



# CIVILIAN PERSONNEL SECTION FACT SHEET

Current as of June 2022

## REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

*Applicable to U.S. appropriated fund civilian employees*

**PURPOSE:** Air Force commanders and supervisors must reasonably accommodate qualified employees or applicants with a disability, unless the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the Department of the Air Force. Reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to a job, employment practice, or the work environment that enables a qualified person with a disability to apply for a job, perform job duties, or enjoy equal benefits and privileges in employment equal to those of employees without disabilities. The concept of reasonable accommodation applies to all aspects of employment, including recruitment, work location and scheduled training, promotion, reassignment, and developmental assignments. Examples of reasonable accommodations include:

- Adaptive equipment
- Requests for a reader or sign language interpreter, or other staff assistance
- Removal of architectural barriers
- Reconfiguration of work space
- Materials in alternative formats (e.g. Braille, large print)
- Acquiring or modifying equipment or devices

**REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION PROCESS:** The following is a brief summary of the reasonable accommodation process. For additional information, employees and supervisors should review the applicable attached factsheets (see attachment #1 for employees, and attachment #2 for supervisors) and the reasonable accommodation provisions found in chapter 13 of AFI 36-2710, *Equal Opportunity Program*.

The Disability Program Manager (DPM) for employees that are personnel serviced by the Ramstein AB Civilian Personnel Flight may be reached at the following email address: [86fss.fsec.us-emr@us.af.mil](mailto:86fss.fsec.us-emr@us.af.mil).

1. **Request Accommodation.** An employee who wishes to obtain reasonable accommodation, or someone acting on the employee's behalf, may make an oral or written request to the employee's first level supervisor or others in the chain of command. For documentation purposes, employees seeking reasonable accommodation will follow up on any initial request by confirming their request in writing to their immediate supervisor on the Request for Reasonable Accommodation Template Form (see attachment #3) as soon as possible following an initial request.
  - The initial request does not need to contain any special words, such as "reasonable accommodation," and the individual need not have a particular accommodation in mind prior to making the request.
  - The employee may ask their medical professional to complete the attached medical inquiry form (see attachment #4) and provide it with their accommodation request to assist with the accommodation process.
  - **Supervisors must confirm receipt of accommodation request within 10 calendar days**, and arrange to begin the interactive process. If the request was submitted to the employee's supervisor, the supervisor shall forward the request and any supporting documentation to the DPM who will provide guidance and assistance.
2. **Interactive process.** The interactive process is the discussion that takes place between the employee and the supervisor (augmented by the DPM as needed) to determine what limitations the individual is experiencing due to

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a medical or physical impairment, clarify what the individual needs, and identify what accommodations might be helpful in working around those limitations.

- If the need for an accommodation is not obvious (e.g., recurring use of a wheelchair would generally be an obvious condition requiring accommodation), a supervisor, after consulting with the DPM and Legal office, can ask the employee for reasonable supporting documentation.
- Supervisors will be proactive in seeking out and considering possible accommodations, to include consulting the DPM, medical personnel, and other appropriate resources for assistance.

3. Determining and Selecting Reasonable Accommodations. Supervisors will consider the preference of the individual to be accommodated and select and implement the accommodation that is most appropriate for both the employee and the Air Force. The Air Force is not required to provide the employee's preferred accommodation(s) and may choose among reasonable accommodations as long as the selected accommodation is equally effective to the one desired by the employee. In circumstances where the employee and the supervisor disagree on the most appropriate accommodation, the supervisor will immediately consult with the DPM to help determine the appropriate accommodation(s).

- Supervisors and Installation Commanders will consult with the DPM, MAJCOM Functional Manager, and the servicing Legal office in making reasonable accommodation determinations.
- Lowering performance standards or removing an essential function from the position are not reasonable accommodations. In addition, the Air force is not obligated to provide personal use items such as glasses or hearing aids as a reasonable accommodation.
- Any decision to deny a request for reasonable accommodation must first be reviewed and coordinated by the installation Legal office. Once reviewed and coordinated, the request must be routed for review and endorsement by the Installation Commander or designee.
- **Supervisors will act upon an employee's request for reasonable accommodation, secure appropriate concurrences and provide an employee with a written response within 30 calendar days.** Exceptions exist for cases which require medical documentation.
- Supervisors must notify the installation DPM when accommodations are implemented and complete/submit the DAF Reasonable Accommodation Information Reporting form (see attachment #5).

4. Implementation of Approved Reasonable Accommodations and Monitoring. Not all accommodations produce the desired outcome. Supervisors will monitor the effectiveness of any approved reasonable accommodation once it has been provided to ensure the accommodation is effective (T-0). If the accommodation proves ineffective, the interactive process begins again.

#### **ATTACHMENTS:**

1. [Reasonable Accommodation Factsheet for Employees](#)
2. [Reasonable Accommodation Factsheet for Supervisors](#)
3. [Reasonable Accommodation Request Form](#)
4. [Medical Inquiry Form in Response to Reasonable Accommodation](#)
5. [DAF Reasonable Accommodation Reporting Form](#)

#### **REFERENCES:**

AFI 36-2710, *Equal Opportunity Program* (18 Jun 2020) - Personal Assistance Services (Chapter 12) and updated Reasonable Accommodation procedures (Chapter 13); and 29 CFR 1630

Additional guidance on this topic is available in the attachments to this factsheet and from your Employee Relations Specialist. Contact information found in the footer below.