

# CARDOZO LAW

BENJAMIN N. CARDOZO SCHOOL OF LAW • YESHIVA UNIVERSITY

From: Francesca Acocella, Director of the Office of Student Life

To: Cardozo Students

Re: Reasonable Accommodations

The Office of Student Life assists students with documented disabilities or disabling medical conditions in obtaining reasonable accommodations. If you believe that you may need an accommodation, please make an appointment to meet with Francesca Acocella, the Director of Student Life, by visiting [CardozoStudentAffairs.Setmore.com](http://CardozoStudentAffairs.Setmore.com) to make an appointment or emailing [Francesca.Acocella@yu.edu](mailto:Francesca.Acocella@yu.edu).

The Office of Student Life also provides holistic support and resources to students with accommodations throughout their time at Cardozo, including academic advising, course selection, and support with study habits and time management. The Director of Student Life also counsels second and third year students on bar exam accommodations.

Students seeking reasonable accommodations should bear in mind that they are responsible for the following:

- Asking for assistance before experiencing difficulty
- Advising the Office of Student Life of the exact nature of the accommodation(s) desired
- Providing supporting documentation in a timely manner
- Meeting all academic responsibilities and deadlines, taking into account any agreed-upon accommodations
- Submitting a completed initial request form. Due to timing and processing, no request will be accepted within 30 calendar days of the final examination period of any given semester
- Bringing any problems to the immediate attention of the Director of Student Life, since it can take time to evaluate the request and, if approved, to arrange the accommodations. No accommodations will be given retroactively.

Supporting documentation should be recent, per the requirements below, and come from an appropriate, licensed professional who is not a member of the student's family. The documentation must be dated, signed, and on the letterhead of the professional. Please submit documentation, along with the Initial Request form at the end of this document, to the Director of Student Life at [Francesca.Acocella@yu.edu](mailto:Francesca.Acocella@yu.edu). The Director will provide your information to the YU Office of Disability Services, whose director will review and assess. At times, additional documentation may be required. All information will be kept confidential as required by law.

Please review the subsequent pages to determine what documentation is appropriate for you to provide based on the reason for which you seek accommodations:

I. **For students with learning disabilities (Evaluation and documentation should be from within the past three - five years, or if the student is not yet 18 years of age, testing must be administered in the past two years) \*:**

- A. Identification of the tests administered as part of a psycho-educational or neuro-psychological evaluation;
- B. The nature of the learning disability. A diagnosis as per the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual - V (DSM-V) is required. Terms such as "learning problems," "learning differences," "weaknesses," etc., are not the equivalent of a learning disability;
- C. Description of the student's functional limitations in law school (i.e. how does the impairment significantly limit a major life activity in an educational setting, e.g. test-taking); and
- D. Recommendations regarding effective accommodations to equalize the student's educational opportunities and the rationale for each recommendation.

*\* The New York Board of Law Examiners, or the equivalent entity in another jurisdiction, may require more recent documentation, which may require updated testing.*

II. **For Students with Attention Deficit Disorder or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder Evaluation and documentation should be from within the past three - five years, or if the student is not yet 18 years of age, testing must be administered in the past two years)\*:**

- A. Identification of the tests administered as part of a psycho-educational evaluation (including standardized measures for inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity, if possible). **Neuro- psychological or psycho-educational assessments are needed to determine the current impact of the condition on the individual's academic functioning;**
- B. Assessment consisting of a history of symptoms, including evidence of ongoing impulsive, hyperactive or inattentive behavior that has significantly impaired functioning over time;
- C. Description of the student's functional limitations in law school (i.e. how does the impairment significantly limit a major life activity in an educational setting, e.g. test-taking), while ruling out other common behaviors in adults, such as procrastination, disorganization, distractibility, restlessness, boredom, academic under-achievement or failure, low self- esteem, chronic tardiness or nonattendance, and distinguishing them from clinically significant impairment; and
- D. Recommendations regarding effective accommodations to equalize the student's educational opportunities and the rationale for each recommendation.

