

The Benefits of Disclosing a Disability as a College Student



Introduction

In this presentation, we'll explore how the state of Florida defines a student with a disability, and the benefits of disclosing a disability while pursuing higher education in the state of Florida.

Disclosing a disability can open doors to many resources and support services that are designed to help individuals thrive academically.

We'll discuss the presence of disability services on Florida college campuses, and Florida's support for prospective disabled college students.



Defining “Student With a Disability”

The term “student with a disability” means a student who is documented as having an intellectual disability; a hearing impairment, including deafness; a speech or language impairment; a visual impairment, including blindness; an emotional or behavioral disability; an orthopedic or other health impairment; an autism spectrum disorder; a traumatic brain injury; or a specific learning disability, including, but not limited to, dyslexia, dyscalculia, or developmental aphasia. Florida Legislature



Nondiscrimination & Equal Opportunity

All Florida College System institutions are equal opportunity institutions and provide equal opportunity for employment and educational opportunities to all applicants for employment, employees, applicants for admission, students and others without regard to race, color, national origin, age, religion, disability, marital status, gender, and any other factor protected under applicable federal, state, and local civil rights laws, rules and regulations.

Florida Department of Education



Florida's Commitment

Students with disabilities are welcome at all Florida colleges.

“The Florida College System is committed to fulfilling equal educational opportunity, autonomy, and full inclusion for students with disabilities”.

