



## **REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION FAQs**

### **What is a disability?**

A disability is a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

Major life activities include such activities as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working.

### **What is a reasonable accommodation?**

A reasonable accommodation is a change to a rule, policy, practice, or service to allow a person with a disability an equal opportunity to use and enjoy any of HASCO's services. A request for a reasonable accommodation can be made at any time. This can include during the application process, when leasing up, for modifications of properties that HASCO manages, or upon exit from HASCO's services.

Note for voucher holders renting from private landlords: HASCO can make accommodations related to your voucher and the voucher process, but any accommodations needed for your unit such as when rent is due or structural modifications need to be addressed by the landlord.

### **Why might I need a reasonable accommodation?**

A person with a disability may need a reasonable accommodation when there is an identifiable relationship between a person's disability need and the requested accommodation.

Not all persons with disabilities will have a need to request a reasonable accommodation. However, all persons with disabilities have a right to request or be provided a reasonable accommodation at any time.

### **Do I need to provide medical documentation to prove my need for an accommodation?**

In many cases, documentation from a medical provider or another professional who is familiar with your disability and needs should be provided to show that you have a disability related need for the accommodation you are requesting. The documentation can be as simple as a note from your doctor and only needs to include information that you 1) have a disability, and 2) how your disability related needs make it necessary for you to have the requested reasonable accommodation to use HASCO's services. If you are using the [HASCO Reasonable Accommodation form](#), there is a spot for your provider

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to include this information. If additional information is needed beyond what is included, HASCO may follow up with your provider.

The documentation you share does not need to go in depth into your medical history, diagnosis, or treatment. You only need to share information to the extent that it establishes a disability related need for a requested accommodation.

In some cases, documentation isn't required. This happens when a disability and the related need are obvious. For example, if an individual who uses a wheelchair requests a unit that is on the ground floor or near an elevator, they do not need to provide documentation because both the disability and the related need for the accommodation are obvious.

#### What kinds of accommodations are typical for HASCO's programs?

For voucher holders, typical accommodations might include:

- Voucher extensions to allow extra time to find an apartment
- An exception to rent from a relative who is a caregiver
- An increased voucher size to allow for a live-in caregiver

For residents of HASCO managed properties, typical accommodations might include:

- A structural modification to make a bathroom accessible
- The right to own a service animal
- An assigned parking space near their unit for individuals with mobility impairments

This is not a complete list of accommodations. Because disabilities and disability related needs are dynamic, individuals with disabilities should feel free to request reasonable accommodations that are not included in this list or already included on the HASCO reasonable accommodations request form.

#### Does every accommodation request have to be granted?

Once an individual has shown that they have a disability related need for a reasonable accommodation, the accommodation should be granted in most cases, but there are exceptions.

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In some cases, HASCO may work with an individual to find an alternative accommodation to the one that was requested, but that also meets the individual's needs.

Accommodation requests can be denied in three situations:

1. If providing an accommodation would impose an undue financial and administrative burden.
2. If providing an accommodation would fundamentally alter the nature of the program that HASCO provides.
3. If providing an accommodation would create a direct threat to the health and safety of the person making the request or to others.

Decisions about whether a reasonable accommodation request falls into these reasons for denial will be made on a case-by-case basis. Anytime that HASCO determines a requested accommodation should be denied for one of these reasons, the Fair Housing Program Manager or the Housing Specialist assigned to the individual will work with the requestor to determine if an alternative accommodation might work or if the disability need can be accommodated up to the point that it would fall into one of the denial reasons above.

#### How does HASCO's reasonable accommodation process work?

HASCO's reasonable accommodation request form can be found at [Reasonable Accommodation Info - HASCO](#). The individual requesting the reasonable accommodation should fill out the first page and have their provider fill out and sign the second and third page. The individual can then give the form to their assigned Housing Specialist. Accommodation requests can be made verbally or in writing without using HASCO's reasonable accommodation request form, but this may require more back and forth between the requestor and Housing Specialist to determine if additional information is needed.

Once a reasonable accommodation request has been made, a decision should be made in a reasonable amount of time. Before a request can be denied, the request will be considered by HASCO's Reasonable Accommodation Committee. The person who made the request will be notified of a decision in writing, and denials can be appealed to HASCO's executive director within 15 calendar days.

#### Why do I need to recertify my accommodation every year?

Reasonable Accommodations are required to remove disability related barriers that prevent an individual from full use and access to HASCO's services. Many reasonable accommodation needs are not

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permanent. In cases where a disability related need may be subject to change, HASCO requires the individual to reverify the need each year and will work with them to reverify in the least burdensome way possible.

For voucher holders - how do I know which accommodations I need to ask for from HASCO or from my landlord?

In most cases, HASCO can consider accommodation requests related to the voucher or voucher process. This might include the voucher size, how long someone has to look for a lease, or whether rules that prevent people from using their voucher to rent from a relative can be modified.

On the other hand, accommodations that are related to the rental unit itself should be brought to the landlord. These may include parking space requests, service animal requests, or requests for a different rent due date to accommodate when disability related benefits are received.

If you are unsure whether an accommodation request should be made to HASCO or your landlord, ask your Housing Specialist or the Fair Housing Program Manager.

I have additional questions not on this FAQ.

If you have additional questions not found here or if you need to talk through any of the information found on this FAQ, feel free to ask the Fair Housing Program Manager. The Fair Housing Program Manager is Chad Hansen, and he can be reached by email at [chansen@hasco.org](mailto:chansen@hasco.org).

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