*\* The New York Board of Law Examiners, or the equivalent entity in another jurisdiction, may require more recent documentation, which may require updated testing.*

III. **For Students with psychiatric diagnoses:**

- A. Specific DSM diagnosis;
- B. Instruments and procedures used to make the diagnosis;
- C. Date of the diagnosis and date of last in-person contact with the student, preferably within 6 months to one year;
- D. Statement regarding the severity of the impairment;
- E. Description of the student's functional limitations in law school (i.e. how does the impairment significantly limit a major life activity in an educational setting); and
- F. Recommendations regarding effective accommodations to equalize the student's educational opportunities and the rationale for each recommendation.

*Please note that students with accommodations based on a mental health diagnosis should anticipate re-applying for accommodations at Cardozo annually, including updated documentation and re-submitting the Initial Request form.*

IV. **For students with temporary disabilities:**

- A. Specific nature of the condition;
- B. Date of the diagnosis and date of last contact with the student;
- C. Assessment of current level of disability and description of the student's functional limitations in law school (i.e. how does the impairment significantly limit a major life activity in an educational setting);
- D. Prognosis as to the expected duration of disability; and
- E. Recommendations regarding effective accommodations to equalize the student's educational opportunities and the rationale for each recommendation.
- F. In the event that the temporary disability continues beyond its expected duration, additional documentation may be required.

V. **For students with physical, sensory and health-related disabilities:**

- A. Specific diagnosis;
- B. Date of diagnosis and date of last in-person contact with the student;
- C. Statement as to the "major life activities," impacted by the student's impairment(s) and level of severity;
- D. Description of the student's functional limitations in law school (i.e. how does the impairment significantly limit a major life activity in an educational setting); and
- E. Recommendations regarding effective accommodations to equalize the student's educational opportunities and the rationale for each recommendation.

**Confidentiality:**

All exam-based accommodations are kept anonymous from your professors and from your peers. In the event of an accommodation relating to attendance, you will discuss with the Director of Student Life how you would like to approach it with your faculty. The Director of Student Life is your primary contact regarding all accommodations questions and concerns and is the liaison between Cardozo and the YU Office of Disability Services, whose director makes all determinations regarding accommodations that the Office of Student Life then implements. While the Student Services Program Manager and the Dean of Students have access to accommodations on a need-to-know basis, no other administrators have access to accommodations information. These members of the Student Services team are bound by confidentiality as provided by the fullest extent of the law, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). If you have questions or concerns about your accommodations, please always direct them to the Director of Student Life.

# Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, Yeshiva University

## INITIAL REQUEST FOR SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Students who have documented disabilities or medical conditions may be eligible for special accommodations. Students who are seeking accommodations should review the guidelines contained in the Cardozo Student Handbook, and then complete the form below and return it to the Office of Student Services and Advising, room 1043.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Circle one:  1L  2L  3L  LL.M.

Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check the relevant category and then specify the nature of your disability on the line provided:

- Learning: \_\_\_\_\_
- AD/HD: \_\_\_\_\_
- Hearing: \_\_\_\_\_
- Speech: \_\_\_\_\_
- Visual: \_\_\_\_\_
- Mobility: \_\_\_\_\_
- Emotional: \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

What specific accommodation(s) are you requesting?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do you plan to use a laptop to take your law school examinations?  Yes  No

**Please attach all relevant medical documentation.** In addition, attach documentation from colleges, universities and/or the Law School Admissions Council (for the LSAT) if they provided you with an accommodation. Requests for accommodations will not be reviewed until supporting documentation is submitted.

This document will serve as written authorization for ODS to share information as it deems necessary in order to consider and implement your accommodations.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

-----*For University Office of Student Services and Advising only*-----

Further documentation is required: \_\_\_\_\_

The following accommodation has been approved:

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of University Official: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_