Overview for Applicants:

Tips for Veterans Requesting Accommodations

Why Have Special Guidelines for Veterans Requesting Accommodations?

Applicants who are veterans frequently utilize resources from the Veteran's Administration (VA). Applicants using the VA may encounter lengthy wait times for assessments or documentation related to accommodations requests.

Why is a Professional Verification Required?

The Association of American Medical Colleges is committed to providing appropriate accommodations to individuals with disabilities as defined by the American with Disabilities Act. At the same time, the Association must protect the validity of the MCAT and PREview exams by offering accommodations only when they are supported by appropriate evidence.

The Veteran's Administration (VA) has documentation systems and processes that differ from those of civilian health professionals and institutions. We have observed that veteran applicants may experience delays in their ability to access assessments or documentation from the VA. These delays can impact the process for obtaining accommodations on the MCAT or PREview exams. We developed this guide to help veterans who use the VA navigate this process efficiently and effectively.

I. Things to Do Before You Apply.

Review the following items ***before*** you begin the application process:

1. ***Start Early***. Most accommodations approvals are ***valid*** for a full testing year or more. Starting early will give you a "cushion" of time before your test date to gather and submit additional documentation, if necessary. Take a moment to review the recommended submission dates for your preferred test administration date (see MCAT Review Cycles and Important Dates and AAMC PREview® Review Cycles and Important Dates). We suggest that you request documentation from the VA at least 90 days before the recommended last submission date for your preferred test administration date. Please note, we do not require you to contact the VA 90 days before your recommended submission date; this is suggested to assist you in receiving a determination in time to schedule your exam with accommodations around your preferred test date. For example, if your preferred test date was **September 11, 2026**, your Initial Application suggested last submission date would have been ***May 29, 2026*** for a guarantee that your review would be completed in time for accommodations to be available on **September 11th**. In this case, we would suggest that you start the process of procuring documentation from the VA no later than ***February 28, 2026***.

2. ***Read the Evaluation Guidelines for Your Impairment Type Before Going to the VA.*** Typically, requests for accommodations require a recent comprehensive assessment of your impairment and discussion of your current functional limitations completed by a qualified professional. The required content of this documentation may vary depending on your impairment and current functional limitations. Please read the evaluation guidelines that are associated with your diagnosis before you contact your qualified professional at the VA. After you have familiarized yourself with the required components, ***take this information to your qualified professional at the VA*** and explain what information should be included in your assessment report/ documentation. If you are ***using a report from a previous assessment***, have your qualified professional ***include a brief letter*** (on letterhead, signed, and dated) that includes any necessary information that may not have been addressed in your original report.

II. Documentation You Should Submit to Support Your Request.

Once you have received the relevant information from your qualified professional at the VA, you should begin the application process using the Accommodations Online application system. Please see our website for more information regarding submitting your application via our online system. You will be required to upload documentation that supports your request for accommodations on the MCAT or PREview exam. We have compiled a list of items that are important to submit in support of your request:

1. ***A Personal Statement***. This is a letter written by you describing your experience of your impairment. This letter should describe interventions or accommodations you have used in the past and describe how your current functional limitations would impact you while taking the MCAT or PREview exam under standard administration conditions. You should also clearly state the accommodation(s) you would like us to approve and provide a rationale for why each accommodation is necessary for you to access the exam.

2. ***Professional Documentation*.** Letters and reports from qualified professionals (i.e., physicians, psychologists, therapists, educators, etc.) that provide a diagnosis, describe your impairment and functional limitations, and make recommendations for accommodation in testing situations like the MCAT or PREview exams should be submitted to support your request. Generally, any document from a qualified professional that describes how your current functional limitations will affect your ability to take an exam like the MCAT or PREview should be submitted. Please refer to the evaluation guidelines associated with your impairment for information regarding what would be considered current documentation for your impairment.

3. ***Transcripts and Academic Information***. You should submit any academic information that describes your impairment or accommodations/interventions you have received in educational settings due to your impairment. Generally, we request transcripts from high school and beyond as well as standardized test scores (e.g., SAT, ACT, or GRE scores). If your impairment ***did not occur until after you finished school or after completing your standardized tests, we would still like to see the documents.*** These educational records can help us understand how your cognitive or academic functioning has been impacted since the onset of your impairments or allow us insight regarding the impact of your impairments over the course of your development. Please see our website for a complete discussion of situations when transcripts and academic information may not be required.

4. ***Professional Documentation*.** Letters and reports from qualified professionals (i.e., physicians, psychologists, therapists, educators, etc.) that provide a diagnosis, describe your impairment and functional limitations, or make recommendations for accommodation in testing situations like the MCAT or PREview exams should be submitted to support your request. Generally, any document from a qualified professional that describes how your current functional limitations will affect your ability to take an exam like the MCAT or PREview should be submitted. Please refer to the evaluation guidelines associated with your impairment for information regarding what would be considered current documentation for your impairment.

III. Documents You Do Not Need to Submit

In Section II, listed above, we identified the items that are generally helpful in supporting your request for accommodations on the MCAT or PREview exam (This list is not exhaustive, so please check the application guidelines associated with your impairment). It is also helpful to know what documents, commonly associated with disability assessments, are ***not helpful*** in supporting your request for accommodations on the MCAT exam. Below you will find a list of common disability documents that ***you do not need to submit in support of your request***:

1. ***VA Benefits Eligibility Letters***.
2. ***Social Security Disability Insurance Letters***
3. ***Medical Records That Do Not Address Your Current Impairments or Related Functional Limitations***

If you (or your qualified professional) have any questions regarding the application process for accommodations requests, please do not hesitate to contact us via accommodations@aamc.org. Representatives are also available to assist you via phone at (202) 828-0600 Monday - Friday, 9am - 7pm ET.