



**Dean of Students
Office of Quality of Life**

**Manual of Service Procedures for Students with Disabilities/Functional
Diversity**

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Introduction

Universidad Ana G. Méndez affirms its commitment to offer equal opportunities to any individual who is part of or who is interested in being part of its student community. It also recognizes the importance of developing the maximum potential for success of its students, promoting inclusion and diversity.

The Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (OSEI), of the Universidad Ana G. Méndez Cupey Campus, Carolina Campus, Gurabo Campus and university centers in Puerto Rico, provides services for students with disabilities through the rehabilitation counselor, professional counselor or staff designated by the institution.

The Universidad Ana G. Méndez does not exclude from participation, nor does it deny benefits, nor does it discriminate against any person because of age, race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, impediment, social status, political affiliation, political or religious ideas or for being a victim or being perceived as a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking or for being a military, ex-military, serving or having served in the Armed Forces of the United States or for holding veteran status, or any other category protected by law.

Purpose

The purpose of this manual is to establish a uniform process in the provision of services and to comply with state and federal provisions that protect people with disabilities in the postsecondary scenario. It also includes the procedure for requesting reasonable accommodation.

Legal base

Some of the provisions that protect the rights of persons with disabilities are:

- *The American with Disabilities Act*, as amended, is intended to eliminate discrimination against the person with physical, mental or sensory limitations, while ensuring equal opportunity for employment, education, access to services and encouraging full participation, independent living, economic self-sufficiency, public and private enterprise activities, public establishments, transportation and telecommunications. This law provides for reasonable accommodation to all U.S. states and their territories.
- The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, section 504 seeks to ensure that a qualified person who has an impairment enjoys an equal opportunity to participate in programs that benefit from federal financial assistance.
- Law No. 44 of July 2, 1985, Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination against Disabled Persons, as amended, prohibits discrimination against the disabled person by any private public institution, whether or not it receives funds from the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. This law establishes reasonable accommodation in Puerto Rico.
- Law 238 of August 31, 2004, known as the Bill of Rights for Persons with Disabilities, offers the person with disabilities the same rights and opportunities enjoyed by other citizens, including education. This law establishes that any public and private entity may not discriminate against any individual on the basis of his or her disability, or intervene against his or her participation in any program or activity.
- Act No. 171 of August 11, 2016, Extended Admission, Reasonable Accommodation, and Retention Act for Students with Disabilities or Functional Diversity in Transition from High School to Postsecondary Grade (formerly known as Law 250, Postsecondary Passport Act of

Accommodation Reasonable), aims to establish a mechanism that facilitate the student with an impairment to access the higher education institution in an equitable way to its peers without disabilities and responsive for their needs.

Concepts Definition:

- Person with impairment: A person with a physical mental or sensory impairment that substantially limits them in one or more activities of daily living, who has a medical history or record of an impairment, or who is considered to have an impairment.
- Reasonable Accommodation: Adaptation, change, alteration, appropriate or appropriate measure or adjustment that must be carried out to allow or empower the student with disabilities or functional diversity, participate in all aspects, curricular and extracurricular educational activities, educational, recreational, sports and cultural scenarios as part of the formal learning process that allows him to participate and perform in said environment in an inclusive manner, accessible, and comparable (Law 250, as amended).
- Certification of condition: document certifying the student's condition by which he requests reasonable accommodation.
- Reasonable Accommodation Request: Document where the student with an impairment requests in writing the services of reasonable accommodation.
- Reasonable Accommodation Renewal Request: Document that completes each academic term for the student to renew their reasonable accommodation request.

- Initial Interview: Formal interview between the student and the rehabilitation counselor or professional counselor for the purpose of completing the documents required to evaluate their request for reasonable accommodation.
- Letter of Reasonable Accommodation: A document issued by the office that provides services for students with disabilities, setting forth reasonable accommodations.
- Referral: Written recommendation addressed to the office providing services for students with disabilities for the purpose of guiding the student on reasonable accommodation services.
- Rehabilitation Counselor: Is the duly licensed professional who uses the principles and techniques of rehabilitation counseling to provide people with and without functional limitations with services compatible with their rehabilitation needs (College of Rehabilitation Counseling Professionals).
- Professional Counselor: Refers to a person who holds a license granted in accordance with the provisions of Law 147 of 2002. Professional counselors are prepared to help individuals and groups achieve mental, emotional, physical, social, educational, and occupational moral development and stability throughout the life cycle.
- Extended Admission: Alternate admission process for students with disabilities or functional diversity in which they are allowed to demonstrate their potential through alternative methods of assessment or differentiated assessment.
- Extended Admission Evaluation Committee: Responsible for implementing the extended admission process. The evaluation committee shall be composed of the