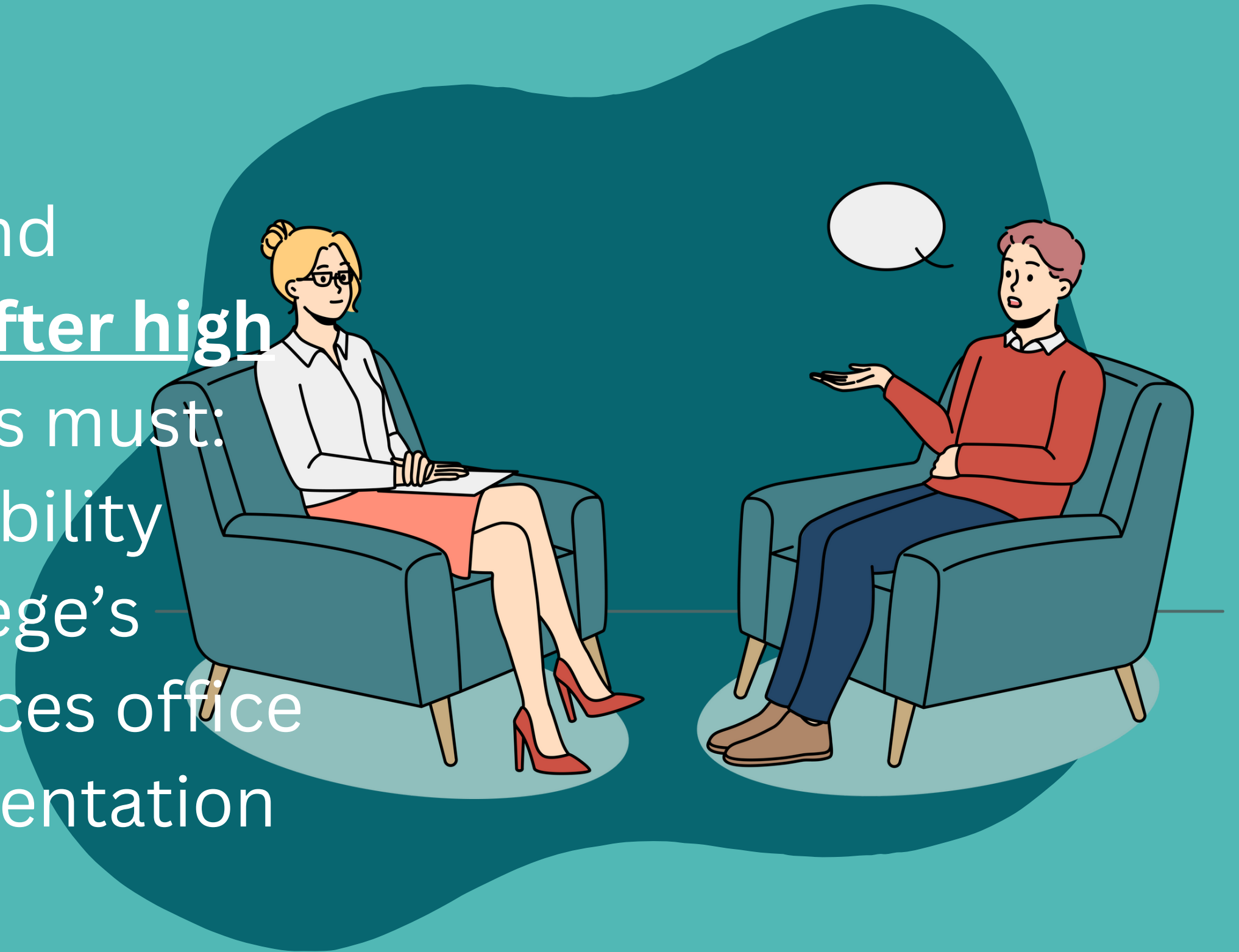
Florida Department of Education



Self-Disclosure is Your Responsibility

High school Individualized Education Program (IEP) and Section 504 Plans expire after high school. Therefore, students must:

- **self-disclose** their disability
- register with their college's student disability services office
- present current documentation of their disability



Providing the Right Documentation

Documentation requirements may vary across colleges and may also be different than the documents required by middle and high schools.

Colleges recommend that students register as early as possible before the beginning of a semester to ensure accommodations are in place.

Please contact the college's student disability services office for specific documentation requirements.



Special Accommodations

College students with documented disabilities can receive auxiliary aids and services, which may include:

- extended time on exams
- texts in an alternative format
- note-takers
- sign language interpreters

Students are encouraged to contact the college to learn what specific accommodations are available.



Let's take a look
at a video



Let's Explore some Florida Colleges and Their Disability Support & Accommodations.



Local College & University Accessibility and Disability Service Centers

[FAMU Center for Disability Access & Resources](#)

[FSU - Office of Accessibility Services](#)

[KEISER UNIVERSITY - Accessibility & Disability Service Guide](#)

[TCC -Student Accessibility Services](#)

[Lively Technical College](#)



Resource Page - Disability Complaints

Disability/Accessibility Complaints

Disability Rights Section, Civil Rights Division

U.S. Department of Justice

950 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. 20530

Phone: 1-800-514-0301

Fax: 202-307-1198

TTY: 1-800-514-0383

Website: <http://www.justice.gov/crt/>



Resource Page - Financial Aid Complaints

For complaints related to financial aid, please contact:

Office of Student Financial Assistance

Florida Department of Education

325 West Gaines Street, Suite 1314

Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400

Phone: 1-800-366-3475

Website: <http://www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/>

E-mail: OSFA@fldoe.org

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Resource Page - Discrimination Complaints

Discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, disability, religion, or marital status against a student or an employee in the state system of public K-20 education is prohibited.

College Equity Officers are available at each college and are tasked with ensuring nondiscriminatory campuses and a bias-free learning environment.

If you believe that your complaint has not been addressed satisfactorily at your local institution after working with the College Equity Officer and exhausting the college's complaint or grievance procedures, and believe your complaint warrants additional investigation, you may contact:

Office for Civil Rights, U. S. Department of Education (Atlanta Office)

61 Forsyth St. S.W., Suite 19T70, Atlanta, GA 30303-3104

Phone: 1-800-421-3481; Fax: 404-562-6455; TDD: 877-521-2172

E-mail: OCR.Atlanta@ed.gov



Resource Page

[An Explanation of Accommodations](#)

[The Florida Legislature](#)

[Where to go to file a complaint with the FL Dept of Education](#)

[Florida Department of Education](#)



Conclusion

In conclusion, your journey to success as a college student with a disability in Florida begins with disclosure. By disclosing your disability, you're taking the first step towards accessing the support and accommodations that will empower you on your educational path. Your job is to reach out to your campus's Disability Resource Center, and embrace the opportunity to become a confident self-advocate.

