

ACCESS

A Guide for Students with Disabilities

**HARFORD
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE**



Disability Support Services
Harford Community College
401 Thomas Run Road
Bel Air, MD 21015
443-412-2402 • TTY 443-412-2199
www.harford.edu/dss

Dear Student,

Whether you are a new or returning student, Disability Support Services (DSS) welcomes you to Harford Community College. It is our goal to help you access all of the educational opportunities and services offered by the College—from credit and noncredit courses to athletics, student activities, cultural events, clubs and organizations, and much more. We encourage you to take advantage of these excellent opportunities for learning and personal growth.

During your orientation to DSS, we help you learn about services for students with disabilities including reasonable accommodations, academic advising, career services, tutoring, assistive technology, and financial aid. After your orientation, if you have questions about these services, please contact us by calling 443-412-2402 or visiting our office in the Student Center. We are always available to assist you.

Have a great college experience—get involved, learn, and grow.

Sincerely,

Disability Support Services Staff

transition

Change from one position
or state to another

Students who are successful in college make a smooth and positive **transition** from high school to college. To become a successful student, you must be aware of the differences between high school and college.

Differences Between High School and College

Subject	High School	College
Structure	Class time is structured; limits are set by parents, teachers, and other adults.	Students determine course load and times; managing personal and study time is up to the individual.
Class Time	6 hours per day for 180 days	12 hours per week for 28 weeks
Study Time	1-2 hours per day	2-3 hours of study per 1 hour of class
Responsibilities	Teachers remind students of assignments, behavior expectations, grading principles, and school policies.	Students are responsible for assignment due dates, maintaining professional behaviors on campus, and being aware of grading procedures and course requirements.
Educational Services	The school system is governed by law to provide educational services and determine if additional supports are necessary. Parents are advocates for students under age 18.	The institution must provide reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities; however, the student must initiate contact with the disability support services office and be a self-advocate to facilitate academic success.

the law

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 provide protection from discrimination on the basis of disability

Laws Protecting Students with Disabilities

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

The ADA, Section 504, and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) protect you and every student with a disability who participates in higher learning.

ADA defines a person with a disability as anyone with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. An individual is considered to be a person with a disability if he or she has proper documentation of an identified disability from a qualified professional.

Section 504 states, *“No otherwise qualified person with a disability . . . shall, solely on the basis of disability, be denied the benefits of, be excluded from participation in, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”*

FERPA is a federal law that provides all students with certain rights concerning their student educational records and protects the privacy of such records.

protection

To cover or shield

ADA, Section 504 & FERPA: How the Law Protects YOU

ADA & Section 504	FERPA
Colleges may not exclude any person from an activity on the basis of a disability.	Students have a right to know about the purpose, content, and location of their educational records.
Colleges may not discriminate through contract (ex. tutoring agreements, athletic scholarships).	Students have the right to gain access to and challenge the content of their educational records.
Students with disabilities should be included in mainstream settings.	Students have a right to expect that information in their educational records will be kept confidential and disclosed only with their permission or under provisions of the law.
Reasonable accommodations in policies, practices, and procedures must be made as necessary.	Disability-related information should be collected and maintained on separate forms and kept in secure files with limited access.
Courses, facilities, equipment, exams, and other educational opportunities must be accessible.	Disability-related information should be treated as medical information and handled under strict rules of confidentiality.

accommodations

Modifications that allow students with disabilities equal access to educational opportunities and services

Accommodations are modifications to the academic requirements that are necessary to ensure equal access to individuals with a disability. Students are granted reasonable accommodations based on the documentation they provided of their disability. Accommodations are tailored to meet individual needs.

Examples of reasonable **accommodations** include but are not limited to:

- Notetaker
- Books in alternate format
- Permission to record lectures
- Extended time for in-class assignments, quizzes, and exams
- Interpreters
- Preferential seating
- Assistive technology

procedure

An established way of doing things

All students with disabilities have the *responsibility* to follow the **procedures** listed below for obtaining reasonable accommodations.

