



REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION INFORMATION

The Housing Authority of the City of Fort Lauderdale (HACFL) is committed to ensuring that our applicants and program participants have access to the information they need to take full advantage of the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program. For this reason, we are providing a summary of our agency's Reasonable Accommodation Policy in order to provide answers to frequently asked questions. Please take a moment to review this information and feel free to ask any questions you may have.

What is a Reasonable Accommodation?

A reasonable accommodation is a change, modification, alteration or adaptation in policy, procedure, practice, program, or facility that provides a qualified individual with a disability the opportunity to participate in, or benefit from, a program (housing or non-housing) or activity. What's requested as a reasonable accommodation must relate to the disabled persons disability.

Who May Request a Reasonable Accommodation?

A person who meets the Civil Rights definition of a *disabled* individual may request a Reasonable Accommodation. HUD requires the HACFL to use this definition to determine that someone is eligible for a Reasonable Accommodation. This definition of a person with a disability is broader than the Social Security's Administrations (SSA) disability definition required to be eligible for disability benefits. This means an individual who did not meet the SSA disability standard, may still qualify for a Reasonable Accommodation. ***(See page 3 of this document for the Civil Rights definition of a Disabled Person)***

What are some Examples of Reasonable Accommodation?

A reasonable accommodation can be anything that falls into the following categories:

- a change in the rules or policies or how the Housing Authority of the City of Fort Lauderdale (HACFL) does things that would give you an equal chance to conduct business here and use the facilities or to take part in programs or services on site
- a change, repair, or special feature in a dwelling that would give you an equal chance to live in the dwelling and use the facilities at the dwelling site or take part in programs on site
- a change, repair or special feature at some other area of a building or property that would give you an equal chance to live here and use the facilities or take part in HACFL programs
- a change in the way HACFL communicates with you or gives you information.

If your request does not fall into one of the categories above, it can still be reviewed for your specific circumstance.

Examples of Accommodations you may request from the property owner at your expense include, but are not limited to:

- to install grab bars in bathrooms
- ramps installed at entrance doors of dwellings
- lever-type door hardware
- widening doorways
- using an assistive animal (also called a service, therapeutic, or support animal) such as a seeing-eye dog
- install visual and audible alarms for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing

Examples of Accommodations you may request from the HACFL include, but are not limited to:

- A Live-In Aide
- Voucher Extension
- Additional Bedroom for Medical Equipment
- An Exception Payment Standard
- Additional Utility Allowance (for medical equipment)



- Waiver on Relative Prohibition
- Transfers to another dwelling (with proof that it's needed because of disability)
- HACFL documents in an accessible format like Braille or large print.

The possible accommodations are endless. Please let us know if there is some other accommodation to aide in giving you full access to the program, or to add to the accessibility of your home.

How do I Request a Reasonable Accommodation?

Ask any HCV staff person for a *Reasonable Accommodation Request Form*. Complete the form, and return it to your housing specialist to document your request(s). Ensuring that the form is completely filled out will help prevent a delay in the processing of your request. By completing the form you will help us understand how we can best assist you. If you are unable to do so, please ask an HACFL representative for assistance.

Reasonable Accommodation Verification

Before providing an accommodation, the HACFL must determine that the person the accommodation is for meets the definition of a person with a disability, and that the accommodation will enhance the family's access to HACFL's programs and services.

If a person's disability is obvious or otherwise known to the PHA, and if the need for the requested accommodation is also readily apparent or known, no further verification will be required.

If a family indicates that an accommodation is required for a disability that is not obvious or otherwise known to HACFL, we must verify that the person meets the definition of a person with a disability, and that the limitations imposed by the disability require the requested accommodation.

In addition to the general HACFL Verification efforts, the following requirements apply when verifying a disability:

- Third-party verification must be obtained from an individual identified by the family who is competent to make the determination. A doctor or other medical professional, a peer support group, a non-medical service agency, or a reliable third party who is in a position to know about the individual's disability may provide verification of a disability
- HACFL must request only information that is necessary to evaluate the disability-related need for the accommodation. HACFL will not inquire about the nature or extent of any disability.
- Medical records will not be accepted or retained in the participant file.
- In the event that the HACFL does receive confidential information about a person's specific diagnosis, treatment, or the nature or severity of the disability, HACFL will dispose of it. In place of the information, HACFL will note in the file that the disability and other requested information have been verified, the date the verification was received, and the name and address of the knowledgeable professional who sent the information.

All information related to a person's disability will be treated in accordance with HACFL confidentiality policies.

Reasonable Accommodation Determinations

Reasonable Accommodation Requests must be assessed on a case-by case basis. Before making a determination the HACFL may enter into discussion and negotiation with you, to request additional information, or may require the family to sign a consent form to perform verification.

The HACFL will respond in writing within fourteen (14) days of receipt of the request. You will be notified if additional information or verification is needed. If your request is denied, an explanation will be provided. If the request is denied because it is not reasonable, we will discuss whether an alternative accommodation could effectively address the disability related need.

You may obtain a full copy of the HACFL Reasonable Accommodation Policies and Procedures upon request.

Definition of a Person with a Disability Under the Federal Civil Rights Laws

A person with a disability, as defined under federal civil rights laws, is any person who:

- Has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of an individual, or
- Has a record of such impairment, or
- Is regarded as having such impairment

The phrase “physical or mental impairment” includes:

- Any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic or 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; or
- Any mental or psychological disorder, such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities. The term “physical or mental impairment” includes, but is not limited to: such diseases and conditions as orthopedic, visual, speech and hearing impairments, cerebral palsy, autism, epilepsy, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, cancer, heart disease, diabetes, mental retardation, emotional illness, drug addiction and alcoholism.

“Major life activities” includes, but is not limited to:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| • caring for oneself | • hearing |
| • performing manual tasks | • breathing |
| • walking | • learning |
| • seeing | • working |

“Has a record of such impairment” means: has a history of, or has been misclassified as having, a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

“Is regarded as having an impairment”:

- is defined as having a physical or mental impairment that does not substantially limit one or more major life activities but is treated by a public entity (such as the PHA) as constituting such a limitation;
- has none of the impairments defined in this section but is treated by a public entity as having such an impairment;
- has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, only as a result of the attitudes of others toward that impairment.

*If you need this document in a different language or **LARGER FONT** or if you need a reasonable accommodation (persons with disabilities), please call 954-556-4100; TDD/TTY 954-523-0514, between 8:30 am and 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Advance notice of seventy-two (72) hours is required in order to arrange for interpreter services.*

Si necesita ayuda con este formulario, llame al **954-556-4100**
Si vous avez besoin d'aide pour remplir cette demande, veuillez appeler **954-556-4100**
Si w bezwen asistans ak fòm sa a, tanpri rele **954-556-4100**