharr San Juan Alamo Independent School District

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

What is Section 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a civil rights statute that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance from the U.S. Dept. of Education. The Office of Civil Rights (OCR), a component of the U.S. Dept. of Education, enforce Section 504.

Section 504 regulations require a school district to provide a “free and appropriate public education” (FAPE) to each qualified student with a disability who is in the school district’s jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the disability. Section 504 requires districts to provide students with disabilities appropriate services and accommodations designed to meet their individual needs to the same extent as the needs of students without disabilities are met.

How does Section 504 define “Disability”?

Under Section 504, a person is considered “disabled” if he/she:

- ◆ has a physical or mental impairment which **substantially limits** one or more major life activities,
- ◆ has a record of such impairment,
- ◆ is regarded of having such an impairment

What is a Physical or Mental Impairment?

Section 504 defines a physical or mental impairment as “any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological; musculoskeletal; special sense organs; respiratory, including speech organs; cardiovascular; reproductive; digestive; genitor-urinary; hemic and lymphatic; skin; and endocrine; or any mental or psychological disorder, such as mental retardation, organic brain

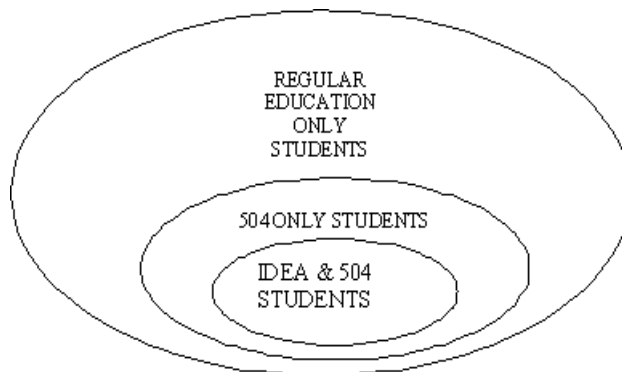
syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities”. OCR guidance suggests that there may be additional conditions to these listed.

What is meant by “substantially limits”?

An impairment in and of itself is not a disability. To be considered a disability under Section 504, the impairment must result in a substantial limitation. The regulations do not provide an operational definition of “substantial limitation.” The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines substantial limitation to mean significant limitation to mean “significantly restricted as to the condition, manner, or duration under which the student can perform a particular major life activity as compared to the condition, manner, or duration under which the average student of the same age/grade level in the general population can perform the same major life activity.”

What is a “Major Life Activity” ?

Major life activities include such things as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working, eating, sleeping, standing, lifting, bending, reading, concentrating, thinking, and communicating. Major bodily functions may also be considered major life activities and may include: functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine and reproductive functions.



Does Section 504 Require Evaluations?

Section 504 requires that districts establish procedures for evaluation and periodic re-evaluation of students who may need accommodations or services because of a disability. “Evaluation” does not necessarily mean testing –in the 504 context, but rather a gathering of information from a variety of sources that are to be included when considering of all factors related to the student’s learning process. The variety of sources may include aptitude and achievement tests, teacher recommendations, health information, parent information, grades, social and cultural background, discipline referrals, and adaptive behavior.

Who determines eligibility?

Section 504 requires that the determination of eligibility be made by a group of persons, including individuals who are knowledgeable about the meaning of the evaluation data. This multi-disciplinary committee is required to draw upon a variety of data sources in considering whether a student is eligible.

Does Section 504 Require a Written Plan?

Section 504 requires a written plan describing the recommended accommodations and services. School personnel are responsible to implement the recommendations within the Section 504 plan.

What is the Process?

Contact your campus—each school has a campus designated 504 campus coordinator. Parents or a student’s school may initiate a referral.