

Resident Requests for Reasonable Modifications

This policy and procedure shall apply to all City of Philadelphia entities*

Policy:

Under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the City is responsible for physical accessibility and program accessibility. Physical accessibility ensures that individuals can access the built environment and program accessibility ensures equal access to programs, services, activities, and information provided by the City.

This policy upholds the commitment of the City of Philadelphia (City) to operate the policies, practices, procedures, services, buildings, and activities so that, when viewed in their entirety, they are accessible to and useable by qualified people with disabilities.

Implementing Procedure:

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), qualified people with disabilities can request “reasonable modifications*,” which are changes in the way the City operates, to give people with disabilities equal opportunity to participate in city activities.

Reasonable modification requests must allow a qualified person with a disability to participate in, and enjoy the benefits of programs, services, and activities in the same manner as residents who are not disabled.

Step 1: Resident makes reasonable modification request

Residents may submit reasonable modification requests online or with departments. If the resident makes the request via email, mail, phone, or in person, the employee should enter the information from the request into the form at phila.gov/reasonable-modification. City employees shall enter the request online as soon as possible but no later than two (2) business days upon receipt of an oral or written request.

The following information must be collected:

- Name and contact information of person who needs the modification
- Name of the program, service, activity, or location of request
- Description of modification being requested

If additional information is needed, the City may request only that information necessary to confirm the need for the modification.

Step 2: Department works with the Office of ADA Compliance to process the request

After receiving all information for the request, the department will respond to resident to acknowledge receipt of the request. The department ADA liaison should work with the Office of ADA Compliance (OAC) to evaluate requests.

In general, the city will approve requests so long as they meet the following criteria:

- There is a disability-related need
- The request is reasonable and would not pose an undue burden

If Department does not intend to approve request, ADA Liaison shall consult with the OAC. The Director of ADA Compliance and the Law Department will review the request and advise the department on next steps.

Step 3: Department responds to resident

The Department will respond to the resident as soon as possible, but no later than fifteen (15) business days. The response will acknowledge the request, inform the person of the outcome of the request, and provide notice that the resident has a right to appeal a decision, if so desired. The response shall include the name and contact information of the Director of ADA Compliance.

Responses will be in documented in writing. Departments are encouraged to use the Reasonable Modification Response template. Responses must be communicated in an alternative format, if requested. The response must indicate a right to appeal.

If the request cannot be completed within fifteen (15) business days, the department Liaison shall contact the resident and the Director of ADA Compliance to show the need for the delay and establish a reasonable date for completion.

Step 4: Department notifies Office of ADA Compliance of request completion

After completing the request, the department ADA Liaison must inform the OAC that the request has been completed.

If the modification request is approved, but the request is to be completed at a later date, the department ADA Liaison shall contact the resident and the Office of ADA Compliance (OAC) to indicate the projected date of completion. Additionally, at completion, the department ADA Liaison shall inform the resident and the OAC.

The ADA Liaison shall track the 1) requests received, 2) outcome, and 3) responses to requests.