

Informational Packet for Requesting Reasonable Housing Accommodations

In accordance with applicable federal, state, and city disability laws, GW's Disability Support Services will review requests for accessible housing for individuals who have a qualifying physical, medical or psychological disability.¹ GW maintains accessible housing dispersed throughout its housing stock that includes a variety of locations, amenities, configurations, and occupancy. GW is committed to providing students with disabilities accessible housing placements or options that are comparable, convenient, and at the same cost as to others within GW's varied housing offerings.

Reasonable housing accommodations are provided for students living on GW's campus. Accessible housing requests for students with disabilities are reviewed by Disability Support Services. **All accommodations are determined on a case-by-case basis as part of an interactive process according to a student's documented disability-related need and prevailing standards for reasonable accommodations.**

When requesting accessible housing or otherwise seeking a reasonable accommodation related to housing, applicants are expected to have already applied for GW Housing and met the eligibility requirements and [deadlines](#) set by the office of Campus Living & Residential Education (CLRE).

Please note that an approved request for accessible housing accommodations does not guarantee a housing assignment. Please further note that all students are subject to the same generally applicable deadlines to request housing. Requests for disability-related accessible housing or other reasonable accommodations related to housing received after such deadlines are subject to limited availability and students approved may be placed on a waitlist.

¹ According to the District of Columbia Human Rights Law, the term "disability" means:

- a) A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of an individual having a record of such an impairment or being regarded as having such an impairment.
- b) The term "physical, medical, mental, or psychological impairment" means:
 - (1) An impairment of any system of the body; including, but not limited to: the neurological system; the musculoskeletal system; the special sense organs and respiratory organs, including, but not limited to, speech organs; the cardiovascular system; the reproductive system; the digestive and genitourinary systems; the hemic and lymphatic systems; the immunological systems; the skin; and the endocrine system; or
 - (2) A mental or psychological impairment
- c) In the case of alcoholism, drug addiction or other substance abuse, the term "disability" shall only apply to a person who:
 - (1) is recovering or has recovered and
 - (2) currently is free of such abuse and shall not include an individual who is currently engaging in the illegal use of drugs, when the covered entity acts on the basis of such use.

How to Apply for a Reasonable Housing Accommodation

Step 1: Read the Informational Packet for Requesting Reasonable Housing Accommodations

Step 2: Complete the [DSS Registration Form](#). Students wishing to participate in the generally applicable housing assignment process must submit by the request deadline.

Step 3: A treating clinician should complete the [Disability Verification Form](#). Further guidance for documentation can be found on the [DSS Website](#).

Step 4: Submit the completed forms and supporting documentation through your initial application or via the [additional documentation portal](#).

Information provided to Disability Support Services is kept confidential and will only be shared within the University as is necessary to evaluate or facilitate provision of the requested accommodation.

If you have any questions about the process, please email dsshousing@gwu.edu.

How Applications are Reviewed and How Students are Informed of Decisions Related to Accessible Housing and Reasonable Housing Accommodations:

Requests for Disability-Related Accessible Housing, along with all supporting documentation, will be reviewed by representatives from Disability Support Services, every Thursday (excluding holidays and other University closings). When possible, students are notified of the decision via email to their GW email address within 10 business days. The correspondence includes a decision regarding eligibility for each housing need requested. Types of decisions include granting or denying a request in whole or in part, providing a reasonable accommodation for accessibility that may differ from the precise request, and/or requesting further documentation or information to support a request. Decisions may be appealed and instructions on how to do so are also included in the decision email.

All approvals are communicated to GW's office for Campus Living & Residential Education (CLRE), which will contact the student through the housing assignment process regarding a specific room assignment or assignment option that will meet their accessibility need(s) and provide the approved reasonable housing accommodation. To ensure that students with disabilities receive comparable housing options and assignments, for those assigned by GW to a specific room, where appropriate, GW shall make appropriate individualized adjustments. All inquiries related to features or specifications of the housing assignment offered should be directed to CLRE at (202) 994-2552 or living@gwu.edu.

Once a student has been deemed eligible for a disability housing accommodation, and their needs remain the same, Campus Living and Residential Education (CLRE) will make every effort to accommodate the student in a similar manner for their remaining years in residence. Variable or changing disability conditions may periodically require updated or supplemental

documentation. Given the limited availability of certain housing configurations, students may apply for an exemption from GW's residency requirement if an appropriate housing accommodation cannot be made on campus.

Requests for accommodation may be submitted and will be evaluated at any time, but requests received after the housing assignment process is already underway or has been completed are subject to limited availability and students whose requests for accessible housing are approved may be placed on a waitlist by the Campus Living & Residential Education. As noted above, receiving an approved request does not guarantee a housing assignment, and students with disabilities are subject to the same generally applicable deadlines as all other students.

Important Information about Supporting Documentation

Supporting documentation should be from a licensed, treating provider and describe the connection between the student's diagnosis and the requested accessible housing and/or related housing accommodation. The healthcare provider should complete the [Disability Verification Form](#) and/or include a letter of additional support if they choose.

Documentation should be:

1. Recent as it should speak to the current impact the diagnosis has on the student's ability to live in GW Housing (DSS staff can be available to answer questions about documentation)
2. Sufficient to establish a direct link between the underlying diagnosis and the requested housing accommodation.

The following documents are **not** considered effective forms of documentation if submitted alone:

1. Handwritten patient records or notes from patient charts
2. Prescription pad notes
3. Self-evaluation found on the internet or in any print publication
4. Research articles

Examples of Common Requests for Accessible Housing and Housing Accommodations:

- **Single (suite style):** private sleeping area within a shared suite.
- **Single (non-suite style):** a single person living environment, no roommates or suitemates.

- **Proximity:** Students may request to be housed near Foggy Bottom campus or other GW building locations.
- **Physical Modifications:** Students who may require physical modification in their living space must indicate their specific needs by the applicable deadlines to be guaranteed timely modifications. Examples of modifications may include wheelchair accessibility, flashing fire alarms, etc.
- **Carpeting:** If no carpet is a critical accommodation for a student with a qualified disability, this must be reflected in the submitted documentation.
- **Meal Plan Alteration:** Students living in On-Campus Housing are required to be on a meal plan, the minimum requirement is based on your class year. For more information on meal plan requirements, please see the [GW Dining Terms and Conditions](#). Additional information about GW Dining services can also be found on the [GW Dining website](#).
 - Students with disability-related dining needs may be able eligible for a reduced meal plan or to be exempted from this requirement. Students with specific dining needs are encouraged to contact GW Dining regarding menu options at 202-994-3663 or dining@gwu.edu.

Examples of Requests for Accessible Housing that generally are NOT considered reasonable accommodations:

- **Specific Building Requests-** Students should generally not make building specific requests, but instead request the housing feature that provides disability-related accessibility that the student needs (e.g., proximity to campus; building with dining services; etc.). A building specific request generally is not considered a reasonable request.
- **Roommate requests -** Roommates may be assigned to students with disabilities who are occupying modified rooms in the same manner as other residential students. However, a roommate request generally is not considered a reasonable accessible housing request.

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