

Requesting Workplace Accommodations For Employees With Disabilities

Authority	This Guide Memo was approved by the President of the University.
Applicability	These policies apply to all University employees. While policy statements are applicable to the entire University, including SLAC, some of the specific procedures given here do not apply at SLAC; employees should contact the SLAC Human Resources Department for information relating to the procedural aspects of requesting workplace accommodations.
Summary	This Guide Memo outlines Stanford University 's policies and procedures for employee requests for disability related accommodations. Section headings are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. POLICY 2. IMPLEMENTATION AND RESPONSIBILITY 3. PROCESS - RECOMMENDED STEPS 4. FUNDING 5. RESOLVING DISAGREEMENTS 6. CONFIDENTIALITY AND RECORDS

1. POLICY

Stanford University values, and has an institutional commitment to provide, equal employment opportunities for qualified employees with disabilities in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations, including the California Fair Employment and Housing Act (CFEHA), the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504).

Disability is defined as any physical or mental impairment that limits one or more of an individual's major life activities (e.g., caring for oneself, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, sitting, standing). To ensure equality of access for employees with disabilities, reasonable accommodations and auxiliary aids shall be provided to enable the employee to perform the essential functions of his/her job and to participate in all University programs and activities.

2. IMPLEMENTATION AND RESPONSIBILITY

- a. **Employees** – are responsible for initiating requests for any desired disability related workplace accommodations. Requests by non-faculty employees should be made to supervisors or human resources managers; faculty employees should contact their Chair, their departmental or school faculty affairs officer, or the ADA/Section 504 Compliance Officer.
- b. **Supervisors** – are responsible for receiving requests for workplace accommodations, informing employees of the process and referring requests to the appropriate human resources manager. Supervisors are responsible for initiating a discussion concerning accommodations when they have reason to believe that an employee's disability precludes the employee from initiating a request. Supervisors should inform the local human resources manager of all requests and accommodations.
- c. **Human Resources Managers** – are responsible for evaluating the request, determining what type of documentation is necessary, and determining if the requested accommodation is appropriate and effective. To identify your human resources manager, see: <http://hrweb.stanford.edu/information/directory.html> or call the appropriate number: Campus 723-2191; Medical School 725-8607; SLAC 926-2358.

- d. **Compliance Officer** – The ADA/Section 504 Compliance Officer provides information relating to the employment provisions of the ADA and employer obligations. The Compliance Officer may also be contacted for information regarding campus accessibility and resources for obtaining technical and assistive equipment as well as funding sources. The ADA/Section 504 Compliance Officer may be reached at the Diversity & Access Office located in Mariposa House, 585 Capistrano Way, (650) 725-0326, FAX (650) 723-1791, TTY (650) 723-1216.
- e. **Chairs and Faculty Affairs Officers** – are responsible for receiving requests for workplace accommodations and referring requests to the ADA/Section 504 Compliance Officer for handling under a procedure paralleling Section 3 below.

3. PROCESS - RECOMMENDED STEPS

- a. **Step One - Request:** The employee is responsible for requesting a workplace accommodation for his or her disability. The request shall be made to either the employee's supervisor or with his/her local human resources manager. Requests should be in writing and should include the following information:
 - 1. Name, telephone number and address of employee
 - 2. Department
 - 3. Supervisor
 - 4. Physical or mental condition and its duration
 - 5. Nature of request
 - 6. Brief explanation of how the requested accommodation will enable the employee to perform the essential functions of his/her job.
- b. **Step Two - Discussion:** When received, the supervisor or human resources manager will meet with the employee to acknowledge the request and explain the process. The supervisor or human resources manager will also meet with the employee as necessary to discuss the request and accommodation alternatives.
- c. **Step Three - Documenting the Disability:** The supervisor or human resources manager evaluating the requested accommodation will determine what type of documentation is necessary to verify the disability. This may vary depending on the nature and extent of the disability and the accommodation requested. It is the responsibility of the employee to provide the requested documentation regarding his or her disability.

In the event the University determines it is appropriate to obtain a second professional opinion concerning the nature or impact of a physical or mental disability, the Department will bear the cost of obtaining the second opinion.

The request for an accommodation will be evaluated once all documentation has been submitted by the employee to the human resources manager and/or the supervisor.

- d. **Step Four - Evaluation:** Appropriate accommodations are determined following an individualized assessment of each request. The supervisor or human resources manager will consider the needs and requests for reasonable accommodation to determine whether the necessary equipment or services exist already in a different department or unit before investing in new equipment or additional services.

Among the factors considered in determining reasonable accommodations for employees are:

- (1) What is the nature of the employee's physical or mental condition and how does it affect his/her needs in the workplace setting?
- (2) Does the employee's physical or mental condition limit one or more major life activities?
- (3) Will the requested accommodation allow the employee to perform the essential job functions effectively?
- (4) Will the requested accommodation alter or remove an essential function of the job?

(5) What impact will the requested accommodation or modification have on the department or unit?

The University is not required to provide an accommodation that will have the effect of eliminating an essential function of the job in question nor to provide an accommodation or service which is personal in nature, such as a hearing aid or wheelchair. Furthermore, the University is not required to lower performance, production or conduct standards nor to alter attendance requirements expected of all employees.

- e. **Step Five - Notification:** The supervisor or human resources manager evaluating the request for an accommodation shall provide the employee with written notification of the determination within fifteen (15) calendar days of receiving the completed request (including the requested documentation). If the determination includes an accommodation, the notice will also include the expected implementation date. If a situation should arise whereby the supervisor or the human resources manager needs additional time to assess a request or to provide an accommodation, he or she shall provide the employee with written notification of the status of the request and the proposed date of determination.

4. FUNDING

If the accommodation is deemed appropriate and reasonable, then the department bears the initial responsibility for funding the accommodation. If the cost is beyond the department's means, the cost should be shared by higher levels in the department's/office's reporting line. For information regarding additional funding resources for disability-related accommodations, contact the Diversity & Access Office at 650/725-0326.

5. RESOLVING DISAGREEMENTS

- a. **Informal Process** - In the event an employee disagrees with the determination and/or proposed accommodation, he or she may contact the ADA/Section 504 Compliance Officer at the Diversity & Access Office, Mariposa House, 585 Capistrano Way, telephone 723-0755, FAX 725-0326, for assistance in resolving the disagreement.
- b. **Formal Grievance Process** - The applicable grievance procedure depends on the circumstances and the status of the person bringing the grievance. Established grievance procedures are listed on http://hrweb.stanford.edu/elr/policies/list_grievance_procedures.html.

If you have questions regarding the applicability of this policy to your situation, call your Human Resources Office: Campus 723-2191; Medical School 725-8607; SLAC 926-2358.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY AND RECORDS

All University employees have a legal obligation to maintain confidentiality regarding a staff or faculty member's disability-related information. To that end, Supervisors and local human resources managers shall provide information to staff and faculty only when necessary to facilitate accommodations.