



Reasonable Accommodation FAQ

If you have any questions this document does not answer, please contact April Lane, Reasonable Accommodation Coordinator.

What is a reasonable accommodation?

A reasonable accommodation is a change in the work environment or in the way that work is customarily done that permits a qualified person with a disability to enjoy equal employment opportunities. Examples of reasonable accommodations include adaptive equipment, including technology and communication equipment, specially designed or reconfigured furniture, sign language interpreters for people who are deaf or hard of hearing and written materials in alternative formats (e.g., Braille or large print) for people who are blind or have low vision.

How do I make a reasonable accommodation request?

You can make the request orally or in writing to any supervisor in your chain of command, or you can have an authorized representative do so on your behalf. You may also make the request to HRD. You aren't required to use the specific words "reasonable accommodation" as part of your request, but it does need to be clear that you need a change in your work environment as a result of a medical condition. Examples of requests for reasonable accommodation are as follows:

- "In order to make my dialysis appointments, I'd like to adjust my weekly work schedule so that I start at 11:00 a.m. on Mondays and Wednesdays. Is that possible?"
- "In order to handle my arthritis flare-ups effectively, my doctor is recommending that I telework three days per week. Can I do that?"

Can someone else make a request for reasonable accommodation on my behalf?

Yes. A third party, such as a family member, physician or attorney can make a request on your behalf.

If I make a request for a reasonable accommodation, what happens next?

Your supervisor should inform HRD's Reasonable Accommodation Coordinator (RAC) of your request and then the RAC will reach out to you to engage in what is called the "interactive process." The interactive process is a dialogue between you, the RAC, and your supervisor to determine the essential functions of the position, gather medical information, identify the limitations caused by the condition, discuss possible reasonable accommodation options and assess the effectiveness of identified accommodations.

The RAC will begin the interactive process by discussing your request with you. If your disability or medical condition is not obvious, the RAC may request, and you must provide, medical information related to the impairment that the accommodation will seek to address.



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The RAC will also seek information from your supervisor regarding your essential job functions and the impact, if any, the requested accommodation will have on FRTIB operations. The RAC will then either grant or deny the request, notifying you and your supervisor of the decision. If you disagree with the decision made by the RAC, you may request reconsideration through the Director of ORM, file an EEO complaint or file an administrative grievance. Please see the [Reasonable Accommodation Policy](#) for details.

Is FRTIB required to provide the reasonable accommodation that I want?

No. FRTIB may choose among reasonable accommodations as long as the chosen accommodation is effective.

What if providing the reasonable accommodation would inconvenience other staff members?

An employer does not have to provide a reasonable accommodation that would cause an "undue hardship" to the employer. Undue hardship must be based on an individualized assessment of current circumstances that show that a specific reasonable accommodation would cause significant difficulty or expense. A showing of mere inconvenience to operations would not be sufficient to demonstrate undue hardship.

If I want to telework or take leave in order to care for a family member with a disability, would that be a reasonable accommodation request?

No. The law requires FRTIB to provide a reasonable accommodation to an **employee** with a disability only. However, other policies may apply in this circumstance, such as medical telework or leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

Are reasonable accommodation requests confidential?

Yes. FRTIB officials must keep all requests for and provisions of reasonable accommodations confidential, and limit disclosure solely to those who have a valid need to know information related to the accommodation request.

Will my supervisor review my medical documentation to determine if a reasonable accommodation is warranted?

No. The RAC reviews your medical documentation associated with the request. The supervisor will be informed of the accommodation granted and medical limitations, as needed, but will not review your medical documentation.

May a supervisor apply the same quantitative and qualitative requirements for performance of essential functions to an employee with a disability that it applies to employees without disabilities?

Yes. An employee with a disability must meet the same production standards, whether quantitative or qualitative, as a non-disabled employee in the same job. Lowering or changing a production standard because an employee cannot meet it due to a disability is not considered a reasonable accommodation.



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However, a reasonable accommodation may be required to assist an employee in meeting a specific production standard.

May a supervisor discipline an employee with a disability for violating a conduct standard?

Yes. If an employee's disability does not cause the misconduct, a supervisor may hold the individual to the same conduct standards that it applies to all other employees. In most instances, an employee's disability will not be relevant to any conduct violations.