



REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

FACT SHEET

What is a reasonable accommodation?

A reasonable accommodation is a change in program rules, policies, practices, or services; and/or modifications to housing units, to give a person with disabilities the ability to participate in and enjoy HRHA programs, services, and housing. The purpose of a reasonable accommodation is to remove or relieve a barrier posed by a disability-related limitation.

Who is eligible for a reasonable accommodation?

To qualify for a reasonable accommodation, the person requesting it must be disabled. Disabled, for this purpose, means having a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; having a record of such impairment, or being regarded as having such impairment.

Physical or mental impairment: includes, but is not limited to, diseases and conditions such as orthopedic, visual, speech, and hearing impairments, cerebral palsy, autism, epilepsy, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and AIDS, or any physiological disorder, disease or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological; musculoskeletal; special sense organs; respiratory, including speech organs; cardiovascular; reproductive; digestive; genito-urinary; hemic and lymphatic; skin; and endocrine. Also any mental or psychological disorder, such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities. Current, illegal use of or addiction to a controlled substance is not considered a disability.

Major life activities include, but are not limited to, caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working.

What sort of accommodations will HRHA consider?

For a reasonable accommodation request to be considered, the person requesting it must be disabled, and the requested accommodation must be related to the disability. A good way to think about this is to ask if the accommodation will allow the disabled person to participate and use or enjoy HRHA's housing and programs equally. For example, a person whose mobility is limited by disability may request that appointments be conducted by phone or in their home.

How can I prove my disability, and how can I prove that I need the accommodation?

If the disability is apparent or already documented, the criterion is met. However, it is possible that the disability for which the accommodation is being requested is a disability other than an apparent disability, or is itself not readily apparent (e.g. a heart condition). If the disability is not apparent or documented, HRHA will obtain verification that the person is a person with a disability.

If the disability is apparent or verified, but it is not apparent that the request is related to the disability, HRHA will obtain documentation that the requested accommodation is needed due to the disability. HRHA will not inquire as to the nature of the disability.

What else do you look at when reviewing a request?

The requested accommodation must be reasonable in two ways. First, it can't constitute a fundamental alteration to our business (housing). For example, we would deny a request for our staff to perform grocery-shopping duties for a person with disabilities. Second, it can't create an undue financial hardship or administrative burden. In cases when cost or administrative workload would be an undue burden, HRHA may allow a meeting with the individual to identify and consider alternatives.