

### **What does the ADA require?**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”) requires government agencies and private companies to offer “reasonable accommodations” upon request to ensure that people with disabilities have equal access to programs, services and facilities.<sup>1</sup> A reasonable request is a change to a rule, program, service or building that allows you to participate equally in the program.

### **How do I request a reasonable accommodation?**

In order to receive an accommodation you **must** request it. While you may have to make your request in writing, the agency or facility should not impose a particular form for this purpose. Some of these accommodations, such as extended test-taking periods, require a doctor’s note stating your disability and the accommodations you need.

### **What are examples of reasonable accommodations?**

Some examples of reasonable accommodations are:

- Relocating a program, or providing access in older, inaccessible buildings
- Providing materials in alternative formats for people with hearing and visual disabilities, such as Braille, large print, audiotape, digital format, or sign language interpretation
- Providing a ramp, chairlift, or similar device to make facilities accessible
- Providing extended test-taking periods and note-taking services
- Removing barriers in existing buildings where it would not cause undue financial and administrative burden
- Using a doorman or installing an automatic door opener
- Verbally reciting a menu or sign

- Relocating the sites for classes or examinations related to professional, educational, or trade-related applications, licensing, certifications, or credentialing, to accessible places or offering alternative accessible sites
- Waiving a “no animals” policy to allow the presence of service animals
- Allowing time off from a program to allow you to get the disability-related services you need (such as counseling, medication, or doctors’ appointments)
- Allowing service providers to assist and visit you to enable your participation in programs

### **What is not a reasonable accommodation?**

- Altering a building if doing so would cause undue financial and administrative burdens
- Providing individuals with disabilities with personal care services or individually-prescribed devices
- Providing food or water for a service animal
- Accommodations which would “fundamentally alter” the nature of the program or service

For more information contact:

U.S. Department of Justice  
Civil Rights Division  
[www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov)  
(800) 514-0301

Contact University Legal Services at (202)547-0198 if you have problems accessing government services or public accommodations because of your disability.

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<sup>1</sup> 42 U.S.C. § 12132 et seq, 42 USC §12181 et seq.

# UNIVERSITY LEGAL SERVICES

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## Know Your Rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): Reasonable Accommodations



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