1. Call 443-412-2402 or visit Disability Support Services (DSS) in the Student Center to make an appointment with a DSS Student Development Specialist *prior to the beginning* of the semester.
2. Meet with DSS staff to:
 - Register and complete DSS Orientation
 - Provide required documentation of your disability
 - Discuss possible accommodations and receive Accommodation Memos
3. Schedule appointments with your instructors to discuss the Accommodation Memos.
4. Contact DSS at any time if you have questions or concerns about your accommodations.

**A complaint, accusation,
injustice or infringement**

grievance

Harford Community College has established informal and formal **grievance** procedures to resolve complaints regarding alleged discrimination based on a disability. If you feel as though your rights have been violated, you may seek resolution of the complaint by filing a/an:

- Informal grievance – File a complaint in writing with the Coordinator for Disability Support Services. An investigation will be completed within 30 work days.
- Formal grievance – A formal grievance may be filed in writing at any time with the Director for Human Resources and Employee Development (443-412- 2129). An investigation into the complaint will be completed within 90 work days.



self-advocacy

To speak or explain on one's behalf

When you enroll in college and need extra support, it is very important that you become a **self-advocate**.

Examples of Self-Advocacy

Being a self-advocate	Not being a self-advocate
Registering with DSS and providing proper documentation	Assuming accommodations will be automatically provided
Increasing your understanding of your disability and how it impacts your academic performance	Not asking questions or seeking assistance
Making yourself aware of study and test-taking strategies that promote learning	Not studying, getting frustrated with college, and making poor academic choices
Contacting DSS staff to receive accommodations and college survival skills	Not showing up for scheduled appointments
Scheduling appointments with instructors early in the semester to discuss needed accommodations	Not obtaining Accommodation Memos from DSS or not scheduling an appointment with your instructor to discuss accommodations



**A process by which
information is exchanged
between individuals**

A major part of being a self-advocate is being able to effectively **communicate** with your instructors about your disability.



Guidelines for Communicating with Your Instructors

- Make an appointment with your instructor.
- Be on time for the appointment.
- Be calm and courteous.
- Introduce yourself.
- Tell the instructor the class and section in which you are enrolled.
- Show an interest in the class.
- Be prepared.
- Explain how your disability affects your learning. You may want to practice explaining your disability with your parents, a friend, your DSS Specialist, or someone else who understands your disability and can give you constructive feedback. Or, you may want to write down what you want to say to your instructor.
- Provide your instructor with the Accommodation Memo you obtained from DSS and discuss the accommodations that you need.
- Be ready to problem solve with your instructor.

evacuation

To immediately leave a building for safety reasons.

Emergencies can happen anywhere. It is important to:

- Be prepared.
- Develop a plan for how to evacuate.
- Practice your plan.

If you need assistance during an emergency situation, locate a safe refuge area and alert College and/or public emergency response personnel as to your location. The numbers for College Security (443-412-2272) and 911 should be programmed into your cell phone so that you can notify them of your location during an emergency.

Students may go out any exit of the one-story buildings on campus. Below you will find the safe refuge areas for two-story buildings on campus.

Bel Air Hall	2nd floor landing–rear stairwell
Edgewood Hall	2nd floor stair landings–inside stairwell, both sides
Fallston Hall	2nd floor stairwell landing–Edgewood Hall side
HECC Center	Center stairwell
Library	2nd and 3rd floor stairwell landing
Student Center	2nd floor landing–rear stairwell

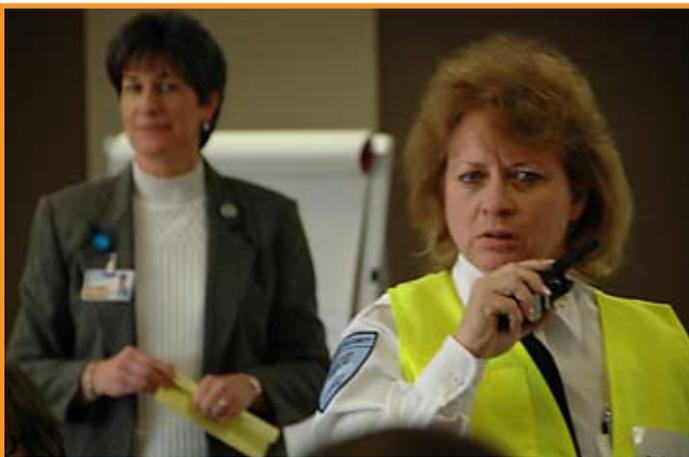


If You Become Trapped:

