

## **Americans with Disabilities Act Fact Sheet**

The **American with Disabilities Act (ADA)** is a federal civil rights law enacted on July 26, 1990. It protects qualified persons with disabilities from discrimination in employment, government services and programs, transportation, public accommodations, and telecommunications. The ADA supplements and complements other federal and state laws that protect persons with disabilities, including **Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**.<sup>1</sup>

University of Missouri is considered a "public entity" under **Title II of the ADA**. According to Title II, the University must not exclude a "qualified individual with a disability" from participation in or deny the benefits of the services, programs or activities of the University or subject that person to discrimination by the University. A "qualified individual" is a person who, with or without reasonable modifications to the University's policies or practices or the removal of architectural, communication or transportation barriers, meets the University's essential eligibility requirements to receive University services or participate in University programs.

The ADA estimates that there are 43 million Americans who have a disability. A "disability" is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a record of having such an impairment or being regarded as having one. "Disability" covers a wide range of conditions and includes mobility, vision, hearing, or speech impairments, learning disabilities, chronic health conditions, emotional illnesses, AIDS, HIV positive, and a history of drug addiction or alcoholism.

<sup>1</sup> *Section 504 requires that no "otherwise qualified handicapped individual" shall be excluded from participation in program or activity receiving federal financial assistance ("college, university or other post-secondary institution, or public system of higher education")*

*An individual is handicapped if he or she is:*

- 1. Has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities;*
- 2. Has a record of such impairment; or*
- 3. Is regarded as having such impairment.*

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