



COLLEGE of
CHARLESTON

OFFICE OF EQUAL
OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMS

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION AND EQUAL ACCESS PROCEDURES

THE LANGUAGE USED IN THIS DOCUMENT DOES NOT CREATE AN EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT BETWEEN THE EMPLOYEE AND THE AGENCY. THIS DOCUMENT DOES NOT CREATE ANY CONTRACTUAL RIGHTS OR ENTITLEMENTS. THE AGENCY RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REVISE THE CONTENT OF THIS DOCUMENT, IN WHOLE OR IN PART. NO PROMISES OR ASSURANCES, WHETHER WRITTEN OR ORAL, WHICH ARE CONTRARY TO OR INCONSISTENT WITH THE TERMS OF THIS PARAGRAPH CREATE ANY CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT.

1.0 REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

- 1.1 **Generally** – In general terms, a reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to a policy, procedure, or practice, or auxiliary aid or service, provided to a qualified person with a disability for purposes of allowing the individual an equal opportunity to participate in educational programs and activities; perform essential course activities; perform essential job functions; apply for admissions or employment; and/or gain access to events, facilities and College housing. Examples of reasonable accommodations might include, but are not limited to: adjustment of examination time periods, materials, or policies; modification to academic requirements that are not essential; the provision of auxiliary aids (*e.g.*, qualified readers, interpreters or note takers); job restructuring; flexible schedules; providing breaks, leave or reassignment; relocating classes or events; and making an existing facility readily accessible. Reasonable accommodations are determined through an interactive process that involves cooperation from the individual for establishing eligibility and need for accommodations and from relevant College officials responsible for evaluating and implementing accommodations.
- 1.2 **Requesting Accommodations** – Individuals seeking accommodations should make their request to the appropriate College office or representative listed below (based on the type of accommodation sought), as soon as possible once the need for accommodation is known. Requests can be made by the person seeking the accommodation or by someone on their behalf. Once a request is made, the College may require individuals to provide supporting documentation before a request can be fully considered. The person seeking accommodation has a responsibility to cooperate in this process, and failure to provide appropriate supporting documentation can result in denial of a reasonable

accommodation request. Requests for accommodations will be evaluated promptly and on a case-by-case basis in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

2.0 TYPES OF ACCOMMODATIONS

2.1 EMPLOYMENT ACCOMMODATIONS

The employee or applicant is responsible for requesting the accommodation and submitting required forms to the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs. The Office of Equal Opportunity Programs staff will work with the employee and supervisors to determine whether a reasonable accommodation can be provided.

- 2.1.1 **Applicants for Employment** – Applicants with disabilities who seek reasonable accommodations during the employment application and selection process or have questions about reasonable accommodations during this process should contact the Office of Human Resources at: (843) 953-5512; TTY: (843) 953-4874 ; or jobs@cofc.edu.
- 2.1.2 **College Employees** – All College employees seeking reasonable accommodations to perform their jobs must follow the following process:
- 2.1.3 **Request Accommodation** – Any College employee who has a disability and requires an accommodation to perform the essential functions of their job is responsible for initiating the reasonable accommodation process with their supervisor or the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs by making a request or having the request made on their behalf. If the request is made to the supervisor, the supervisor should provide the employee with the Employee Accommodation Request Form and direct the employee to the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs for the next steps in the process. The Office of Equal Opportunity Programs can be reached at: (843) 953-5754 or eop@cofc.edu. Additional information about reasonable accommodations for College employee and the Employee Accommodation Request Form are located at: <http://eop.cofc.edu/ada/employee-accommodations/index.php>.
- 2.1.4 **Interactive Process** – Once the employee has completed the Employee Accommodation Request Form, the form should be returned to the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs. After a request for accommodation has been made, the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs will initiate a collaborative and interactive process with the employee, their supervisor and/or department head, and/or other appropriate personnel to determine what, if any, accommodation should be provided. As part of this process, and in cases where the disability and/or need for accommodation are not known or obvious, the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs may require information

from the individual's health care provider regarding the impairment to determine eligibility for accommodation, to identify limitations related to the job and to propose potential effective accommodations.

2.1.5 **Timing** – Employees should make requests as soon as possible once the need for accommodation is known. Requests will be processed as soon as possible, which generally occurs within 30 business days from the date the request is made. The College will not unnecessarily delay the process and will strive to process requests sooner where possible. When medical information is requested, the time frame to process requests may take longer. There also may be extenuating circumstances that could not have been anticipated or that are beyond the College's control that may extend the time for processing a request. These extensions will be limited to circumstances where they are absolutely necessary. In circumstances where a request may be time sensitive, employees may request an expedited review and decision.

2.1.6 **Decisions** – The Office of Equal Opportunity Programs will communicate all decisions regarding reasonable employment accommodations, including the reasons for the decisions, to the employee seeking the accommodation. A decision to provide an accommodation may include an accommodation other than the one specifically requested by the employee. While consideration is given to the employee's preference, the College will choose from among reasonably effective accommodations and may select and implement the one that is most cost effective and easiest to provide. A receipt or denial of an accommodation does not prevent the individual from making another request at a later time if circumstances change and an accommodation is needed due to limitations from a disability (*e.g.*, the disability changes or an employee is assigned new duties that require an additional or different reasonable accommodation).

