

2021 AmeriCorps Grant Management Institute

Reasonable Accommodations July 16th, 2021

Kyla Mittal, Special Projects Coordinator



Agenda

- What is a Reasonable Accommodation (RA)?
- Developing a RA Request Process
- Types of RAs
- Undue Hardship
- Breakout Session and Discussion
- Q&A

What is a Reasonable Accommodation?

- Request to alter workplace policy to accommodate a medical condition or disability
 - Must be tied to disability
- Goal is to remove workplace barriers to help members effectively perform duties
- What it is not: a change to the fundamental nature of the program or a way to get out of service duties
- Usually inexpensive and easy to implement
- Can apply to members in any stage of the recruitment process, not just currently enrolled members

What is a Reasonable Accommodation?

- Disability: a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits major life activities (ADA)
- Reasonable: defined by the grantee depending on the available resources (EEOC)
 - Does not necessarily mean that the accommodation is not costly, difficult, or time-consuming
- A member or applicant is qualified if they can successfully perform the service duties with or without accommodation

Developing a Reasonable Accommodation Request Process

1. Recognize the Request

- A member does not have to use the words “reasonable accommodation” or put the request in writing
- Members should initiate the conversation, and can request at any time

Examples:

- “I’m having trouble getting to my service site on time due to medical treatments I’m undergoing.”
- “I need time off to get treatment for a back problem.”



Developing a Reasonable Accommodation Request Process

2. Gather Information

- Meant to be a collaboration between the member and grantee
- A grantee can request documentation for a disability and appropriate accommodations, if not immediately obvious
- Lack of action is considered a denial. A request must be acted upon in a timely manner

Examples:

- A member in a wheelchair requests a larger desk since the current one does not fit with the dimensions of the wheelchair
- A member says he's having trouble reaching tools due to a shoulder injury



Developing a Reasonable Accommodation Request Process

3. Explore Accommodations

- The member likely already has ideas
- Can request ideas from knowledgeable professionals
- Accommodations can change over time, so it's a best practice to list as many options as possible up front

4. Choose Accommodations

- The grantee can ultimately choose which accommodation to implement, but should consider the member's preferences

Developing a Reasonable Accommodation Request Process

5. Implement Accommodations

6. Monitor Accommodations

- Grantee should periodically check in with the member regarding the efficacy of the accommodation
- If an accommodation is not effective, it is the responsibility of the grantee to exhaust all other options before terminating the member

Example:

- Efficacy of an accommodation: reader



Types of Reasonable Accommodations

1. Service Restructuring: altering when/how a service duty is performed
 - Reallocating marginal service duties to another member that a disability prevents
2. Modified Schedule: change in hourly or weekly schedule
3. Modified Workplace Policy
4. Reassignment
5. Leave

Undue Hardship

- Causing significant difficulty or expense that would alter the nature of the program
- Considerations:
 - Must consider all accommodation options
 - Must consider all funding sources
 - Determined based on grantee's available resources - case by case
- Legal obligation to prove undue hardship falls on the grantee

Examples of Undue Hardship

- A member requests an adjustment in his work schedule to start at 8am instead of 7am due to a disability. This member works with three others who cannot do their service duties without the requesting member present.
- A member with cancer is undergoing chemotherapy and as a result, is fatigued with her current workload. The grantee transfers three of her marginal duties to another member.

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Breakout Sessions

Example Scenario and Peer Discussion



Example Scenario

- A supervisor frequently schedules team meetings on a day's notice. A member with a disability has missed several meetings because they have conflicted with previously scheduled doctor's appointments. The member asks the supervisor to give 2-3 days notice for team meetings so the appointments can be rescheduled if necessary.

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Q&A Session



Additional Resources

- Job Accommodation Network Website: <https://askjan.org/>
- Guidance from CNCS: [Reasonable Accommodation](#)
- [Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation and Undue Hardship under the ADA | US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#)
 - Specific examples related to employment

Contact us

Kyla Mittal

Special Projects Coordinator

kyla.mittal@state.co.us

