

REQUESTS FOR ACCOMMODATIONS UNDER THE ADA¹

Introduction

Pursuant to Chapter 346, RSMo, the Board has the statutory authority to approve applicants for a license by examination. The board approves appropriate licensure examination modifications which are psychometrically sound and safeguard the fairness and security of the testing process for all candidates.

Description of Modifications Request Review and Approval Process

All requests for exam modifications from licensure examination candidates must be in writing and accompanied by the following:

- A letter from the applicant requesting the modifications and detailing the specific modifications.
- A letter from the educational program indicating what modifications, if any, were granted by that program.
- An application for licensure.
- Application fee.
- Appropriate documentation supporting the request for accommodation from a qualified professional with expertise in the areas of the diagnosed disability.

Documentation must include:

- a history of the disability and any past accommodation granted the candidate and a description of its impact on the individual's functioning;
- identification of the specific standardized and professional recognized tests/assessments given (e.g. Woodcock-Johnson, Weschler Adult Intelligence Scale);
- clinical diagnosis of disability (where applicable, list DSM Code Number and Title);
- the scores resulting from testing, interpretation of the scores and evaluations; and
- recommendations for testing accommodations with a stated rationale as to why the requested accommodation is necessary and appropriate for the diagnosed disability.

After the application for license and all documentation are received, the members of the Board will review the request to determine if modifications are appropriate.

¹ The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is codified at 42 U.S.C. §§12101-12213 (2000).

Statement

Only physical or mental impairments that substantially limit one or more major life activities are disabilities subject to the protection of the ADA. "Major life activities" pursuant to the ADA including walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working, caring for one's self and performing manual tasks. Mental impairment pursuant to the ADA includes any mental or psychological disorder such as organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness and specific learning disabilities.

Almost everyone experiences some apprehension before taking an important examination. Careful diagnosis is required to address the issue of what point "normal" anxiety constitutes a disability protected under the ADA.

"Test anxiety, anxiety or phobia" without precise diagnosis, may not constitute a disability within the meaning of ADA for the threshold reason that such terms are not recognized physiological or psychological impairments which substantially limits a major life activity. Accordingly, documentation of any disability as described in this document is essential.

English as a second language is not considered a disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Cultural factors (such as an individual's language), environmental and economic conditions cannot form the basis of a claim of disability.