



COVID-19 and Accommodations Under the ADA

In accordance with Saint Leo University's *Return to the Pride* framework, the university has established safety precautions including, but not limited to increased social distancing, testing requirements, and sanitation procedures. Additionally, the use of cloth face coverings or masks is required for all students, faculty, staff, and visitors on Saint Leo campuses. University guidelines will continue to evolve as the situation changes and more information becomes available. These guidelines will be updated accordingly in support of keeping all community members safe while simultaneously ensuring equitable access and benefit for students with disabilities.

PROCESS FOR REQUESTING ACCOMMODATIONS RELATED TO COVID-19

Students who are in need of accommodations must complete an application via the [AIM portal](#). Students can access the application via the link in this document, via the [Accessibility Services website](#), or via their Okta portal. Along with their application, students must provide documentation from their treating provider that outlines relevant diagnoses and functional limitations associated with the student's disability. Further information about documentation requirements can be found in the [Office of Accessibility Services Documentation Guidelines](#).

GUIDELINES FOR DETERMINING APPROPRIATE ACCOMMODATIONS

The Centers for Disease Control recommend that reasonable adaptations to mask requirements be considered in certain circumstances, such as when an individual experiences significant breathing difficulties, sensory needs, or other conditions that may be exacerbated by the wearing of a face covering. Simultaneously, the Americans with Disabilities Act mandates that individuals with disabilities receive reasonable and appropriate accommodations so long as such accommodations do not constitute a fundamental alteration to the nature of programs or pose a direct threat to the health or safety of the individual or others. To this end, Saint Leo will work individually with each person requesting accommodations to determine the ways in which reasonable adaptations can be made while maintaining both the safety of the university community as well as the technical and academic standards of its programs. The below sections outline examples of reasonable accommodations that may apply to a variety of situations. This list is by no means inclusive of all situations that may arise, rather it is intended to provide a framework and reasonable basis for engaging in the interactive process with individuals with disabilities.

CLASSROOMS, MEETINGS, AND OTHER ENCLOSED SPACES

In many cases, classes, meetings, and similar activities that traditionally require individuals to congregate in an enclosed space can be accommodated through the use of virtual attendance. Upon reasonable notice, the university will ensure that a virtual connection is available, if one is not already present, to the extent appropriate. It is important to note that there are some circumstances, such as in

a lab environment, where virtual attendance may not be feasible. Each situation will be analyzed on a case-by-case basis to determine what, if any, reasonable accommodations may be appropriate.

CURBSIDE PICKUP

Some activities, materials, and personal needs, such as obtaining meals or checking out library materials, may be accomplished through the use of scheduled curbside pickup. Individuals using this option are required to notify the entity responsible for providing the item or service sufficiently in advance of the need for pickup and arranging a time for this to occur. Doing so will allow individuals with accommodations to maintain appropriate social distance while obtaining the necessary items, thus minimizing or eliminating time spent wearing a mask. It is important to note that this does not remove an individual's responsibility to wear a mask when within six feet of another individual or when entering any building. The individual receiving accommodations should discuss procedures for scheduling the necessary services with the office responsible for implementing their accommodations (i.e., Accessibility Services or Human Resources).

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

The use of face masks can create unique challenges for individuals who are Deaf or hard of hearing, especially if the individual relies on lip reading and/or facial expressions as part of their communication modality. Furthermore, increased distancing may create additional barriers for those who lip read or who rely on proximity to a speaker. A variety of options including, but not limited to, interpreting services, assistive listening systems, transparent masks, and communication access real-time translation (CART) services may be used to help ensure appropriate access.

ACCOMMODATION EXPIRATION AND CHANGES

Due to the unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, individuals with disabilities may experience the need for unique accommodations during this time. Generally speaking, accommodations specifically related to limitations caused or exacerbated by COVID-19 will be implemented on a temporary basis and will be reviewed for extension, as necessary, based on updated guidance from the CDC, updated information from an individual's treating provider, and/or any other guidance from federal, state, local, or university officials. Individuals receiving these types of accommodations will be notified of any pertinent information about expiration of accommodations and/or other relevant changes.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS EXPOSED TO COVID-19

Students with possible exposure to the COVID-19 virus will be instructed to self-quarantine, per university campus guidelines. During this time of self-quarantine, some students with disabilities may require temporary changes to their accommodations. The Office of Student Accessibility will work with students and faculty on a case-by-case basis to identify specific modifications, taking the severity and duration of symptoms into account. Additional documentation may be required based on individual circumstances.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

Students who have questions about accommodations at Saint Leo University may contact the Office of Accessibility Services at (352) 588-8464 or adaoffice@saintleo.edu.

Accessibility Services COVID-19 FAQs

Q: Is the Office of Accessibility Services available for in-person advising and intakes?

A: In order to promote the safety and wellbeing of our community, Accessibility Services will be conducting all meetings virtually or via phone until further notice. Staff will continue to be available to provide all services including, but not limited to, intakes, advising appointments, and professional development. If virtual or phone meetings create barriers to equitable access, our office will work with the impacted student individually to determine the most effective way to meet while maintaining the precautions outlined in Saint Leo University's *Return to the Pride* framework.

