

WORKFORCE PROGRAM ACCOMMODATIONS

Workforce program accommodations provide DLR workforce program participants an inclusive environment to readily and efficiently ask for and receive reasonable accommodations necessary to reach their full potential.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

Reasonable accommodations are adjustments that provide an equal opportunity to an individual with a disability allowing them to take part in a workforce training program. This process does not cover requests that would pose an undue hardship on the program or worksite.

COVERAGE

Workforce program participants who have a physical or mental condition that substantially limits one or more major life activity or have record of a substantially limiting condition.

Not All Accommodation Requests Can Be Honored

Sometimes a participant may ask for an accommodation that is not reasonable or necessary that poses an “undue hardship” (i.e. too costly or disruptive) or that might threaten the safety of the participant who has made the request or of others.

COMMON TYPES

- Online training program with audio, in addition to written text
- Computer in a different setting, such as a quiet room with few distractions
- Text in larger print sizes
- Material read to participant
- Additional time to complete tasks
- Additional or modified breaks
- Visual aids, such as checklists
- Video closed captioning

Additional assistance in identifying accommodations can be used by contacting the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) at askJAN.org.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Program Participant

The program participant has the responsibility to request an accommodation to their DLR Employment Specialist.

DLR Employment Specialist

The Employment Specialist is responsible to receive and document accommodation requests in SDWORKS case notes.

The Employment Specialist works with the participant, work site supervisor, and medical provider, as applicable, to identify a reasonable solution that allows them to take part in the workforce program. After an accommodation is implemented, the Employment Specialist should monitor the effectiveness of the solution provided.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Equal Opportunity (EO) Officer

The EO Officer is responsible for assisting the Employment Specialist through this process as needed and reviewing any requests that are denied before this communication occurs.

REQUESTS

Most accommodation requests are initiated by the program participant. It is important not to assume that because an individual has a physical or mental disability that he or she will necessarily require or want an accommodation. A participant may have a disability that does not limit their ability to participate in the workforce program. Because each participant's abilities and needs are different, each accommodation request will be handled on a case-by-case basis. In *rare* instances, an Employment Specialist may initiate the reasonable accommodation process and begin the interactive discussion with the participant with a disability.

The process begins when an Employment Specialist becomes aware that a participant may need an adjustment or change for a reason related to a disability or chronic medical condition. An accommodations request does not have to include any special words, such as "reasonable accommodation," "disability," or "ADA."

If the accommodation requested is reasonable, this can be implemented by the Employment Specialist. If eligible, support services can be made available to assist with costs associated with accommodations. If not eligible for financial supports through a workforce program, contact the WIOA EO Officer. If the Employment Specialist needs assistance, they can connect with the WIOA EO Officer. Before an accommodation is denied or if an accommodation is not able to be agreed upon, the Employment Specialist must consult the WIOA EO Officer.

If additional information is needed to support the accommodation request, documentation may be requested of the participant's physician.

Participants are obligated to cooperate with this process. A failure to do so could result in delayed consideration of a request or in its denial.

INTERACTIVE PROCESS (IP)

The interactive process is a collaborative effort between the participant, Employment Specialist, and worksite supervisor, if applicable, to discuss the need for an accommodation as well as identify effective accommodation solutions. The interactive process begins when a participant discloses a disability/health condition and requests an accommodation.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Medical information will be disclosed ONLY on a "need to know" basis. Accommodations may be provided without informing the employee's manager or supervisor without disclosing the employee's diagnosis or disability.

Ensuring the confidentiality of all medical information obtained in connection with a request for reasonable accommodation, as well as the confidentiality of all associated communications during the interactive process is required by federal law. Non-medical information obtained during this process is shared on an as needed basis with those involved in providing a reasonable accommodation.

DETERMINATION

A participant's receipt or denial of an accommodation does not preclude the participant from making another request at a later time if circumstances change and participant believes that an accommodation is needed. It is important to note that company representatives cannot refuse to process a request for reasonable accommodation, and a reasonable accommodation may not be denied, based on a belief that the accommodation should have been requested earlier (e.g., during the application process).

Timeframe

The Employment Specialist will process requests and provide accommodations in as short a period as reasonably possible.

MONITORING

It is the obligation of the Employment Specialist to monitor the effectiveness of the accommodation. This is documented through case notes. If an accommodation is no longer effective, then the interactive process should be revisited.