



# TOTA

TEXAS OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION, INC.

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## Requesting FW Accommodations

- Student files paperwork with the university accessibility office
  - Student discloses accommodation needs to the university AFWC
  - Student works with the university and the AFWC to develop a request letter for accommodations
  - Request is sent to and discussed with the FW site
  - Student interview or site meeting is encouraged
  - Retain copies of correspondences conveying accommodation agreements
- (Deluliis & Hanson, 2023, pp. 262-264)

## Frequently Requested Accommodations

- Extended time for assignments, chart review, documentation, and language processing
- A quiet space for documentation
- Breaks throughout the day
- Schedule alterations
- Spell check features for disabilities such as Dyslexia
- Access to organizational aids
- Lifting precautions including patient transfers

## Inclusion

- Supports students with disabilities and follows the basic tenets of the OT profession
  - Provides flexible practice options and prevents discrimination
  - Fosters student autonomy and independence
  - Broadens the diversity of future practitioners within the profession
- (Deluliis & Hanson, 2023, pp. 268-269)

Accommodations should always be followed when evaluating student performance.

## Guidance for Navigating Student Accommodations on Fieldwork (FW)

### Federal Regulations

As required by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, both public and private universities must provide accommodations to students with documented proof of a disability. Academic institutions must also ensure that fieldwork sites are accessible to and appropriate for students with disabilities.

(Deluliis & Hanson, 2023, p. 257)

### Disclosure

Due to privacy rights including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), students are individually responsible for requesting accommodations in higher education. A student can receive accommodations during academic coursework but choose non-disclosure of their disability with fieldwork sites. The Academic Fieldwork Coordinator (AFWC) can only disclose a student's disability to a fieldwork site upon written consent from the student.

(Deluliis & Hanson, 2023, p. 259)

### Alternative Accommodations

Under federal laws, fieldwork sites are required to provide aids and accommodations to students with a disability. However, the accommodations must be reasonable in that they must not cause significant hardships or significantly interfere with the fieldwork site, including financial strain or overwhelming difficulty for the fieldwork educator.

(Deluliis & Hanson, 2023, p. 258)

### Facility Access

When a student's accommodative needs are a mismatch for a fieldwork site, alternative site accommodations should then be pursued. Modifying institutional protocols, such as utilizing different technologies or providing extended time with documentation, may allow for reasonable student provisions. A shift in either the fieldwork educator, fieldwork setting or environment, or delay in fieldwork placement may also be the best course of action when considering fieldwork settings that can fulfill student accessibility.

(Deluliis & Hanson, 2023, pp. 266-268)

## Appropriate Interview Questions for Fieldwork Educators

- *It is not permitted to ask specific questions about a student's disability.*
- Make inquiries about academic coursework, work, and leadership experiences.
- Ask the student to reflect on classroom knowledge in regard to clinical practice.
- Provide a description for entry-level skills at that site.
- Ask questions that focus on the student's readiness to fulfill expected fieldwork and site duties ("...what does this look like for you?")
- Discuss daily schedules and inquire about fulfilling the site's attendance policy and punctuality standards.

(Adapted from Deluliis & Hanson, 2023, pp. 255-256)