

Reasonable Accommodation Guide for National Service Programs

Organizations that receive funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service must comply with federal laws that guarantee equal access and prohibit discrimination. Serve DC—The Mayor's Office on Volunteerism provides technical assistance and resources to National Service programs to ensure inclusion. Visit www.serve.dc.gov for additional information on Serve DC's Disability Inclusion efforts.

WHAT ARE REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS?

Accommodations refer to all of the technology, services, and changes in policy, procedures, and the built environment that enable individuals with disabilities to perform essential functions or to equally participate in events and programs. An accommodation will vary depending on the individual need, the disability, the program, resources available, and the tasks that need to be completed¹.

TYPES OF ACCOMMODATIONS:

- » Removing barriers and increasing accessibility
- » Restructuring a service position
- » Modifying a service schedule
- » Modifying policies or procedures
- » Obtaining or modifying equipment or devices
- » Reassignment to a vacant position
- » Providing services, such as qualified readers, interpreters, or real-time captioning
- » Adjusting or modifying training activities, materials, or examinations. Some individuals will need one or two accommodations, and others may need more.

EXAMPLES OF ACCOMMODATIONS:

- » Raising the desk of a member with a wheelchair so that he/she is able to comfortably work at the desk.
- » Installing wheelchair ramps
- » Widening doorways
- » Moving controls and buttons so they are in a more accessible location
- » Providing implements that read out loud for people with reading difficulties.
- » Allow flexible work hours
- » Modifying equipment or providing adaptive equipment for people to use
- » Moving a program or task so that it can be performed in a more accessible place

KEEP IN MIND THAT:

- » Some people may be able to tell you exactly what they need, while others may be unsure.
- » An open and inclusive environment will encourage members to communicate their needs.
- » By thinking creatively, organizations will be able to reasonably accommodate the needs of AmeriCorps members with disabilities in a fully adequate, cost-efficient manner.
- » Accommodation suggestions can be found on the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) website at <http://askjan.org/>. A JAN survey determined that most large- and medium-sized businesses report no significant costs in accommodating the workplace needs of members with disabilities. (US Department of Labor, 2009)

RESOURCES:

Disability.gov: www.disability.gov

Job Accommodation Network: <http://askjan.org>

National Service Inclusion Project: <http://serviceandinclusion.org>

Office on Disability Rights: <http://odr.dc.gov/>

US Department of Labor (2009), Customized Employment:

www.dol.gov/odep/documents/customized_employment_v3blue_508_FINAL.pdf



¹Creating an Inclusive Environment: A Handbook for the Inclusion of People with Disabilities in National and Community Service Programs, www.serviceandinclusion.org/handbook/index.php