



The Community Partnership
For The Prevention
of Homelessness

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION – Sample Scenarios

Example 1: A housing program has a policy of providing unassigned parking spaces to residents. A resident with a mobility impairment, who is substantially limited in her ability to walk, requests an assigned accessible parking space close to the entrance to her unit as a reasonable accommodation. There are available parking spaces near the entrance to her unit that are accessible, but those spaces are available to all residents on a first come, first served basis.

The provider must make an exception to its policy of not providing assigned parking spaces to accommodate this resident.

Example 2: A housing program has a policy of requiring clients to come to the rental office in person to pay their rental contribution. A client has a mental disability that makes her afraid to leave her unit. Because of her disability, she requests that she be permitted to have a friend mail her rent payment to the rental office as a reasonable accommodation.

The provider must make an exception to its payment policy to accommodate this client.

Example 3: A shelter/housing program has a "no pets" policy. A client who is deaf requests that the provider allow him to keep a dog in his unit as a reasonable accommodation. The client explains that the dog is an assistance animal that will alert him to several sounds, including knocks at the door, sounding of the smoke detector, the telephone ringing, and cars coming into the driveway.

The housing provider must make an exception to its "no pets" policy to accommodate this client.

Example 4: Because of his disability, an applicant with a hearing impairment needs to keep an assistance animal in his unit as a reasonable accommodation. The housing provider may not require the applicant to pay a fee or a security deposit as a condition of allowing the applicant to keep the assistance animal. However, if a client's assistance animal causes damage to the unit or the common areas of the dwelling, the housing provider may charge the client for the cost of repairing the damage (or deduct it from the standard security deposit imposed on all clients), if it is the provider's practice to assess clients for any damage they cause to the premises.

Example 5: As a result of a disability, a client is physically unable to open the dumpster placed in the parking lot by his housing provider for trash collection. The client requests that the shelter/housing program send a maintenance staff person to his apartment on a daily basis to collect his trash and take it to the dumpster. Because the housing development is a small operation with limited financial resources and the maintenance staff are on site only twice per week, it may be an undue financial and administrative burden for the housing provider to grant the requested daily trash pick-up service. Accordingly, the requested accommodation may not be reasonable. If the housing provider denies the requested accommodation as unreasonable, the housing provider should discuss with the client whether reasonable accommodations could be provided to meet the client's disability-related needs - for instance, placing an open trash collection can in a location that is readily accessible to the client so the client can dispose of his own trash and the provider's maintenance staff can then transfer the trash to the dumpster when they are on site. Such an accommodation would not involve a fundamental alteration of the provider's operations and would involve little financial and administrative burden for the provider while accommodating the client's disability-related needs.

Example 6: A client has a severe mobility impairment that substantially limits his ability to walk. He asks his housing provider to transport him to the grocery store and assist him with his grocery shopping as a reasonable accommodation to his disability. The provider does not provide any transportation or shopping services for its clients, so granting this request would require a fundamental alteration in the nature of the provider's operations. The request can be denied, but the provider should discuss with the requester whether there is any alternative accommodation that would effectively meet the requester's disability-related needs without fundamentally altering the nature of its operations, such as reducing the client's need to walk long distances by altering its parking policy to allow a volunteer from a local community service organization to park her car close to the client's unit so she can transport the client to the grocery store and assist him with his shopping.