

Reasonable Accommodations for Employees with Disabilities

Reasonable Accommodation Process*

Each employee situation is unique and AAEO evaluates each request for accommodation based on an employee's specific health condition, circumstances and job at OHSU. The most common process steps are listed below, though it may not be necessary to follow each step or in this order.

- 1. NOTICE.** The employee informs their supervisor or Human Resources (HR) of the need for a workplace modification or accommodation due to a mental or physical condition. Or, an employee submits an ADA reasonable accommodation request form to AAEO. Employees need not use the specific terms "ADA" or "reasonable accommodation" to initiate the process.
- 2. MEDICAL RELEASE.** This release authorizes AAEO to obtain protected health information (PHI) from one or more medical providers to support the request. The release form is included with the request form.
- 3. POSITION DESCRIPTION.** AAEO notifies the employee's supervisor and HR of the request. AAEO also gets a position description from the employee's department. Employee PHI is not shared with their supervisor; only information needed to explore and provide reasonable accommodations is disclosed.
- 4. AAEO INTERVIEWS THE EMPLOYEE.** AAEO begins an interactive process by meeting with the employee for an interview to learn more about the employee's situation, needs and to advise on options.
- 5. JOB DUTIES.** AAEO talks with the supervisor and/or HR to gain their insight and perspective on other aspects of the employee's situation and the essential functions of the job.

The law:

- The amended Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Oregon law require employers to provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities.*
- An accommodation may help an employee perform the essential functions of their job.
- An accommodation may not be possible if it is an undue hardship to OHSU.

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6. **HEALTHCARE PROVIDER VERIFICATION.** AAEO sends questions to the employee's healthcare provider(s). Some questions help verify whether the employee qualifies as a person with a disability under the law and other questions are tailored to the specific request(s) for accommodation. The process may take longer if a provider does not respond in a timely manner. It may be necessary to send follow-up information requests to a provider. Provisional accommodations may be provided while awaiting documentation from a healthcare provider.
7. **AAEO MEETS WITH MANAGEMENT.** Upon a provider response, AAEO will meet with management, and sometimes the employee and others to discuss the accommodation request. Again, although the potential accommodation is discussed, the employee's PHI is not disclosed.
8. **AAEO PROVIDES DETERMINATION.** AAEO makes a determination of whether the employee is a qualified individual with a disability and provides a determination and reasonable accommodation plan in writing to the employee and supervisor.

* Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities are handled by the OHSU Office for Student Access. You may contact Student Access by calling 503-494-0082 or emailing studentaccess@ohsu.edu.

Confidentiality and non-retaliation

AAEO investigations are kept confidential to the extent possible under OHSU policies; and information will only be shared on a need to know basis pursuant to AAEO's investigation protocol or as required by law. OHSU prohibits retaliation against individuals who file a complaint or who participate in an investigation. Alleged retaliation will be investigated and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.