



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs) GED® Test Accommodations

### Questions about the process of requesting accommodations on the GED® test

#### ***What types of conditions or impairments might need to be accommodated?***

The most commonly accommodated conditions include:

- Learning disabilities
- Visual impairments
- ADHD
- Emotional disorders such as major depression
- Physical impairments

In addition, some chronic medical conditions may require a change in the standard testing conditions, such as:

- Diabetes
- Crohn's Disease
- Chronic severe back pain due to an injury or illness

Finally, some individuals may qualify for an accommodation if they have a temporary medical condition that requires an adaptation, such as:

- A broken leg
- Pregnancy

Keep in mind that not all disorders and conditions will result in an accommodation. Having been diagnosed with an impairment or disability does not automatically mean that you will qualify for an accommodation. Each case is carefully reviewed by individuals who have expertise in the area in which you indicate you have impairment.

#### ***Are there some kinds of accommodations that don't require formal approval in advance?***

Yes. The *Personal Items and Minor Modifications* includes a list of personal items and minor modifications that do not need formal pre-approval; this form also lists some personal items that do need preapproval.

***I have a medical condition that necessitates that I bring something into the testing room with me. Do I need to formally request accommodations?***

Yes. If you have a medical condition and you believe you need to bring an item into the testing room with you, this must be approved by the GED® Administrator or GED Testing Service, in advance of your testing date. Examples of personal medical items include:

- Medication
- An insulin pump
- A cast
- A prosthetic device
- A wheelchair
- An inhaler
- Food or beverage

If you have a chronic medical condition and you are **only** requesting permission to bring a personal medical item into the testing room, and you are **not** requesting other accommodations (such as extra testing time), you should then complete the *Personal Items and Minor Modifications*. Your documentation should consist of a detailed letter from your physician, on letterhead, that explains your condition and the rationale for your requested accommodation. You are advised to submit your documentation well in advance, so that if we need additional clarification, there will be ample time.

***When do I need to submit my request for accommodations?***

Apply as far in advance of your preferred test date as possible. It is in your best interest to request accommodations well in advance of your preferred test date, so that if your application for accommodations is incomplete or insufficient, you will have time to provide us with more documentation.

***How long will it take for my request to be reviewed?***

Most accommodations requests can be processed within 30 days. However, if your situation is unusually complex, or if your documentation is not complete, it may take longer.

***If I am approved for accommodations, how long do I have to take the GED® TEST with those accommodations?***

Accommodations approvals are automatically valid for 1 year from the date of approval. At any time after that, if you decide to take the GED® test with the same accommodations for which you were previously approved, and your documentation materials are still current, you have the option of requesting an extension of your accommodations approval. You can get a *Request for Extension Form* from the Chief Examiner at your GED® testing center. Keep in mind that the "Currency" requirements and all other requirements of your documentation (detailed in the Documentation Guidelines) still need to be met.

### ***How can I appeal my accommodations decision?***

If your request for accommodations was denied, and you wish to appeal our decision, complete the Appeal Form. Give your completed form, along with any additional documentation you want us to consider, to the Chief Examiner at your GED® testing center.

### ***Who is qualified to be an evaluator and provide me with documentation of my disability?***

Please see the “Qualifications of the Evaluator” section of the [Documentation Guidelines](#).

### ***Are there certain accommodations that are always approved for some disabilities?***

No. Not all test-takers with disabilities are the same, even if they have the same diagnosis. We look at each case individually to determine what accommodations are appropriate, given your unique circumstances.

## **General questions about disabilities and accommodations**

### ***What is a disability?***

A disability is defined by federal law as a substantial limitation, in a major life activity, as compared with most people in the general population. Major life activities include activities of daily living such as breathing, working, learning, seeing, hearing, and reading.

### ***I have been diagnosed with a learning disorder, ADHD, or another condition. Does that mean I have a disability?***

Not necessarily. Not all disorders are *disabling*. In order to be considered *disabled*, you must be substantially limited in a major life activity, not just meet criteria for a particular disorder. Note that having a relative weakness—being better at some kinds of tasks than others—does not mean that you are *disabled*.

### ***I have been diagnosed with a disorder, and it is disabling. Am I entitled to whatever accommodations my doctor recommends?***

Not necessarily. Just because you have a diagnosis of a particular disorder, and your doctor recommends a variety of accommodations, does not necessarily mean that all of those accommodations are appropriate in every circumstance. Some accommodations are more appropriate in classrooms than on standardized tests like the GED® test, such as having someone explain the questions to you. Other accommodations like having extra time on tests might be appropriate for a quiz in a Math class, but it might not be realistic for you to take the GED® test with

double time (that's over 15 hours of testing time!) It is important to carefully consider your test-taking challenges and make sure the accommodations are appropriate and in your best interest.

***Although my impairment is not “disabling”, I’m sure I would do better on the GED® test if I had accommodations. Why shouldn’t I be allowed to show my true potential?***

Accommodations are intended to provide access to the GED® test, not to ensure success or to ensure that you perform at your best. Many GED® test-takers would probably do better with accommodations, but accommodations must not provide any test-takers with an unfair advantage. Instead, accommodations must provide equal access.

***I don’t have a disability, but I usually run out of time when I take GED® practice tests. Why shouldn’t I be allowed extra time?***

Many GED® test-takers do not finish the exam. Remember, the GED® test is a timed, standardized exam. The test assesses not only your ability to demonstrate your skills and knowledge, but also your ability to demonstrate your skills *fluently*, in a timely way.

***If I’m disabled, does that mean I am entitled to my preferred accommodations?***

No. If you are disabled (as defined by law), you are entitled to reasonable accommodations that enable you to access the GED® exam. While we will give strong consideration to your request and the recommendations of your evaluator, you may not receive your preferred accommodations.

***I had an Individual Education Plan (IEP) in high school. Am I automatically guaranteed the same accommodations on the GED® test?***

No. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a United States federal law that governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education, and related services to children with disabilities. Under IDEA, schools in the K-12 education system are encouraged to provide students with every opportunity to perform at their best.

In contrast, adults are not covered by the IDEA. Instead, adults with disabilities are protected from discrimination by the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA). Whereas IDEA is designed to enhance *success*, the ADAAA does not have success as its goal, but rather, access. This means that post-high school educational accommodations are not designed to ensure a person’s success, or ensure a certain grade or score, or “best performance.” Rather, the ADAAA is meant to prohibit discrimination and ensure *access*.

***When I’m in a classroom, an aid or teacher often helps explain the questions for me. Can I have someone explain the GED® test items to me?***

No. There are many accommodations and modifications that may be appropriate in a classroom or instructional setting that are not appropriate on a standardized exam like the GED® test. The GED®

test is a standardized test that measures what you know, and what skills you yourself can demonstrate.

***I still have questions. Who should I ask?***

Discuss your questions with the Chief Examiner in your GED® testing center. If that person doesn't know the answers to your questions, they will forward your questions to the state GED® Administrator.