Q: How do I utilize my testing accommodation during Phase 2?

A: Students will continue to receive their approved accommodations, including those related to testing, during the fall semester; however, some adjustments will be necessary to promote student safety. The following three testing modalities encompass the majority of situations; however, students who have questions or concerns about their accommodations should contact the Office of Accessibility Services at adaoffice@saintleo.edu.

University Campus Testing Center

Students who require face-to-face exams in the testing center must continue to register for exams via their AIM profile at least five days in advance of the scheduled test. All relevant University guidelines related to social distancing, face coverings, etc. will remain in effect in the testing center. As a result, seating will be limited. To the maximum extent possible, we will continue to schedule exams at the same day and time as the exam being offered in class; however, there may be times when alternative exam times will have to be utilized due to seating constraints. When this occurs, a CAVE staff member will work with you and your professor to determine a time that is mutually agreeable. Students will receive an email confirming their test date and time and any additional information related to COVID-19 procedures at the time of check-in.

Center Location Testing

Test scheduling procedures at education center locations are determined by each Center, individually. Just as on the University Campus, centers will be following safety measures to minimize the health risk for the Saint Leo community. As a result, students may need to follow modified guidelines for testing and test scheduling. Students should contact their professor and/or Center Director for information about utilizing testing accommodations during the Fall semester.

Online Testing

We expect minimal change or disruption for students who are taking online exams as many testing accommodations are easily implemented during these types of assessments. Students

who are not accustomed to online exams may want to meet with their Accessibility Services advisor to discuss any potential changes to testing accommodations.

Q: Will tutoring services be available during stage 2 of reopening?

A: During stage 2, PAL tutoring services will be available via Zoom rather than face-to-face in the CAVE. Tutoring schedules and additional information are available on the [CAVE's tutoring page](#). Students may also access free tutoring services through tutor.com. Information about these services as well as helpful resources for academic success are available on the [CAVE website](#). Students who need assistance accessing these resources should contact the Office of Accessibility Services at adaoffice@saintleo.edu.

Q: How do I maintain social distancing while using my preferential seating accommodation?

A: Students who have been approved for preferential seating are still entitled to this accommodation, even under modified instructional delivery models. Due to social distancing requirements, it is possible that a student's preferred seating option may not be available for any student. If this is the case, the student should select the most appropriate seating option available. If no available seating options provide equal access, the student should contact the Office of Accessibility Services at adaoffice@saintleo.edu.

Q: Will the Office of Accessibility provide me with accommodations if I do not have disability and am diagnosed with COVID-19?

A: Generally speaking, the Office of Accessibility does not register students for accommodations based solely on a COVID-19 diagnosis as the majority of diagnoses would not rise to the level of a disability under the ADA. In some rare situations, a severe or protracted case of COVID-19 may qualify as a disability. Furthermore, some conditions may be exacerbated or otherwise impacted by COVID-19 and may require accommodation. Any student who believes they qualify as a student with a disability, whether or not it is related to a COVID-19 diagnosis, should contact the Office of Accessibility Services at adaoffice@saintleo.edu.

Q: How do students with disabilities apply for COVID-19 related accommodations?

A: Individuals with disabilities that are impacted by a COVID-19 diagnosis and/or by the health and safety precautions that the University is implementing may apply for accommodations with Accessibility Services. The nature and duration of these accommodations will depend upon the functional limitations experienced by the student as it relates to COVID-19. Students may apply for accommodations by submitting an application on the [Accessibility Services website](#).

Q: I am in a high-risk group but have never needed accommodations in the past. Will Accessibility Services provide COVID-19 accommodations?

A: Potentially. Each person's needs are unique and may be impacted differently by COVID-19 and/or the health and safety measures we have put in place for the university. We encourage you to contact Accessibility Services to discuss your specific circumstances as well as any accommodations that may be appropriate to provide you with equitable access.

Q: I am receiving accommodations for in-person classes during Fall 2020. Will my accommodations be affected during any planned and/or unplanned changes in instructional delivery models?

A: Saint Leo University is offering multiple delivery models for students during the Fall semester and all face-to-face classes will transition online after Thanksgiving Break. Furthermore, instructors are preparing for the need to transition all classes online should the need arise. Students will continue to be eligible for the accommodations they have already been receiving; however, because of these changes, students may find that they no longer need certain accommodations or need new accommodations as a result of the change in delivery model. If a student believes they need to make adjustments to their accommodations due to changes in delivery models, they should contact the Office of Accessibility Services at adaoffice@saintleo.edu.

Q: I have a disability-related reason for not wearing a mask, how do I apply for an exemption?

A: Generally speaking, all members of the university community, including guests, must adhere to all safety guidelines outlined by the university. ADA accommodations may never pose a direct threat to the health and safety of others. If you are unable to wear a mask for disability-related reasons, Accessibility Services will work with you to find alternate means of ensuring access such as virtual class options, allowing curbside pickup of dining items, etc.