



# NASA Procedural Requirements

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Request Notification of Change (NASA Only)

**Subject: Reasonable Accommodations Procedures****Responsible Office: Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity**[| TOC](#) | [Preface](#) | [Chapter1](#) | [Chapter2](#) | [Chapter3](#) | [Chapter4](#) | [Chapter5](#) | [Chapter6](#) | [AppendixA](#) | [AppendixB](#) | [AppendixC](#) | [AppendixD](#) | [AppendixE](#) | [AppendixF](#) | [ALL](#) |

## Chapter 2. Roles and Responsibilities

### 2.1 Employees

2.1.1 Employees requesting reasonable accommodation are responsible for:

a. Notifying their supervisor or Center DPM orally or in writing of any disability or medical condition that may interfere with the performance of the essential functions of their job.

(1) An oral request will start the reasonable accommodation process.

(2) For record-keeping purposes, reasonable accommodation requests are recorded using NASA Form (NF) 1699. <sup>6</sup> Employees may complete NF 1699 or seek assistance from the DPM or their supervisor. (See Appendix F.)

(3) If the employee does not complete NF 1699, the employee is responsible for promptly reviewing the NF 1699 and signing it, acknowledging that the form properly reflects the requested accommodation. <sup>7</sup>

b. Participating in an interactive process (see Section 3.2.2) with their supervisor regarding functional limitations and the need for an accommodation. Employee responsibilities in the interactive process include:

(1) Suggesting reasonable accommodation possibilities that can be explored;

(2) Cooperating with management efforts to identify effective accommodations and/or alternate placements, if necessary; and

(3) Promptly providing requested supporting medical documentation on the physical and/or mental impairment to be accommodated and how it relates to the essential functions of the position. <sup>8</sup> Employees should understand that, if the Agency asks for documentation, their requests for reasonable accommodation will not be processed until they provide the supporting documentation. (See Sections 3.2.7 and 3.3.)

2.1.2 Employees should understand that under Federal law they are not entitled to the accommodation of their choice. They are entitled to an effective accommodation that does not impose an undue hardship on the Agency.

<sup>6</sup> It is the Agency's preference that requests for reasonable accommodation are made by the employee in writing, using NF 1699 (See Section 3.1.6).

<sup>7</sup> All reference to NASA Forms or NFs refers to the forms or their electronic equivalents.

<sup>8</sup> Employees or their representatives should let their supervisor know of any potential delays in providing adequate medical documentation.

### 2.2 Job Applicants

2.2.1 If job applicants need a reasonable accommodation during the application or hiring process, they should inform the Human Resources Specialist (HRS) who is handling the Vacancy Announcement under which they are applying. An example would be a request for sign language interpretation.

2.2.2 In general, job applicants who request a reasonable accommodation for the application process should participate in an interactive discussion with the HRS, similar to that between a NASA employee and supervisor (See Sections 2.1.1(b) and 3.2.2.)

## 2.3 Supervisors/Decision Makers <sup>9</sup>

2.3.1 First-level supervisors are responsible for deciding whether to grant or deny employee requests for reasonable accommodation in most circumstances. <sup>10</sup>

2.3.2 When employees raise the reasonable accommodation request directly with their supervisor and do not make the request in writing, the supervisor is responsible for documenting the reasonable accommodation request. The supervisor is responsible for transferring the request details to NF 1699 as soon as possible but no later than five calendar days from the date the request was received and promptly providing copies of the NF 1699 to the Center DPM and employee requesting the accommodation.

2.3.3 Supervisors should consult with the "Reasonable Accommodations Team" throughout this process. (See Sec. 2.8.)

2.3.4 Supervisors shall engage in the interactive process with employees to discuss the employee's limitations and the need for accommodation. This discussion is designed to allow the supervisor to determine whether or not an accommodation is reasonable and, if so, what would be the most effective accommodation for the employee that does not impose an undue hardship on the Agency. (See Sections 1.2.2, 1.2.3 and Section 3.2.2.)

2.3.5 Supervisors shall promptly notify the employee in writing of their final decision whether to grant or deny the accommodation. <sup>11</sup>

2.3.5.1 Where an accommodation is granted, the supervisor shall notify the employee in writing of when and how the accommodation will be provided.

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<sup>9</sup> For the sake of continuity, decision makers shall be referred to as "supervisors" throughout this document.

<sup>10</sup> For requests relating to benefits and privileges of employment beyond supervisory control, such as use of fitness centers, employees should direct their requests to the Center Disability Program Manager for processing (see also Sec. 2.5.3).

<sup>11</sup> The Agency is only required to accommodate the known physical or mental limitations of a qualified individual with a disability, unless the Agency can show an undue hardship. Employees must show a nexus between their disability and the need for an accommodation.

2.3.5.2 Where an accommodation is denied, the supervisor shall notify the employee in writing and provide the employee with reconsideration and appeal rights and/or the right to seek EEO counseling. Note: Employees have the right to contact an EEO counselor at any time to be advised of their rights.

