



## Guide for Writing a Social Disadvantage Narrative

### 1. Purpose

This guide will provide insight into some of the elements to include in a social disadvantage narrative.

### 1b. How NDOT Determines Disadvantage

NDOT must determine that the discrimination or bias experienced by an individual is chronic, substantial, and has occurred within American society. Additionally, the discrimination must have negatively impacted the individual's entry or advancement in the business world

#### 1. Key Elements of a Social Disadvantage Narrative

Social disadvantage narratives should contain the following elements:

- a. An indication of which identity or identities is/are the basis of social disadvantage.
- b. Descriptions of incidents in which bias or discrimination has occurred.

*Generally, narratives are sufficient at a length of 3 pages, but may require more or fewer pages. NDOT will request additional information, if needed.*

### 2. Indication of Identity

Clearly describing which identity or characteristics you possess and how you have been subject to discrimination based on the identified identity or characteristics helps NDOT understand your experience. It is important to specify the identities/characteristics within the category/categories which form the basis of your social disadvantage.

One identity/characteristic is sufficient to establish social disadvantage, although individuals with multiple identities/characteristics may wish to specify more than one, as it is often difficult to determine which single characteristic is the subject of discrimination.

### 3. Descriptions of Incidents

An individual should typically provide multiple incidents of bias to establish chronic and substantial social disadvantage. Experience(s) should be related to education, employment, and business history (including current or previously owned companies). Some of the broad types of experiences which may establish social disadvantage are included later in the document.

- Education – NDOT considers factors such as: denial of equal access to institutions of higher education; exclusion from social and professional association with students or teachers; denial of education honors rightfully earned; and social patterns or pressures which discouraged the individual from pursuing a professional or business education.
- Employment – NDOT considers factors such as: unequal treatment in hiring, promotions, and other aspects of professional advancement, pay and fringe benefits, terms and conditions of employment, or retaliatory or discriminatory behavior by an employer; and social patterns or pressures which have channeled the individual into nonprofessional or non-business fields.
- Business history – NDOT considers factors such as: unequal access to credit or capital; acquisition of credit or capital under commercially unfavorable circumstances; unequal treatment in opportunities for government contracts or other work; unequal treatment by potential customers and business associates; and exclusion from business or professional organizations.

For each incident, please **describe who, what, where, why, when, and how** discrimination or bias occurred. Incidents are more easily digested if they provide information in the following order:

- **When** – Explain when the discriminatory conduct occurred. Exact dates, if available, are preferred but are not necessary so long as the incident provides a specific time period. This discrimination can be from any period of your life; you do not need to be experiencing current discrimination to qualify.
- **Where** – Explain where the discriminatory conduct occurred. The incident must have occurred in American society.
- **Who** – Explain who committed the discriminatory action. This could include an individual, a group of individuals, or an institution. Individual names, where

available, are preferred but not necessary so long as the incident provides a specific figure or organization.

- **What** – Explain the discriminatory conduct.
- **Why** – Explain the reason(s) that the conduct was more likely motivated by bias or discrimination than other non-discriminatory reasons. Without additional facts, a mere assertion that the action was the result of bias or discrimination is not enough to support a claim of social disadvantage.
- **How** - Explain how each instance of discriminatory conduct impacted your entry into or advancement in the business world. Offensive comments or conduct, while reprehensible, will not support a claim of social disadvantage if there is no negative impact associated with the incident.

#### 4a. Examples of When

<p>The following are examples that <b>would</b> satisfy the level of detailed needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Example 1 (Education): Spring semester of my second year in college</li><li>• Example 2 (Employment): November 25, 2020</li><li>• Example 3 (Business History): Fall of 2012</li></ul>	<p>The following are examples that <b>would not</b> provide the level of detail needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Example 1 (Education): In college</li><li>• Example 2 (Employment): In my mid-20s</li><li>• Example 3 (Business History): Within the first few years of starting my business</li></ul>
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#### 4b. Examples of Where

<p>The following are examples that <b>would</b> provide the level of detailed needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Example 1 (Education): University of ABC in [City. State]</li><li>• Example 2 (Employment): ABC Corporation in [City, State]</li><li>• Example 3 (Business History): ABC Bank in [City, State]</li></ul>	<p>The following are examples that <b>would not</b> provide the level of detail needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Example 1 (Education): At college</li><li>• Example 2 (Employment): My first job</li><li>• Example 3 (Business History): The bank</li></ul>
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