dean of students or their representative, the rehabilitation counselor, an admissions officer, and a representative of the Academic Division to which the student is interested in entering. Analyzes and recommends the admission process of the student with a disability and presents the results to the Admissions Office.

- Technological assistance equipment: any equipment, object, computer program or product acquired for the purpose of increasing, maintaining or improving the functional capacity of the person with impairment.

Procedure for Completing the Request for Reasonable Accommodation

The Universidad Ana G. Méndez establishes the procedure for requesting reasonable accommodation services while maintaining due confidentiality. The reasonable accommodation can be processed at any time during the academic term, but it is recommended that it be made at the beginning of it.

- Visit the office that provides services for students with disabilities or functional diversity to receive guidance on the services, procedures, and documents needed to request reasonable accommodation.
- Complete the Reasonable Accommodation Request and provide the required documents. Interview with the rehabilitation counselor or professional counselor.
- Once all the required documentation has been provided and the request for reasonable accommodation has been completed, it will be evaluated.
- The student will be notified about the result of the evaluation and the accommodations that will be provided will be agreed.
- The rehabilitation counselor, professional counselor will draft the letter of reasonable accommodation.
- The student is responsible for delivering the Letter of Reasonable Accommodation to his/her teachers. The accommodation will be effective once the teacher receives the letter of reasonable accommodation.

- The student should discuss with his or her professors the letter of reasonable accommodation and agree with them on the best way to implement the reasonable accommodation.
- The student will be responsible for returning the letter of reasonable accommodation signed by his/her teachers.
- The effectiveness of reasonable accommodation shall not be retroactive.
- The student must renew in each academic term, his request for reasonable accommodation.
- Any doubt, question or situation with reasonable accommodation, the student should visit the office that provides services for students with disabilities or functional diversity.

Extended Admission, Reasonable Accommodation, and Retention act for Students with Disabilities or Functional Diversity in Transition from High School to Postsecondary Grades (Law 250 of September 15, 2012, as amended)

Any applicant who is interested in being admitted to the Universidad Ana G. Méndez must meet the admission requirements of the program to which they wish to enter and apply for admission under the regular process established in each of the institutions of the Universidad Ana G. Méndez.

Extended admission process

- If the student does not meet the requirements to be admitted to the program they applied for, they will receive a notification from the Admissions Office informing them of the availability of the extended admission process.
1. The student will complete the extended admission application provided by the Admissions Office within the deadline set by the institution.
 2. The Admissions Office reports to the Dean of Students to convene the Admissions Committee.

3. The Admissions Committee informs the Admissions Office of the determination on the student's extended application for admission and the relevant recommendations in each case.

4. The Admissions Office notifies the student of the Admissions Committee's determination.

6. If the student is admitted, they will receive guidance on vocational rehabilitation administration services, their rights and responsibilities, reasonable accommodation or modification, and the Individualized Transition and Retention Plan.

Process for filing Complaints

For the filing of complaints, the student must go to the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities or may visit the Dean of Students or the Director of the university center to be guided in relation to the procedure to file it. This will be attended according to the Procedure for the Investigation of Complaints, established in the Institution.

Validity

This Manual of Procedures for Services for Students with Disabilities takes effect on January 1, 2016 and supersedes any other procedure or regulation that is in conflict with the provisions herein. It may be amended according to the need and with the prior consent of the personnel responsible for the processes in the institutions of the Universidad Ana G. Méndez.

If you need more information you can contact:

US Department of Justice 950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Civil Rights Division
Disability Rights Section – 1425 NYAV
Washington, D.C. 20530
ADA Information Line: 800-514-0301; 800-514-0383 (TTY)
Fax: (202) 307-1197
ADA.complaint@usdoj.gov