2.3.6 Supervisors shall consider requests for reconsideration, including any additional information provided, and issue decisions on such requests within 10 calendar days of the request for reconsideration.

### 2.3.7 Supervisor Initiates in Limited Circumstances

2.3.7.1 Supervisors should initiate the reasonable accommodation interactive process on their own initiative without being asked if the supervisor:

- a. Knows that the employee has a disability;
- b. Knows, or has reason to know, that the employee is experiencing workplace problems because of the disability; and
- c. Knows, or has reason to know, that the disability prevents the employee from requesting a reasonable accommodation.

2.3.7.2 If the individual with a disability states that he or she does not need a reasonable accommodation, NASA will have fulfilled its obligation. <sup>12</sup>

## 2.4 Associate Administrator for Diversity and Equal Opportunity

2.4.1 The Associate Administrator (AA), ODEO, is responsible for ensuring the effective functioning of the reasonable accommodations policy and procedures, including the development and coordination of information dissemination and training on reasonable accommodations for managers, supervisors, and employees.

## 2.5 Disability Program Managers

2.5.1 The HQ or Center DPMs, who normally reside within the HQ and Center EO Offices, are responsible for coordinating, tracking, and providing advice on the reasonable accommodation process at the Center level.

## 2.5.2 The DPM:

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<sup>12</sup> See EEOC Enforcement Guidance: Reasonable Accommodation and Undue Hardship, Q&A No. 40.

- a. Receives and maintains requests for reasonable accommodations from employees and supervisors; and
- b. Notifies supervisors immediately when employees request reasonable accommodation directly to the DPM.

2.5.3 The DPM will process requests relating to benefits and privileges of employment beyond supervisory control, such as use of fitness centers, and employees should direct their requests to the Center DPM for processing. (See Appendix A for a definition of "benefits and privileges of employment.")

2.5.4 When necessary, the DPM will request and receive medical documentation in support of the reasonable accommodation request, safeguard the documentation, and forward it to the NASA physician for medical evaluation. (See Section 3.3.1.3.)

2.5.5 The DPM will convene the "Reasonable Accommodations Team" (comprised of SMEs), as deemed appropriate. (See Section 1.2.3.)

2.5.6 The DPM is responsible for entering information related to all requests for reasonable accommodation and case disposition into the NASA electronic tracking system. (See Section 5.2 for specific information on the data to be maintained.)

2.5.7 The DPM shall safeguard the privacy of reasonable accommodation records at all times. (See Section 3.3.4.)

## 2.6 Human Resources Specialists (HRS)

2.6.1 In the case of a job applicant making a request for reasonable accommodation, the HRS processing the vacancy shall be responsible for processing the request for reasonable accommodation and making the decision whether or not to grant the request.

2.6.2 The HRS shall ensure that all vacancy announcements include the following statement in accordance with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) guidelines: "Applicants with a disability who need a reasonable accommodation for any part of the application or hiring process should notify the Office of Human Capital or Human Resources. The decision on granting reasonable accommodations will be made on a case-by-case basis."

2.6.3 The HRS shall begin the interactive process with persons offered employment under Schedule A, or other disability specific hiring authority, inquiring as to whether the employee requires a reasonable accommodation, prior to reporting to duty.

2.6.4 The HRS shall notify the Center DPM regarding each request for reasonable accommodation made by a job applicant and consult appropriately.

2.6.5 In employee requests for reasonable accommodation, the HRS shall assist supervisors and other members of Reasonable Accommodation Teams in the reasonable accommodation process, as needed.

## 2.7 NASA Physicians

2.7.1 The NASA physician at each respective Center or a Federal Occupational Health (FOH) consultant <sup>13</sup> shall consult with NASA supervisors and Reasonable Accommodations Teams on a case-by-case basis regarding the need to obtain medical information. (See Section 3.3.1.1.)

2.7.2 In cases in which a review of medical documentation is determined appropriate, the NASA physician shall review the medical documentation to:

- a. Determine whether the medical documentation is sufficient for the Agency to decide whether the individual has a disability; and
- b. Provide detailed information on the employee's functional limitations to assist the supervisor in identifying what types of accommodation(s) would be reasonable and effective. (See Section 3.3.3.3.)

## 2.8 Reasonable Accommodations Team

2.8.1 This is a team of subject matter experts, including but not limited to, NASA physicians, Center DPMs (normally EO Office officials), representatives from HR, Office of the General Counsel/Center Office of the Chief Counsel, IT, and Facilities.

2.8.2 When convened by the DPM to discuss reasonable accommodation requests, members of this team advise the supervisor in helping make the decision on whether to grant or deny the request.

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<sup>13</sup> The term "NASA physician" refers to physicians employed by NASA or the Federal Occupational Health (FOH) service or working as contractors with NASA or FOH.

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