



Reasonable Accommodation Policy

It is the policy of **Rental Property Management** to provide reasonable accommodations to applicants and residents who have disabilities, and to permit residents with disabilities to make reasonable modifications.

Definition Of Disability

The federal Fair Housing Act defines handicap as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. (The preferred term is "disability"; however, a few fair housing laws use the terms "handicap" and "disability" interchangeably).

Under fair housing laws, the definition of disability does not include:

- sex offenders
- current illegal drug users (however, fair housing laws protect people who are recovering from substance abuse)

Reasonable Accommodations And Modifications

An applicant or resident with a disability may need either a reasonable accommodation or a reasonable modification, or both, in order to have an equal opportunity to live in and enjoy a dwelling or housing services

A **reasonable accommodation** is a change, exception, or adjustment to a rule, policy, practice, or service that allows a person with a disability to use and enjoy a dwelling, including public and common use areas. Examples include:

- providing rental forms in large print
- providing a reserved accessible parking space near a resident's rental
- allowing a resident to have a service animal in a "no pets" building
- permitting a resident who has new mobility limitations to move to the ground floor.

A **reasonable modification** is a structural change made to a resident's living space or to the common areas of a community, which is necessary to enable a resident with a disability to have full use of and enjoyment of the housing. Reasonable modifications can include structural changes to interiors and exteriors of dwellings and to common and public use areas. Examples include:

- widening a doorway
- installing grab bars in a bathroom
- lowering kitchen cabinets to a height suitable for a wheelchair user
- adding a ramp and handrails to make a primary entrance accessible

Restoration

We may choose to keep modifications in place at the end of the tenancy, and in many cases, these changes enhance the general accessibility of the unit or common area.

At the end of tenancy, the resident is obligated, at the resident's expense, to restore interior dwelling areas to their previous condition only where it is reasonable to do so and where we request the restoration. In general, if the modifications would not affect the next resident's use or enjoyment of the premises, we will not require the outgoing resident to restore the premises to its prior state. We will not require that the resident restore modifications made to the exterior of a dwelling, such as ramps to the front door of the dwelling, or modifications made to laundry rooms or building entrances.

In certain limited and narrow circumstances, we may require that the resident deposit money into an interest bearing account to ensure that funds are available to restore the interior of a dwelling to its previous state. The resident is not responsible for expenses associated with reasonable wear and tear.

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS AND RESIDENTS WHO HAVE DISABILITIES

Making A Request

If you or a member of your household needs a reasonable accommodation or modification, please submit a request to the housing manager. If you are unable to make a request for yourself, another person (an advocacy organization or representative) can make the request on your behalf. You do not need to disclose the nature of your disability. You can make verbal requests for accommodations; however, we recommend that you make requests in writing. This will help us to assess your request and to avoid misunderstandings about what you need.

In order for management to approve your request for accommodation, please make a reasonable accommodation request to management, the requested accommodation or modification:

- must be for someone with a disability.
- must be directly related to the disability.
- must be reasonable.

In your request, please give us a full description of the required accommodation. If you know of resources that will make it easier or quicker for management to grant your request, include this information along with your request.

If you request permission to make a modification to the property, please:

- Give a full description of the intended modification(s).
- Provide assurance that you will obtain building permits, if necessary.
- Provide assurance that the modifications will be done in a professional manner.

Please be aware that residents are responsible for the costs of their own modifications (except in housing that receives federal funding). If the modification you plan to make will not interfere with the next resident's use and enjoyment of the premises, it can remain there when you move out. In some cases, we will ask you to:

- Agree to return the premises to their original state.
- Agree to pay into an interest-bearing escrow account, over a reasonable period, an amount of money not to exceed the cost of the restorations (the interest on the account accrues to you).

[Example: If you install grab bars in the bathtub with reinforcement in the wall, at move-out we may ask you to remove the grab bars but leave the in-wall reinforcement.]

Verification

Management may ask you to provide written verification that the request is for someone who has a disability. We may also ask you for verification that the accommodation or modification is necessary to give you an equal opportunity to use and enjoy the housing community. If asked for verification, you can get it from your healthcare provider, a peer support group, a non-medical service agency, or a reliable third party who is in a position to know about your disability and your need for the accommodation or modification you requested.

PROVISION OF ACCOMMODATIONS

We will work with you to process your request promptly. We may need to discuss your request with you. We grant requests for reasonable accommodations without cost to you. However, in most cases, you must pay for reasonable modifications.

Management will give you the following:

- A letter confirming that we received your request.
- If needed, a letter requesting additional information (such as written verification that you have a disability, that the accommodation is disability-related, or both), with a suggested timeline for providing the information.
- A letter notifying you that your request is under consideration, has been approved, or has been denied.

Sometimes the specific accommodation you request may be difficult, time-consuming or expensive to provide, and we may suggest alternate accommodations that might work just as well. If you believe the accommodation you have requested is the only one that will work, be prepared to explain why. It's a good idea to have a back-up plan in mind and be willing to discuss alternatives.

If we decide that we cannot fulfill your request because it poses an undue financial and administrative burden, a fundamental alteration, or a direct threat in our housing program, we will advise you in writing, and offer an opportunity for you to make a modified request.

RESOURCES/QUESTIONS

If you have any questions regarding your rights and responsibilities under the fair housing laws, you can find general information at: www.hud.gov/offices/fheo/FHLaws/yourrights.cfm.

In addition, should you have any questions or concerns you feel we may be able to assist with, please feel free to contact our office at (636) 528-9502.

Thank you!

Rental Property Management