
Color Vision Deficiency and 504

What is CVD?

Color vision deficiency (aka color blindness) is a vision impairment that occurs in 1 out of 12 males and 1 out of 200 females. This means in a classroom of 25 students there are probably 2 students with CVD.

The most common type of color blindness makes it hard to tell the difference between red and green. Another type makes it hard to tell the difference between blue and yellow. People who are completely color blind don't see color at all, but that's not very common.

Are accommodations necessary?

CVD isn't a learning disability, but it is a physical impairment that impacts daily life activities. Typically students with CVD will qualify for 504 plans due to a substantial limitation on the major life activity of seeing.

Is a diagnosis required?

Schools may ask for documentation of CVD diagnosis, but Section 504 does not actually require that a diagnosis be present. To be protected under Section 504, a student must be determined to: (1) have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; or (2) have a record of such an impairment; or (3) be regarded as having such an impairment.

If a school district requires documentation of a diagnosis prior to considering 504 accommodations, the school district is required to provide a medical assessment at no cost to the parent.

See the 7/26/16 OCR Dear Colleague letter for more information on 504 eligibility and diagnosis

<https://sites.ed.gov/idea/files/OCR-letter-07-26-2016.pdf>

Is academic impact required to qualify for a 504?

Academic impact is not required for 504 eligibility - a student may be getting good grades but still qualify for 504 accommodations if a physical or mental impairment is substantially limiting a major life activity (for example an A/B student who uses a wheelchair may require accommodations to navigate the school building).