

Housing Accommodation Request Guidelines

UMW is committed to providing reasonable accommodations in its housing policies and practices where necessary for UMW students with disabilities to use and enjoy UMW housing, in accordance with the Fair Housing Act (FHA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974. The University of Mary Washington (UMW) recognizes that students with disabilities may require (an) accommodation(s) to fully participate in the residential component of their experience at UMW. The University of Mary Washington does not charge a student additional fees for disability-related accommodations.

These guidelines provide information on the process to request housing accommodations, and may be updated as needed.

Requesting a Housing Accommodation

UMW students with disabilities may request accommodations in their residence halls by completing a Housing Accommodations Request Form and/or an Emotional Support Animal Request Form. The appropriate form must be accompanied by documentation of a substantially-limiting condition from the student's physician or other appropriately licensed medical provider.

The form includes two parts. Part I is completed by the student, and Part II is completed by a health care professional or other licensed provider treating the student. Requests should include both Part 1 and Part II of the Housing Accommodations Request Form. Students who have been previously approved for Housing Accommodations will be required, each year, to inform the Office of Disability Resources and Residence Life that they intend to reside on campus the following year and if they intend to use their approved accommodations in order for requests for accommodations to be effectively implemented.

After the ODR has had an opportunity to review the completed form, ODR staff may contact the student to request additional information or documentation. After review of documentation, ODR will request for the student to schedule a meeting to engage in an interactive process to discuss the student's disability-related needs and how to appropriately accommodate those needs in UMW housing.

Housing Committee Meeting

The Housing Committee convenes on a regular basis throughout the year to review housing accommodation requests, including any information provided to ODR. Students should provide any completed applications for housing accommodations, with supporting documentation, as soon as possible.

Decision Regarding Request

Accommodation requests are determined by the Housing Committee on a case-by-case basis, according to documented need and prevailing standards for reasonable accommodations. Housing accommodations are made after a determination of:

- a. The student's disability status
- b. Whether his/her disability necessitates adjustments to the living environment
- c. Available housing options
- d. Whether the request is considered an undue financial and/or administrative burden
- e. Whether the request is considered a fundamental alteration of the University of Mary Washington's Residence Life and Housing policies
- f. Whether the request poses a direct threat to the health and/or safety of others
- g. Whether the request would cause substantial property damage to the property of others, including University of Mary Washington property.

After the Housing Committee has made a determination regarding the student's request, the ODR will notify the student of its decision by e-mail.

Denial of Accommodation

If the Housing Committee determines a requested accommodation is not approved, the Office of Disability Resources (ODR) will contact the student via the student's UMW email account. The student is invited to participate in an interactive process with the ODR to determine if there are alternate accommodations that might effectively meet the individual's disability-related needs, or if additional documentation may be needed. Providing additional documentation re-engages the student in the Housing Accommodation Request Process and allows the Housing Committee to reconvene on the student's request using the additional information.

Timing and Renewal of Requests

- a. Students may submit a request form at any time. Students are encouraged to consider meeting dates and deadline information posted on the Residence Life website, and may also call the Office of Residence Life and/or ODR to request information about those timelines. Students should also be mindful of the high demand for on-campus housing and the fact that available housing inventory fluctuates throughout the year. Early submission of requests assists staff in determining appropriate accommodations on a timely basis. While accommodation requests submitted after any applicable deadline will be accepted, UMW cannot guarantee that the availability of rooms for assignment that will meet specific accommodation needs.
- b. Housing accommodation requests are processed in accordance with the guidelines in place at the time the request is made. Students approved for housing accommodations are generally approved for renewal of those accommodations for the subsequent housing term, unless the approved accommodation(s) are related to a temporary disability or temporary need.

- c. Students seeking renewal of housing accommodations will generally need to submit information related to their intent to reside on campus the following year and their intent to use their approved accommodations, unless additional information is requested by ODR.
- d. There is no limit to the number of times a student may submit a request to the Housing Committee for review; however, new and/or additional information from a healthcare professional and/or licensed provider must accompany repeated requests for the same accommodation.
- e. Should students choose to decline (an) approved housing accommodation(s) after approval, then request (a) previously-approved accommodation(s) at a later date, the student's request will be re-evaluated through the Housing Committee. The student may be asked for additional documentation and to engage in an interactive process with ODR to help with the decision-making process.
- f. Students who have (an) approved housing accommodation(s) who move off campus, then return to campus after a period of time and request previously-approved accommodation(s) must resubmit their housing accommodation request.

Housing Assignment Responsibility

Participating in the Housing Accommodation Request process does not relieve students of their responsibilities to adhere to Residence Life and Housing policies and procedures to secure housing assignments. Approvals for housing accommodations do not indicate a guaranteed housing assignment. ODR is unable to guarantee housing assignments and all students are required to secure housing placement through Residence Life and Housing. Students should be aware that being approved for a housing accommodation is a different and separate process than housing placement through Residence Life and Housing. Once students go through the housing accommodation process, Residence Life and Housing is responsible for housing placement and assignments. Please contact [Residence Life and Housing](#) directly for questions regarding the process for securing a housing assignment and specific housing assignment questions.