An individual dissatisfied with the decision following a reasonable accommodation request can ask the Vice President of the Office of Human Resources to reconsider the decision within 10 business days of the decision.

2.2 EDUCATIONAL ACCOMMODATIONS

2.2.1 **Applicants for Admission** – Applicants with disabilities who seek reasonable accommodations during the application and selection process or have questions about reasonable accommodations during this process should contact the Center for Disability Services at: : (843) 953-1431; SC Relay System for TTY users: 711 (within SC) or 1-800-735-2905; or SNAP@cofc.edu.

2.2.2 **Students** – Prospective and current students with disabilities who have questions about or seek reasonable accommodations should contact the Center

for Disability Services at: (843) 953-1431; SC Relay System for TTY users: 711 (within SC) or 1-800-735-2905; or SNAP@cofc.edu. Students with disabilities should apply for services with the Center for Disability Services and supply the requested documentation as soon as possible. The application for student services and detailed information on the application process can be found at: <http://disabilityservices.cofc.edu/application/index.php>. Once a student has been approved for services, the Center for Disability Services will be able to assist with identifying accommodations and ensure equal access by coordinating with appropriate offices across campus, including academic departments and Residence Life and Housing, among others. More information on educational accommodations and student disability services can be found at: <http://disabilityservices.cofc.edu/index.php>.

- 2.2.3 **Decisions** – The Center for Disability Services will communicate all decisions regarding reasonable educational accommodations, including the reasons for the decisions, to the student seeking the accommodation. A decision to provide an accommodation may include an accommodation other than the one specifically requested by the student. A receipt or denial of an accommodation does not prevent the individual from making another request at a later time if circumstances change and an accommodation is needed due to limitations from a disability (*e.g.*, the disability changes or circumstances change that require an additional or different reasonable accommodation).

Student disagreement over educational accommodations should be resolved using the Student Grievance Procedure as described in the Faculty/Administration Manual. The Faculty/Administration Manual also describes the appropriate process for resolving disputes between faculty and the Center for Disability Services regarding proposed educational accommodations. Students who wish to pursue an informal resolution may also speak with an administrator in the Center for Disability Services.

If a student is approved for accommodations and encounters any difficulty receiving the accommodations, the student should immediately contact the Center for Disability Services for assistance.

2.3 PUBLIC ACCESS ACCOMMODATIONS

- 2.3.1 **Event Sponsors** – Event sponsors (departments, organizations, individuals, etc.) of College-sponsored public events should include contact information in their event publications (flyers, bulletins, signage, websites, etc.) for requesting accommodations. Suggested language for publications is:

Requests for reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities may be made to **[insert contact information]**. To ensure that reasonable accommodations can be provided for this event, please make your request as soon as possible and in advance of the event.

Event sponsors should make every effort to ensure that the activity is scheduled in a College facility that is accessible. Sponsors should begin planning early to ensure that the preferred facility is available on the proposed date of the event. Event sponsors are required to provide services and accommodations for participants who have self-identified as having a disability. Services include (but are not limited to) interpreters and captioning for hearing impaired individuals and note takers and/or tapes for visually impaired individuals. The cost for these services is the responsibility of the event sponsor.

While the event sponsor has the primary responsibility to make necessary accommodations, prior to denial of any request for accommodation, the ADA Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunities Programs must be consulted. The ADA Coordinator is also available to assist event sponsors with the assessment of accommodations and to assist with coordinating accommodation efforts across campus.

2.3.2 **Participants** – Employees, students and members of the public with disabilities who require accommodations to participate in an event, activity or program, should contact the event sponsor as far in advance of the event as possible so that requested accommodations can be considered and implemented. Individuals may also contact the ADA Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs with questions regarding accommodations at: (843) 953-5754.

2.3.3 **Accessible Parking and Facility Entry** – Employees and students of the College requiring accessible parking or requesting temporary parking accommodations should provide the Parking Services Office with a valid College of Charleston ID and Department of Motor Vehicle handicap placard.

Visitors may park in any of the city or College parking garages, where handicap-accessible parking is available with a valid, state-issued handicap placard. Additionally, drop-off and pick up areas are available near the accessible entryways to the facilities. The campus map with accessible parking and accessible facility entry is located at:

http://www.cofc.edu/visit/documents/campusmap_det.pdf. Please contact the Office of Parking Services at (843) 953-7834 for more information about accessible parking.

- 2.3.4 **Barrier Notification** – The College strives to remove barriers to its programs, facilities and physical space, and if a barrier is encountered, please notify the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs and/or submit a Barrier Notification Form, which can be found at: <http://eop.cofc.edu/ada/physical-facilities-and-space/index.php>. The ADA Coordinator will review the barrier notice with others responsible for accessibility compliance to determine the range of actions available and necessary to improve accessibility.

Terms used in this procedure and related policy, are used in accordance with applicable controlling laws and regulations.