How to Navigate Going Back to College in the Age of COVID-19

About: Many vulnerable students are concerned about the upcoming Fall 2020 semester due to the ongoing global pandemic. The Health Advocacy Summit has compiled some resources and tips for students with chronic medical disabilities or chronic illnesses.

How to Navigate Your School: Determine who is a part of your support team.

- Talk to your medical care team to create an action plan for the upcoming academic year.
- Determine your school’s plan for the upcoming academic year, may it be in person, completely online, or a hybrid of both.
  - A Searchable List of Colleges’ Plans for Fall 2020
    *Please note that this is not a complete list of ALL U.S. colleges and universities. If you are unable to find your school on here, please feel free to reach out to college@healthadvocacysummit.org*
- Reach out to your accommodations advisor to see if they have changed their reasonable standards for documentation for accommodations due to COVID-19. Ask them to help you create a support team on campus and find out what steps your institution is taking to protect vulnerable students.
  - Template email for freshman
  - Template email for current students

Know Your Rights: Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, The Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990, you have the right to equal access to higher education and reasonable accommodations in the classroom, online learning, tutoring, school programs, student-led organizations, and housing. In 2008 an amendment was added to broaden the interpretation of disability to cover those with:

- Chronic medical disabilities
- Mental health illnesses
- Chronic illnesses that are episodic or in remission
- Temporary disabilities, such as a broken leg or arm

Additional Resources

- 7 Things to Know About College Disability Services
- Types of College Accommodations and Services
- Online Learning Tips
- Online Learning Accessibility and Your Legal Rights
- Department of Education COVID-19 Resources for ALL Schools
- The Department of Education on Higher Education and COVID-19
- CDC Guidance on Higher Education
- Helpful Disability Groups on Higher Education
- Planning Steps for Patients and Families During the COVID-19 Crisis

Please contact us at programs@healthadvocacysummit.org with any questions, comments, concerns, or additional resources. If any links are not working, please email us with the subject line “Fall 2020 Link.”