



Reasonable Accommodations Policy

PURPOSE:

Watson Community Health Centre is prepared to modify or adjust the employment and job application process or the job or work environment to make reasonable accommodations to the known limitations of the applicant or employee to enable the applicant or employee to be considered for the position he or she desires, to perform the essential functions of the position in question, or to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment as are enjoyed by other similarly situated employees without disabilities, unless the accommodation would impose an undue hardship or pose a direct threat of substantial harm to the health or safety of the applicant, employee or others.

POLICY

It is the policy of Watson Community Health Centre that qualified individuals with disabilities are not discriminated against because of their disability in regard to access to services or employment within the agency. It is further the policy of Watson Community Health Centre to provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities in all aspects of the service delivery process and employment.

PROCEDURES

For purposes of this policy, the term "disability" is used with the understanding that it has the same meaning as "handicap" in state and federal law. (See Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act and 45 CFR 85.3; Americans with Disabilities Act and 29 CFR 1630).

I. Prospective Employees and Potential Clients

- A. All new/potential employees and clients will be made aware of their right to request an accommodation.
- B. Employment applications will contain the statement; "It is the policy of Watson Community Health Centre to provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with a disability who are either applicants for employment or are current employees. Should you require any assistance or reasonable accommodation to complete this application or participate in interviews, please make a note on the application or notify the interviewer".
- C. All applicants should make requests for accommodations through the COO. When requested by an applicant with a disability, Watson Community Health Centre is prepared to modify or adjust the job application process to make reasonable accommodation to the known limitations of the applicant to enable the applicant to be considered for the position he/she desires.
- D. Each applicant is responsible for making timely and complete disclosures and specific requests regarding accommodations to meet his or her particular needs in order to enable the COO to provide an appropriate response. It is strongly recommended that requests for accommodations be made as soon as possible to avoid delays in providing reasonable accommodations.
- E. An interviewer may not ask an applicant whether or not he/she has a disability. This includes both physical and psychological disabilities. If the applicant volunteers information about a disability, the interviewer shall not ask any questions relating to the nature or extent of the disability or whether treatment will be necessary.



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- F. With respect to the ability to perform required job duties, an interviewer may ask each applicant whether or not he/she is able to perform the essential functions of the job applied for with or without reasonable accommodation.
- G. If an applicant indicates in response to such an inquiry that he/she can perform the essential functions of the job but does not volunteer comment on the need for accommodation, then no inquiry shall be made about the need for an accommodation.
- H. If, however, the applicant indicates in response to such an inquiry that he/she can perform the essential functions of the job and does volunteer the need for an accommodation, the interviewer may ask the applicant how he/she will perform the essential functions of the position and what accommodation will be necessary.

II. Current Employees or Applicants Offered Jobs

- A. To request a reasonable accommodation, an employee or applicant offered a job is required to submit a written statement to the COO. The written statement must identify the nature of the claimed disability, identify the functional limitations with respect to the disability, and identify the requested accommodation(s).
- B. An individual who identifies him/herself as having a disability and requests a reasonable accommodation may be required to provide documentation, including medical records, sufficient to establish the existence of the claimed physical or mental impairment and the need for accommodation.
- C. If an employee is having difficulty performing his/her job, the supervisor, in consultation with the COO, should inform the employee of the existence of Watson Community Health Centre policy to provide reasonable accommodations. If the employee requests a reasonable accommodation, the procedures in this policy shall apply.

III. Providing Accommodations

- A. Each request for an accommodation shall be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The employee or applicant will be involved in the process of determining potential reasonable accommodations.
- B. The COO will make the decision to approve or deny an accommodation request.
- C. The COO will assess Reasonableness of Accommodation Request using the following criteria:
 - i. Are the job functions for which the accommodation is required essential?
 - i. Is the applicant or employee otherwise qualified to perform the essential job functions?
 - ii. Does the accommodation accomplish the desired result allowing the individual to overcome limitations of the disability to effectively perform the essential functions of the job or to enjoy the benefits and privileges of similarly situated employees?
 - iii. Is the accommodation necessary and effective?
 - iv. Will the accommodation adversely affect the productivity or work environment of other employees in the work unit?



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- v. Is the cost of the accommodation feasible within Watson Community Health Centre budget?
 - vi. Are there other more cost-effective options which will allow the individual to perform the essential functions of the job?
- D. The decision to approve or disapprove an accommodation request must be made by the COO in writing and provided to the applicant or employee **within 20 working days** after the filing of a request.
- E. Where there is more than one effective accommodation, the final decision as to which accommodation will be provided shall be made by COO after consideration of the wishes of the individual, the documentation provided, and advice from other appropriate personnel.
- F. A qualified individual with a disability is not required to accept an accommodation, aid, service, opportunity or benefit that such qualified individual chooses not to accept. However, if such individual rejects a reasonable accommodation, aid, service, opportunity or benefit that is necessary to enable the individual to perform the essential functions of the position held or desired, and cannot as a result of that rejection, perform the essential functions of the position, the individual will not be considered a qualified individual with a disability. If the person rejects the accommodations, they must provide the rejection in writing to the COO, with rationale.
- G. Watson Community Health Centre does not provide employees with disabilities with personal devices or assistance for personal use, including but not limited to wheelchairs, eyeglasses, hearing aids, personal assistance for eating or dressing, or readers for personal use.
- H. When no reasonable accommodation is available to allow an employee with a disability to remain in his/her current position, Watson Community Health Centre will attempt to reassign that employee to a vacant position, which is equivalent in terms of pay and status. The employee must be qualified for the vacant position and the position must be vacant or will be vacant within a reasonable period of time. Assignment to another vacant position is only available to employees and not job applicants. The COO is responsible for documenting reassignment attempts and outcome.
- I. All material and information collected from an applicant or employee regarding the individual's accommodation request shall be considered confidential information and be kept in a separate file. Upon completion of the decision-making process regarding the accommodation request, all material collected will be kept in a separate, locked file by the COO. This information will be confidential with the following exceptions:
- i. Supervisors and managers may be informed regarding necessary accommodations or necessary restrictions on the work or duties of the employee;
 - ii. First aid and safety personnel may be informed, when appropriate, if the disability might require alternative actions in emergency situations;
 - iii. Government officials investigating compliance with non-discrimination laws shall be provided relevant information on request.



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- iv. The COO will periodically monitor the effectiveness of accommodations provided to applicants or employees.

IV. Complaint process

Watson Community Health Centre has an internal complaint procedure to resolve complaints alleging violations of Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act and 45 CFR 85.3; Americans with Disabilities Act and 29 CFR 1630. If an applicant offered a job, or an employee disagrees with a decision regarding his or her request for an accommodation, a complaint may be filed using this internal complaint procedure.

V. Customer requests

- A. All new and potential customers will be made aware of their right to request an accommodation.
- B. Individual support plans also identify any essential assistive and those responsible for addressing that need.
- C. Watson Community Health Centre client orientation handbook will provide information on other agencies that can assist.
- D. When necessary, Watson Community Health Centre will refer to outside resources to evaluate, identify, and secure needed accommodations.
- E. Watson Community Health Centre has a customer complaint process to resolve complaints alleging violations of Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act and 45 CFR 85.3; Americans with Disabilities Act and 29 CFR 1630. If a customer is dissatisfied with Watson Community Health Centre ability to accommodate them in order to access services, a complaint may be filed using this procedure.