- If a window is available, place an article of clothing outside the window as a marker for rescue crews. Stay near the floor and shout at regular intervals.
- If there is no window, stay near the floor and shout at regular intervals.

Tips for Evacuation:

- Individuals with **cognitive or certain mental health disabilities** may wish to keep a clearly and simply written emergency plan with them.
- Individuals with **hearing or communication disorders** may want to keep pen and paper with them at all times.
- Individuals with **mobility impairments** may want to explore exits in buildings they frequent and familiarize themselves with lifting and carrying techniques that are most effective for them.
- Individuals with **visual impairments** may want to familiarize themselves with emergency exits in buildings they frequent.
- Individuals with **medical concerns and conditions** should carry cards or tags with emergency information and instructions about their needs.



rights

Privileges to which one
is justly entitled

Students with disabilities at HCC have the right to:

- equal access to courses, programs, services, jobs, activities, and facilities offered through the College.
- an equal opportunity to work and to learn, and to receive reasonable accommodations.
- confidentiality of all information regarding their disability, except as required or permitted by law.
- information reasonably available in accessible formats.

Harford Community College has the right to:

- identify the academic standards of courses and evaluate students on this basis.
- request, through Disability Support Services, current documentation that supports requests for accommodations.
- deny a request if sufficient support for such accommodation is not provided in the documentation.
- select among equally effective accommodations.
- refuse an unreasonable accommodation that imposes a fundamental alteration of a program or activity of the College or would result in an undue financial hardship.



responsibilities

Tasks for which you must be accountable

Students with disabilities at HCC have the responsibility to:

- identify oneself as an individual with a disability when an accommodation is needed and to seek information, counsel, and assistance as necessary.
- meet qualifications and maintain essential institutional standards for courses, programs, services, jobs, activities, and facilities.
- provide sufficient documentation of their disability and how it affects their participation in courses, programs, services, jobs, activities, and facilities.
- follow published procedures for obtaining reasonable accommodations.

Harford Community College has the responsibility to:

- provide information in accessible formats to students with disabilities upon request.
- ensure that courses, programs, services, jobs, activities, and facilities, when viewed in their entirety, are available and usable in the most integrated and appropriate settings.
- evaluate students on their abilities and not their disabilities.
- provide or arrange for reasonable accommodations.
- maintain appropriate confidentiality of records and communication.



DSS Matching

Match the words listed below to their appropriate definitions and review your knowledge of Disability Support Services at HCC!

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| _____ ACCOMMODATION | a. A process by which information is exchanged between individuals |
| _____ ADVOCACY | b. An established way of doing things |
| _____ COMMUNICATION | c. ADA, Section 504, FERPA |
| _____ DISABILITY | d. Change from one position or state to another |
| _____ GRIEVANCE | e. To encourage, uphold |
| _____ LAW | f. To speak, plead, or explain |
| _____ PROCEDURE | g. Modifications that allow students with disabilities equal access to educational opportunities and services |
| _____ PROTECTION | h. A complaint, accusation, injustice, or infringement |
| _____ SUPPORT | i. A physical, learning, or psychiatric impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities |
| _____ TRANSITION | j. To cover or shield |

Our DSS staff is here to serve you!

**For more information or to schedule
an appointment, please contact
Disability Support Services
at 443-412-2402
TTY 443-412-2199**

**Additional information is also available
on the web at www.harford.edu/dss**

**To get involved or learn more
about student life at HCC, contact
the College Life Office at 443-412-2140
or visit their website at
www.harford.edu/collegelife**