

## Candidate Disability Accommodation Policy

### I. Purpose

This policy enables the Spiritual Care Association Credentialing and Certification processes to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which require reasonable accommodations made for qualified candidates with disabilities and prohibits the credentialing and certification programs from denying them the benefits of its programs and activities.

### II. Eligibility

Only candidates who identify themselves as having a disability and seek accommodation are eligible.

### III. Definitions

- A. **Accommodations** are defined as any reasonable adjustment required for a candidate to have equal access to the credentialing and certification program. Examples include:
- Extended time for completion of exams or tests for a candidate with a disability
  - Ability to use speech-to-text software for a candidate with dysgraphia

Accommodations do not include:

- Substantial modifications to credentialing and certification standards,
  - Personal aids/devices,
  - Modification or adjustment of requirements essential to any program, or activity, essential to any directly related licensing requirement, or
  - Modifications or adjustments that result in undue hardship, considering the nature, cost, and impact of the accommodation, and other factors.
- B. **Disability** is a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.
- C. A student is “**qualified**” if he or she meets the basic requirements for credentialing or certification with or without reasonable modifications to rules, policies, or practices or the provision of auxiliary aids and services.”

### IV. Policy

It is the policy of the Spiritual Care Association to provide qualified candidates who have disabilities with reasonable accommodation based upon relevant law and sound ethical practice.

Decisions about whether a candidate is a qualified candidate with a disability and what constitutes reasonable accommodation typically are made by the Director of Credentialing and Certification in consultation with the COO. Accommodations are considered on a case by case basis.

### V. Procedure for Requesting Accommodations

In order to receive an accommodation, a candidate must submit a written request to the Director of Credentialing and Certification. The request must explain the need for the accommodation and may include a specific accommodation request. The request must be submitted with adequate time for it to be considered and a determination made. The candidate will need to provide evidence of his or her disability through documentation by a medical care provider. Candidates may always choose whether or not they want to identify themselves as having a disability, but candidates who want the Spiritual Care Association to provide an accommodation in the credentialing or certification process must do so. If a candidate's disability is not obvious,

he or she is responsible for providing medical documentation to support the existence of the disability and the need for accommodation.

Medical documentation should be recent, completed by a health care provider, and include the following:

- a. A diagnostic statement identifying the disability, the date of the most current diagnostic evaluation, and the date of the original diagnosis.
- b. A description of the diagnostic tests, methods, and/or criteria used.
- c. A description of the current functional impact of the disability which includes specific test results and the examiner's narrative interpretation
- d. The credentials of the diagnosing professional if not clear from the letterhead or other forms.
- e. The diagnosing professional may not be a family member

#### **VI. Accommodation Determinations**

The Director of Credentialing and Certification will consider the request and the information (documentation) provided by the candidate, consult with the COO, and determine whether and what accommodation(s) to approve..

#### **VII. Confidentiality**

All information submitted to the SCA related to the diagnosis, documentation, or accommodation of a disability is considered confidential. Disability information may be released in confidence to SCA certification reviewers who have a need to know. All documents supporting a disability on file will be retained and destroyed in accordance with New York law.