

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION FACT SHEET

Q: What is a reasonable accommodation?

A: A reasonable accommodation includes a) modifications or adjustments to a job application process which enable a qualified applicant with a disability to be considered for a position the applicant seeks; b) modifications or adjustments to the work environment or the way the duties are customarily performed which allow a qualified individual with a disability to perform the essential functions of the position; or c) modifications or adjustments which enable an employee with a disability to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment as similarly situated employees without disabilities.

Q: Who is a “Qualified Individual with a Disability”?

A: A qualified individual with a disability is an individual who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits a major life activity and can perform the essential functions of the position with or without an accommodation. To be a qualified individual with a disability, the individual must meet the skills, experience, education and other requirements for the job the individual holds or seeks.

Q: What is a disability?

A: The Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) defines a disability as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity. Major life activities include, but are not limited to: caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, interacting with others, operation of major bodily functions and working.

Q: What are some examples of accommodations?

A: Accommodations can include adaptive equipment, assistive technology, ergonomic adjustments, modified workplace policies, telework, and schedule changes, just to name a few.

Q: Can I request to be placed into a new position as reasonable accommodation?

A: Reassignments are the accommodation of last resort. That means management must make every effort to accommodate the employee in the position that they were hired to do. The reasonable accommodation process should not be used as a position management process.

Q: Am I entitled to the exact accommodation that I request?

A: No. An employee or applicant is only entitled to an “effective” accommodation and not the accommodation of choice. If more than one accommodation is effective, the “preference of the individual with a disability should be given primary consideration. However, the

manager providing the accommodation has the ultimate discretion to choose between effective accommodations.

Q: How do I request a reasonable accommodation?

A: A request for reasonable accommodation can be made in writing or verbally (with a written follow-up) to either the employee's supervisor, HR representative or the Reasonable Accommodation Coordinator.

Q: When may I request a reasonable accommodation?

A: A request for reasonable accommodation can be made at any point during the application process by an applicant or at any point during employment by an employee.

Q: Is any documentation required?

A: Yes, if the stated disability is not obvious limited medical documentation will be required to assist in determining whether or not the employee is a qualified individual with a disability under the ADAAA. When medical documentation is requested, it will be required to be submitted to the EEO Office within the timeframe stated in the request letter so the reasonable accommodation request can be processed within the 30-day DON timeframe.

Q: What can I do if I feel like I have been discriminated against during the reasonable accommodation process or disagree with the Agency's determination on their reasonable accommodation request?

A: An employee or applicant for employment should contact the EEO Office within 45 calendar days after experiencing an incident that they deem to be discriminatory in nature. Additionally, the notice providing the decision on the reasonable accommodation should include information on the ways that the employee may seek redress.

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