

Policy History
Policy No. HR18
Approving Jurisdiction: President
Administrative Responsibility: Vice President Human Resources
Effective Date: November 28, 2000

Job Accommodations for Employees Policy

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE

Under Human Rights legislation, the University has a duty to reasonably accommodate persons with disabilities, providing the accommodation does not create undue hardship to the University.

This process is not intended for small budget items (under \$500) such as anti-glare screens, mouse pads, or footrests, or for ergonomic requirements under WCB which are departmental responsibilities.

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

An employee who wishes to be considered for accommodation must follow the process outlined below:

1. The employee must provide documentation specifying the nature, severity and prognosis of the medical condition and the impact on the employee's ability to perform work-related tasks. The documentation must outline the specific job accommodations, such as technical aids, adaptive equipment, furniture or work modifications required for the employee. Documentation must describe the nature of the disability/condition and include a detailed explanation of the functional impact of the disability. A diagnosis alone is insufficient to support a request for job accommodation. For example, the documentation for back problems should outline why the ergonomic standard chair is not suitable. Documentation must be obtained from a professional who has specific training, expertise and experience in the diagnosis of conditions for which the accommodations are being requested (for example, physician, occupational therapist, registered psychologist, ophthalmologist). All professionals submitting documentation must be appropriately certified and/or licensed to practice in British Columbia. The University may require additional medical information or another medical opinion.

2. The employee request and supporting documentation must be submitted to Human Resource Services. Medical information will be treated as confidential information. Each request will be dealt with on an individual basis. Human Resource Services may consult with the appropriate supervisor about the request and action to be taken.

3. The University may seek assistance in identifying a range of possible job accommodations or products for a specific medical condition. Decisions regarding suitability of accommodation may be based on level of effectiveness, ease of implementation, cost, time constraints, and availability of item requested (if required). The University may substitute a product or accommodation other than that specified or requested.
4. Once the request is approved, Human Resource Services will consult with Purchasing or Facilities as appropriate. The Purchasing Department will work with the employee and supervisor in locating products and vendors etc. for technical aids, adaptive equipment, furniture or alterations. Upon approval of the request Facilities will work directly with the employee and the supervisor on renovations.
5. Decisions regarding the feasibility of work modification or accommodation requests may be based on interchangeability of workers, disruption of the collective agreement, problems of morale amongst other employees, financial cost, magnitude of safety risk, and ability to make adaptations. If the work modification or accommodation request is not approved, the employee will be given the reasons in writing.
6. In the event the employee's abilities, needs, or the conditions of his or her job change, the supervisor may consult with Human Resource Services to reassess, modify or replace existing job accommodations.
7. On departure of the employee, or if the item is no longer required, any technical aids, adaptive equipment or furniture will be returned to Purchasing for re-allocation.