



Grand Junction Housing Authority

Notice Of Right To Reasonable Accommodation/Modification

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Fair Housing Act, it is the policy of Grand Junction Housing Authority (GJHA) to provide reasonable accommodations for applicants and participants with disabilities, when necessary, to ensure an equal opportunity to participate in or benefit from GJHA housing programs.

Reasonable accommodation is a change, adaptation or modification to a policy, program or services which will allow a person with a disability as defined under the federal civil rights law the equal opportunity to participate fully in GJHA's housing programs. Federal regulations require that requests for accommodations be considered reasonable if they do not create an undue financial and administrative burden for GJHA or result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of the program. There must also be an identified relationship between the required reasonable accommodation and the individual's disability.

A person is disabled if he or she:

- Has a physical, emotional, or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, or
- Has a record of such an impairment, or
- Is regarded as having such an impairment

For reasonable accommodations, disability status and the need for reasonable accommodation must be verified and documented initially by a knowledgeable professional. A request for continued need must be completed annually by or on behalf of the participant.

Examples of reasonable accommodation may include:

- Providing time extensions for locating a unit
- Modification of unit features for accessibility
- Permitting participants to have a live-in aide
- Allowing assistance animal to reside in the unit

Requests for reasonable accommodations must be assessed on a case-by-case basis, considering factors such as the cost of the requested accommodation, the financial resources of GJHA at the time of the request, the benefits that the accommodation would provide to the family, and the availability of alternative accommodations that would effectively meet the family's disability-related needs.



If you or a member of your household are disabled and require reasonable accommodation, you may request it, in writing, at any time during the application process or after admission. You may obtain a Request for Reasonable Accommodation form by contacting GJHA at:

Grand Junction Housing Authority

8 Foresight Circle Grand Junction CO 81505

Phone: 970-245-0388; Fax: 970-241-5514

TDD/TTY or Colorado Relay: 711 or 1-800-842-9710

GJHA will respond to your request **within ten (10) business days from the date the request was received, and all verifications have been received.** If additional information is necessary, you will receive a written request from GJHA outlining what is needed. Whether your request is approved or denied, you will be notified in writing. Should your request be denied, you have the right to appeal the decision.

Grand Junction Housing Authority 504 Coordinator

Name: Heather Fox, Quality Assurance Specialist

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Grand Junction Housing Authority Reasonable Accommodation Policy

Overview

In accordance with Section 504, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Fair Housing Act, it is the policy of Grand Junction Housing Authority (GJHA) to make reasonable accommodation in rules, policies, practices, or services when such reasonable accommodation may be necessary to afford a person with a disability the equal opportunity to fully participate in GJHA housing programs.

A copy of this Reasonable Accommodation Policy will be available on GJHA's website.

GJHA will ask all applicants and participants if they require any type of reasonable accommodation, in writing, on the GJHA website by including the following language or similar language in application and other materials:

If you or a member of your household is a person with disabilities, and require a specific reasonable accommodation to fully utilize our programs and services, you may request Reasonable Accommodation by contacting GJHA at:

Grand Junction Housing Authority

8 Foresight Circle Grand Junction CO 81505

Phone: 970-245-0388; Fax: 970-241-5514

TDD/TTY or Colorado Relay: 711 or 1-800-842-9710

Definition of Reasonable Accommodation

Reasonable accommodation is a change, modification, exception, alteration, or adaptation in a policy, procedure, practice, program, service, activity, facility, or dwelling unit that may be necessary to provide an Individual with a Disability an equal opportunity to: (1) use and enjoy a dwelling, including public and common use areas of a development; (2) participate in, or benefit from, a program (housing or non-housing), service, or activity. Such reasonable accommodation must be granted unless it would (i) pose an undue financial and administrative burden, or (ii) fundamentally alter the essential nature of the program, service, or activity.



Types of Reasonable Accommodations

When needed, GJHA will modify normal procedures to accommodate the needs of a person with disabilities. Examples include:

- Providing application and reporting documents in an alternative format
- Providing TDD/TTY Number or translation services when necessary
- Providing time extensions for completing paperwork/locating a unit
- Permitting participants to have a live-in aide
- Permitting assistance or service animals to live in the unit
- Modification of unit features for accessibility

Request for Accommodation

If a participant indicates that an exception, change, or adjustment to a rule, policy, practice, or service is needed because of a disability, GJHA will treat the information as a request for reasonable accommodation, even if no formal request is made. Once a tenant tells a housing provider that they are a person with a disability and need something changed to accommodate their disability, the provider is obligated to begin reasonable accommodation process.

A request may be oral or written. However, the best practice is to request reasonable accommodation in writing so that there is a clear record of the request. If a participant is unable to write the request, the request can be heard orally and written for the individual allowing them to confirm the accuracy.

Requests for reasonable accommodation must be assessed on a case-by-case basis, considering factors such as the cost of the requested reasonable accommodation, the financial resources of GJHA at the time of the request, the benefits that reasonable accommodation would provide to the household, and the availability of alternative reasonable accommodations that would effectively meet the household's disability-related needs.

A certification of continued need for reasonable accommodation must be made annually. The GJHA Voucher department will obtain third party verification every three years for items such as an extra bedroom for a medical need. If the granted reasonable accommodation is unit-specific, the request must be re-verified at the time the participant moves into a new unit.

Verification of Disability

Before providing reasonable accommodation, GJHA will determine that the person meets the definition of a person with a disability, and that reasonable accommodation will enhance the household's access to GJHA's programs and services. GJHA will seek only the minimum information needed to determine if reasonable accommodation would serve an individual's disability-related need.

