

ARKANSAS BOARD OF CERTIFIED COURT REPORTER EXAMINERS
GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR REQUESTING TEST ACCOMMODATIONS

The Arkansas Board of Certified Court Reporter Examiners (Board) encourages persons with disabilities to apply for test accommodations. Reasonable test accommodations will be made on the Examination in Arkansas for qualified applicants with disabilities. The Certification Exam that is administered in Arkansas is a 2-day, timed examination designed to test the knowledge and skills necessary for one who seeks certification as a court reporter licensed to practice in Arkansas.

It is the policy of Board to administer the examination in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended (ADAAA). A qualified applicant with a disability who is otherwise eligible to take the certification examination, but who cannot demonstrate under standard testing conditions that he/she possesses the knowledge and skills to be a court reporter licensed to practice in Arkansas, may request reasonable test accommodations.

The Board will make reasonable modifications to any policies, practices, and procedures that might otherwise prevent individuals with disabilities from taking the certification examination in an accessible place or manner, provided such modifications do not result in a fundamental alteration to the examination or other admission requirements, impose an undue burden, or jeopardize examination security. In order to accommodate disabled persons, the Board will furnish additional testing time, auxiliary aids, and other accommodations when necessary to ameliorate the impact of the applicant's disability on the applicant's ability to take the certification examination. No additional charges will be assessed to individuals with disabilities to cover the costs of reasonable accommodations.

Requests for test accommodations will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The applicant must submit documentation from one or more qualified professionals that provides information on the diagnosed impairment(s), the applicant's current level of impairment, and the rationale for the accommodations requested on the certification examination. In addition, the applicant must submit verifying documentation of his or her history of accommodations, if any. All documentation will be retained by the Board and may be submitted to one or more qualified professionals for an impartial review.

Accommodations granted elsewhere do not necessarily entitle an applicant to accommodations on the certification examination in Arkansas, although the Board gives considerable weight to documentation relating to past accommodations received in similar testing situations or in response to an IEP or Section 504 plan.

DEFINITIONS

1. *Disability* is a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of the applicant, a record of such impairment, or being regarded as having such impairment. In the certification examination setting, the impairment must limit an applicant's ability to demonstrate, under standard testing conditions, that the applicant possesses the knowledge, skills, and abilities tested on the examination.
2. *Physical impairment* is a physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the body's systems.
3. *Mental impairment* is any mental or psychological disorder such as intellectual disability, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, or any specific learning disability.
4. *Substantially limits* means an impairment is a disability if it substantially limits the ability of an individual to perform a major life activity as compared to most people in the general population, subject to individualized assessment.
5. *Major life activities* include, but are not limited to, caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, eating, sleeping, standing, sitting, reaching, lifting, bending, learning, reading, writing, concentrating, thinking, communicating, interacting with others, and working.
6. *Reasonable accommodation* is an adjustment or modification of the standard testing conditions, or an appropriate auxiliary aid or service, that ameliorates the impact of the applicant's disability without doing any of the following:
 - a. Fundamentally altering the nature of the certification examination, including but not limited to compromising the validity or reliability of the examination;
 - b. Imposing an undue burden on the Board; or
 - c. Jeopardizing examination security.
7. *Qualified professionals* are licensed or otherwise properly credentialed and possess expertise in the disability for which modifications or accommodations are sought. Types of professionals who might possess the appropriate credentials and expertise are doctors (including psychiatrists), psychologists, nurses, physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, vocational rehabilitation specialists, school counselors, and licensed mental health professionals.