

CAPS Documentation Policy (Letters and Doctor's Notes)

The mission of UC San Diego Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) is to provide counseling and mental health services to all enrolled university students. We assist students with life challenges and mental health problems. We encourage students to come to CAPS for counseling and when they are having personal crisis.

However, many of our initial appointments are being increasingly taken up by students whose sole interest is in acquiring a written document to support an adjustment to an academic obligation, administrative appeal or exception from a university regulation. The demand for these documents has reduced the availability of appointment for students who are seeking counseling services.

Therefore, CAPS will not provide requested documentation of a personal difficulty at the initial contact or appointment. CAPS Services Documentation Forms may be provided, at the discretion of your psychologist, at follow-up counseling appointments only. An additional reason for this policy is that documentation is of limited accuracy when it is based on only a single interview.

If documentation is provided, it will describe a student's psychological symptoms, diagnosis and personal difficulties. It will not suggest a specific accommodation such as an adjustment to academic requirements or the need to comply with university regulations. Therefore, documentation will not include specific recommendations such as allowing emotional support animals in university housing or academic accommodations such as extra time on tests. Such accommodations or exceptions to university policy are determined by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) or other relevant university departments.

CAPS encourages students to register at the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) if they believe that they have a mental health condition that warrants accommodations. CAPS will provide documentation to OSD about your current or past mental health condition if counseling or psychiatric services are or were provided. If current or previous services were provided by an off-campus mental health professional, then those providers must supply information to OSD about your condition.

CAPS suggests that if you would like a one-time only adjustment to a specific academic course obligation, you should initially contact the professor/instructor and explain the circumstances that might warrant such an adjustment.

If you are seeking counseling at CAPS but also ultimately want CAPS documentation, please inform your CAPS counselor at the beginning of your initial meeting, so that relevant information can be collected that will be needed to complete the documentation.