

Reasonable Accommodation Policy & Procedures

The Norton Housing Authority (hereinafter referred to as NHA) is committed to ensuring that its policies and procedures do not deny individuals with disabilities the opportunity to participate in, or benefit from, not otherwise discriminate against individuals with disabilities, on the basis of disability, in connection with the operations of Norton Housing Authority's programs, services and activities. Therefore, if a modification to NHA policy becomes necessary, the NHA will provide such accommodation unless doing so would result in fundamental alteration in the nature of the program; or an undue financial and administrative burden.

A reasonable accommodation is a change, modification, alteration or adjustment in policy, procedure, practice, rule or facility that provides a qualified individual with a disability the opportunity to participate in, or benefit from, a program (housing or non-housing) or activity to have equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling, including public and common use spaces.

Th NHA will post a copy of this Reasonable Accommodation Policy and Procedures at the main office located at 120 W. Main Street, Norton, MA 02766; with the office staff, and on our website. In addition, individuals may obtain a copy of this Reasonable Accommodation Policy and Procedures, upon request, from the NHA.

Legal Authority

The NHA is subject to Federal and Commonwealth of Massachusetts civil rights laws and regulation. This Reasonable Accommodation Policy is based on the following statutes and regulations. See Section 504 of the rehabilitation for of 1973 (Section 504); Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA); the Fair Housing Act of 1968, as amended (Fair Housing Act); the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968, and the respective implementing regulations of each act, MCLC151B.

Monitoring and Enforcement

The NHA's Executive Director is responsible for monitoring compliance with this policy. Individuals who have questions regarding this policy, its interpretation or implementation should contact NHA's Executive Director in writing, by telephone, or by appointment, as follows:

Andrea Downey, Executive Director
120 W. Main Street, Norton, MA 02766
508-285-3929, X6

State Training

The Executive Director will ensure that all appropriate NHA staff receives appropriate training on the Reasonable Accommodation Policy and Procedures including all applicable Federal, state and local requirements regarding reasonable accommodations.

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The definition of disability does not include any individual who is an alcoholic or using illegal drugs, whose current use of alcohol or illegal drugs, prevents the individual from participating in the public housing program or activities; or whose participation, by reason of such current alcohol abuse, would constitute a direct threat to property or the safety of others.

Examples of Reasonable Accommodation

Examples of reasonable accommodations may include, but are not limited to:

- a) Making a unit, part of a unit or public and common use element accessible for the head of household or a household member with a disability who is on the lease;
- b) Permitting a family to have a service or assistance animal necessary to assist a family member with a disability;
- c) Allowing a live-in aid to reside in an appropriately sized NHA unit;
- d) Transferring a resident to a larger size unit to provide separate bedroom for a person with a disability;
- e) Transferring a resident to a unit on a lower level or a unit that is completely one level.
- f) Making documents available in large type, computer disc or Braille;
- g) Providing qualified sign language interpreters for applicant or resident meetings with NHA staff, or at resident meetings;
- h) Installing strobe type flashing lights and other such equipment for a family member with a hearing impairment;
- i) Permitting an outside agency or family member to assist a resident or an applicant in meeting screening criteria or meeting essential lease obligations;

Processing of Reasonable Accommodation Requests

The NHA will provide the "Request for Reasonable Accommodation," (Request Form) attached hereto, to all applicants, residents or individuals with disabilities who request a reasonable accommodation.

Individuals may submit their reasonable accommodation request(s) in writing, orally, or by any other equally effective means of communication. However, the NHA encourages a reasonable accommodation request to be in writing. If needed as a reasonable accommodation, the NHA will assist the individual in completing the Request Form.

- a) The NHA will provide all applicants with the Request Form as an attachment to the PHA application available by hard copy or on the CHAMP Website: www.CHAMP.com . The request for reasonable accommodation form can be provided in an alternative format upon request.
- b) Reasonable accommodation will be made for applicants during the application process. All applicants must be taken in an accessible location. Applications will be made available in accessible formats. NHA will provide applicants with appropriate auxiliary

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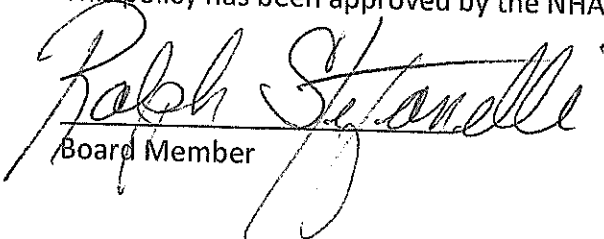
- c) An undue financial and administrative burden on the Norton Housing Authority;
- d) A structurally infeasible alteration; or
- e) An alteration requiring the removal or alteration of a load-bearing structural member.

Transfer as Reasonable Accommodation

Norton Housing Authority shall not require a resident with a disability to accept a transfer in lieu of providing a reasonable accommodation. However, if a public housing resident with a disability, requests a dwelling unit modification(s) that involves structural changes, including, but not limited to, widening entrances, rooms, or hallways, and there is a vacant, comparable, appropriately sized Uniform Federal Accessibility Standard Compliant Unit available in that resident's project or an adjacent project, the NHA reserves the right to offer a transfer, in lieu of providing structural modifications. However, if that resident rejects the proffered transfer or voucher, the NHA shall make modifications to the resident's unit unless doing so would be structurally impracticable unreasonable, alters the nature of the program or would result in an undue financial and administrative burden.

If the resident accepts the transfer, the NHA will work with the resident to obtain moving expenses from social service agencies or other similar sources. If that effort to obtain moving expenses is unsuccessful within thirty (30) days of the assignment of the dwelling unit, NHA may pay reasonable moving expenses, including utilities fees and deposits. Nothing contained in this paragraph is intended to modify the terms of NHA's policies and procedures and any resident's rights there under.

This policy has been approved by the NHA Board of Commissioners on January 21, 2020


Board Member

