

If you are a person with a disability, it is your right under the federal Fair Housing Act to a reasonable accommodation or modification or both which would allow you full enjoyment of your apartment, including public and common spaces. It is important, however, to make your request to your landlord the correct way.

WHAT IS A REASONABLE ACCOMODATION?

Under the Fair Housing Act, a reasonable accommodation is a change, exception or adjustment to a rule, policy, practice or service that may be necessary for a person with a disability to have an equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling unit.

EXAMPLES:

- An assigned accessible parking spot for a person with a mobility impairment when typically parking spaces are not assigned;
- Permitting a person who is visually impaired with a guide dog when there is a "no pets" policy;
- Allowing a person with a disability who needs help with laundry have a friend or family member assist them when non-tenants are prohibited from the laundry room.

WHAT IS A REASONABLE MODIFICATION?

A reasonable modification is a structural change made to the existing premises in order to afford a person with a disability full enjoyment of those premises. The housing provider must approve the modification before it is made, but it is the tenant who is responsible for paying for the costs of the modification.

EXAMPLES:

- Installing grab bars in the bathroom;
- Widening doorways to allow for a wheelchair;
- Installing a ramp at the main entrance of the building.

HOW DO I MAKE A REQUEST?

The Fair Housing Act doesn't specify how to make a request, but it is recommended that you send a written letter to your landlord detailing the barrier you face because of your disability and how you propose to remedy it.

WHAT SHOULD I SAY?

- Explain the link between the accommodation or modification and your disability. A note from your doctor may be helpful.
- Be clear what policy or structural element is interfering with your use or enjoyment.
- Ask for a written response to your request.
- Keep a copy of your letter and any supporting documents for your records. [Click here to view an example of a reasonable accommodation letter.](#)

EXAMPLE OF A LETTER

July 26, 2017

Dakota Property Management
John Smith, building manager
2624 Vermont Ave
Bismarck, ND 58503

Dear Mr. Smith:

I live at Silver Mist Apartments #101, which is managed by you and owned by Mistywood Apartments LLP. I qualify as a person with a disability as defined by the federal Fair Housing Act.

Because of my disability, I am physically unable to lift the lid of the dumpster in the parking lot where I am supposed to place my trash. I am requesting that I be allowed to place my trash in a garbage can in the laundry room which is normally taken to the dumpster by maintenance staff once a week.

Under the federal Fair Housing Act, it is unlawful discrimination to refuse to make reasonable accommodations in rules, policies, practices or services which such accommodations may be necessary to afford persons with disabilities equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling.

Please respond in writing to my request within 10 days of the date of this letter. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Jane Doe