ST. CHARLES COUNTY REGION

ACCOMMODATION POLICY

The St. Charles Region and its subcontractors comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) and is committed to the fair and equal employment of people with disabilities. The St. Charles Region and its subcontractors do not discriminate against qualified job applicants or employees with disabilities with regard to job application procedures, hiring, employee compensation, advancement, training, discharge or other terms, conditions and privileges of employment.

Qualified job applicants and employees with disabilities shall be provided reasonable employment-related accommodations when necessary, unless the accommodation would impose an undue hardship. This policy provides guidelines for employees and job applicants who wish to apply for reasonable accommodations with St. Charles Region and its subcontractors and prescribes the steps employees and job applicants should take if he or she is the victim of discrimination or retaliation in his or her request for an accommodation.

Additionally, the St. Charles Region and its subcontractors are committed to complying with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), which prohibits discrimination against employees or applicants for employment because of their religious beliefs in hiring, firing and other terms and conditions of employment.

This policy provides guidelines for employees and job applicants with the St. Charles Region and its subcontractors who wish to apply for an accommodation based upon his/her religious beliefs or practices. The policy prescribes the steps employees and job applicants should take to request an accommodation based upon religious beliefs or practices.

Definitions

Disability: An individual with a disability has:
- A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individual;
- A record of such an impairment; or
- Is regarded as having such impairment.

Essential Functions: The fundamental job duties that an employee must be able to perform with or without the help of a reasonable accommodation. The term “essential functions” does not include the marginal functions of the position.

Major Life Activities: Functions including, but not limited to:
- Caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, standing, lifting, bending, learning, eating, sleeping, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating and working.
- Impairments that are episodic or in remission if it would substantially limit a major life activity when active.
Operations of major bodily functions, including but not limited to functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine and reproductive functions.

**Qualified individual or applicant with a disability:** A person who meets legitimate skill, experience, education, or other requirements of an employment position that he or she holds or seeks, and who can perform the *essential functions* of the position with or without *reasonable accommodation*.

**Reasonable accommodation:**
- Modifications or adjustments to a job application process that enable a *qualified applicant with a disability* to be considered for the position such qualified applicant desires; or
- Modifications or adjustments to the work environment, or to the manner or circumstances under which the position held or desired is customarily performed, that enable a *qualified individual with a disability* to perform the essential functions of that position; or
- Modifications or adjustments that enable a covered entity’s *qualified employee with a disability* to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment as are enjoyed by its other similarly situated employees without disabilities.

**Religion:** May include traditional, organized religions such as Christianity, Judaism, and Buddhism. It may include religious beliefs that are new, uncommon, not part of a formal church or sect, or only held by a small number of people. A practice is religious if the employee’s reason for the practice is religious and not based upon personal preferences. Social, political, or economic philosophies, or personal preferences, are not ‘religious’ beliefs under Title VII.

**Service animal:** Any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Service animals are working animals, not pets. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual’s disability. Dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under the ADA. Only dogs and miniature horses (with limitations) are recognized as service animals under ADA.

**Undue hardship:** An undue hardship exists if an accommodation:
- Would cause an employer to incur significant difficulty or expense, in comparison to the financial resources available to the employer;
- Is overly extensive, substantial, or disruptive or would alter the nature or operation of the business;
- Would cause a lack of necessary staffing; or
- Would jeopardize security or health.

An employer is not obligated to make an accommodation that would cause an “undue hardship.”

**Accommodation Request Guidelines for Employees**
Employees may request an accommodation through the human resources department of their employer of record. Employees should consult their respective human resources department for specific guidelines on requesting an accommodation.
Accommodation Request Guidelines for Job Applicants
Job applicants shall inform the human resources department of the agency for which they are applying of the need for an accommodation.

Religious Accommodation Guidelines
Employees and job applicants may request a religious accommodation through the human resources department of the agency to which they are employed or are seeking employment.

Service Animal Accommodation Criteria
Service animals may be considered a reasonable accommodation in the workplace if the service animal meets certain criteria and does not present an undue hardship on the employer. Employees and job seekers shall request a service animal accommodation through the human resources department to which they are employed or are seeking employment.

Final Decision, Discrimination, and Retaliation
Human Resources will provide a decision as quickly as reasonably possible regarding the employee or applicant’s:
- request for an accommodation due to a disability; or
- request for an accommodation due to religious beliefs or practices

Retaliation occurs when an employer takes an adverse action against a covered individual because he or she engaged in a protected activity. The St. Charles Region and its subcontractors prohibit retaliation against a job applicant or employee from exercising his/her right to request an accommodation. The following is a non-exclusive list of actions that may be retaliation: termination, refusal to hire, denial of promotion, intimidation, harassment, threat(s), withholding of employment benefits and/or opportunities.

If a job applicant or employee believes he or she is the victim of discrimination or retaliation, he or she may file a complaint with the:
- Missouri Commission on Human Rights;
- U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission;
- Director, Civil Rights Center; or
- Danielle Smith, State WIOA Equal Opportunity Officer (if position is funded through WIOA).