If a person's disability is obvious or otherwise known to GJHA, and if the need for the requested reasonable accommodation is also readily apparent or known, no further verification will be required.



If a household indicates that reasonable accommodation is required for a disability that is not obvious or otherwise known to GJHA, GJHA will verify that the person meets the definition of a person with a disability, and that the limitations imposed by the disability require the requested reasonable accommodation.

- Third-party verification must be obtained from an individual identified by the household who is competent to make the determination. A knowledgeable professional such as a doctor or other medical professional, a peer support group, a non-medical service agency, or a reliable third party who is in a position to know about the individual's disability may provide verification of a disability.
- GJHA must request only information that is necessary to evaluate the disability-related need for reasonable accommodation. GJHA will not inquire about the nature or extent of any disability.
- Medical records will not be accepted or retained in the participant file.

In the event that GJHA does receive confidential information about a person's specific diagnosis, treatment, or the nature or severity of the disability, GJHA will dispose of it. In place of the information, GJHA will note in the file that the disability and other requested information have been verified, the date the verification was received, and the name and address of the knowledgeable professional who sent the verification.

Nexus

The request should state specifically what reasonable accommodation the tenant is seeking and demonstrate that the tenant has a disability that could be accommodated by the specific request. If the need for reasonable accommodation is not readily apparent or known to GJHA, the household must explain the relationship between the requested reasonable accommodation and the disability. There must be an identifiable connection, or nexus, between the requested reasonable accommodation and the individual's disability.

Approval/Denial of Requested Accommodation

After a request for reasonable accommodation is presented, GJHA will respond, in writing, **within ten (10) business days from the date the request and all verifications have been received.**

GJHA will approve a request for reasonable accommodation if the following three conditions are met:

- The request was made by or on behalf of a person with a disability.
- There is a disability-related need for the requested reasonable accommodation.
- The requested accommodation is reasonable, meaning it would not fundamentally alter the nature of the GJHA's program or impose undue financial and administrative burden, considering resources available to GJHA.

Requests for reasonable accommodation must be assessed on a case-by-case basis, taking into account factors such as the overall size of GJHA's program with respect to the number of employees, type of facilities and size of budget, type of operation including composition and structure of workforce, the nature and cost of the requested reasonable accommodation, and the availability of



alternative reasonable accommodations that would effectively meet the household's disability-related needs.

Interactive Dialogue

Before deciding whether to approve the request, GJHA may enter into an interactive dialogue and negotiation with the household, request more information from the household, or may require the household to sign a consent form so that GJHA may verify the nexus for the requested reasonable accommodation.

If GJHA denies a request for reasonable accommodation because there is no relationship, or nexus, found between the disability and the requested reasonable accommodation, the notice will inform the household of the right to appeal GJHA's decision through an informal review (if applicable) or informal hearing.

Before GJHA denies a request for reasonable accommodation because it is not reasonable, it would impose an undue financial and administrative burden, or fundamentally alter the nature of GJHA's operations, GJHA must enter into an interactive dialogue with the participant to discuss whether an alternative reasonable accommodation could effectively address the household's disability-related needs without a fundamental alteration to the program and without imposing an undue financial and administrative burden.

If GJHA believes that the household has failed to identify reasonable alternative reasonable accommodation after interactive discussion and negotiation, GJHA will notify the household, in writing, of its determination **within ten (10) business days from the date of the most recent discussion or communication with the household.**

Grievance Procedure

If GJHA denies a request for reasonable accommodation, the affected household has the right to appeal the decision **within ten (10) business days** of the date of the written notification. The appeal meeting will be conducted by staff who were not originally involved in the denial. GJHA will provide a written decision in response to the appeal no later than **ten (10) business days after** GJHA receipt and review of the appeal.

Program Accessibility for Persons with Hearing or Vision Impairments

HUD regulations require GJHA to ensure that persons with disabilities related to hearing and vision have reasonable access to GJHA's programs and services.

At the initial point of contact with each applicant, GJHA shall inform all applicants of alternative forms of communication that can be used other than plain language paperwork.

- To meet the needs of persons with hearing impairments, TTD/TTY (1-800-842-9710 / 711) communication will be available.
- To meet the needs of persons with vision impairments, large print and audio versions of key program documents will be made available upon request. When visual aids are used in public



meetings or presentations, or in meetings with GJHA staff, one-on-one assistance will be provided upon request.

- Additional examples of alternative forms of communication are sign language interpretation; having material explained orally by staff; or having a third-party representative (a friend, relative or advocate, named by the applicant) to receive, interpret and explain housing materials and be present at all meetings.

Denial or Termination of Assistance

GJHA's decision to deny or terminate the assistance of a household that includes a person with disabilities is subject to consideration of reasonable accommodation.

When applicants with disabilities are denied assistance, the notice of denial must inform them of GJHA's informal review process and their right to request an informal review. In addition, the notice must inform applicants with disabilities of their right to request reasonable accommodation to participate in the informal review process.

When a participant household's assistance is terminated, the notice of termination must inform them of GJHA's informal hearing process and their right to request a hearing and reasonable accommodation.

When reviewing reasonable accommodation requests, GJHA must consider whether any mitigating circumstances can be verified to explain and overcome the problem that led to GJHA's decision to deny or terminate assistance. If reasonable accommodation will allow the household to meet the requirements, GJHA must make reasonable accommodation.

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