



Shepherd Center

2020 Peachtree Road, NW
Atlanta, GA 30309-1465
404-352-2020 shepherd.org

Getting Ready: Talk with the Office of Disability Services at a College or University

What I Should Bring:

1. Documentation of my injury, including a medical professional's signature, date of onset, diagnosis and prognosis
2. A copy of my Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan from high school if I want to make it available to the college
3. A completed application for disability services (available on most colleges' websites)

Questions I Should Ask (if applicable to me):

Academics

1. How do I sign up to have a note-taker if I need help? How will the note-taker be selected? How will I get notes from the note-taker?
2. How will I take tests if I need help writing?
3. How can I get textbooks in an electronic format?
4. How can I get class handouts in an electronic format (especially if loose-leaf papers are hard for me to manage)?
5. Will assistive technology devices (whatever I need) be available in all my classes?
6. When I have new professors each semester, will you explain my accommodations to them, or do I need to initiate that conversation each semester?
7. Am I eligible for priority registration? How does that process work?
8. If I am still participating in therapy, how can I manage my schedule?
9. What are my options for participating in a class online if, for medical reasons, I am unable to physically attend class one day?
10. If I require assistance with setup (pulling a tablet out of my backpack, managing supplies, opening a dictation program), who could help me during class?
11. Am I eligible for extended time? How do I plan for completing assignments with extended time?
12. Can I record lectures and listen to them later? Is there a device available on campus that I can use for that?
13. What assistive technology is available in the library? Do your computers have Dragon, Quad-Joy and MathSpeak? Can I check out a Livescribe pen, etc.?

14. If I need a scribe for certain parts of a class, how do I coordinate receiving help?
15. Will I have access to all parts of the classroom?
16. If I am in a science or engineering course with a lab component, how will I do the labs? Can any of the lab tables be lowered?

Campus Accessibility

1. Are all parts of campus accessible to me?
2. Can you or a member of facilities management do a walk-through with me before classes start to ensure that I can safely follow my class schedule?
3. Where are the accessible restrooms on campus?
4. How can I access sporting events and other extracurricular activities? Where can I sit for special events? How do I buy those tickets? Can my friends sit with me?
5. Does the recreation center have accessible gym equipment? Does the pool have a lift?
6. How accessible is your on-campus dining area? If I need help reaching food or bringing it to a table, how could I get help with that?
7. If I find that a push-button isn't working on a door or anything else like that isn't working, whom should I contact?
8. What parts of campus are "historical" and not up to ADA? How can I get around them?

Housing

1. How will I access my housing? Can I open the door?
2. Do any ramps need to be added so I can access my dorm?
3. Do I have a private bathroom? Can I access the shower?
4. Do I need to change anything about the bed or bring my own bed or mattress?
5. Can I reach everything I need to access?
6. Am I in climate-controlled housing (if I have temperature regulation issues)?
7. Can I access the laundry room?
8. Do all your dorms have elevators?
9. Can we modify my dorm room? Who could help me adjust things to make my room accessible?

Personal Care Needs

1. If I need help with bowel or bladder management, what are my options? If I have a medical problem on campus, where could I go?
2. If I have a personal care attendant, when will they come, how will they access my dorm, how will they access the rest of campus, where will they stay, should we get them a student ID, etc.?
3. If my classes are far from where I live, can I keep bowel and bladder supplies stocked at the student health office?

Healthcare Needs

1. What health services does the student health office offer?
2. Does anyone in the student health office have experience working with a person with a spinal cord injury?

3. Should I meet with anyone in student health to discuss dysreflexia or other medical complications I might encounter?

Emergency Preparedness

1. In the event of a fire or emergency, how can I reach safety? Who could I contact for help?
2. Who should I contact if I get stuck somewhere?
3. What should I do in the event of severe weather?

Transportation

1. Could you tell me about transportation on campus? How do students usually get around?
2. Are campus buses accessible? Do all the buses have a lift?
3. What are the local accessible public transportation options?
4. How do I let them know I'm moving to this area or apply to join their program?
5. Is handicapped parking widely available? What parking passes, if any, do I need? Is parking covered? Are spaces wide enough for me to get into/out of my vehicle?

Extracurricular Activities

1. Does this campus have any adapted sports teams? How do people join?
2. What clubs or other activities are available to me?
3. What about sororities and fraternities?

Vocational Rehabilitation

1. Would you tell me about your relationship with the state's vocational rehabilitation office?
2. How could vocational rehab help me with my return to college?

This information was compiled by the staff at Shepherd Center, an Atlanta-based, private, not-for-profit hospital specializing in medical treatment, research and rehabilitation for people with spinal cord injury and brain injury. Visit shepherd.org for more information.