

## REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION/MODIFICATION POLICY

Metro West is committed to providing people with disabilities<sup>1</sup> the equal opportunity to use and enjoy their dwellings, as required by federal, state, and local law. Reasonable accommodations may include a change or exception to rules, policies, practices, or services that is needed because of a person's disability. Reasonable modifications may be a physical change to a unit or common area that is needed because of a person's disability. It is Metro West's general policy to provide reasonable accommodations or modifications to individuals with disabilities whenever an individual has a.) requested a reasonable accommodation or modification, b.) met the definition of a person with a disability, and c.) has provided that there is a disability-related need for the requested accommodation or modification. A disability-related need exists when there is an identifiable relationship, or nexus, between the requested accommodation/modification and the individual's disability.

Metro West accepts reasonable accommodation and modification requests from persons with disabilities and those acting on their behalf. Reasonable accommodation and modification request forms are available in your property management office, and may be returned to that office when complete. They will then be forwarded to the appropriate property manager. If you require assistance in completing the form, or wish to make the request orally, please contact Metro West's management office. Metro West will keep a record of all requests.

We will make a prompt decision on your request. If the request is of a time-sensitive nature, please let us know and we will expedite the decision-making process. In the event we need additional information to make a determination, we will promptly advise you of the information needed. It is Metro West's policy to seek only the information needed to determine if the request should be granted under federal, state, or local law. We will not ask about the nature or extent of your disabilities. If the request is granted, you will receive a letter indicating so.

In the event of a denial due to a fundamental alteration to the operations of the property or if the request imposes an undue financial and administrative burden the request will be discussed with the individual who has made the request. Metro West is committed to participating in an interactive process with the person requesting the accommodation or modification in order to reach an alternative.

If the request is denied we will provide you with a letter stating all of the reasons for the denial. If an individual with a disability believes that the request has been denied unlawfully or a response has been unreasonably delayed, then he or she may contact the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, Office of Fair Housing & Equal Opportunity, 1670 Broadway, Denver Colorado, 80202-4801, 1-800-877-7353, <http://hud.gov/complaints>.

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<sup>1</sup> For this purpose, a person with a disability is defined as a person with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a person who is regarded as having such an impairment, or a person with a record of such an impairment. Physical or mental impairments include, but are not limited to, such diseases and conditions as orthopedic, visual, speech and hearing impairments, cerebral palsy, autism, epilepsy, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, cancer, heart disease, diabetes, HIV, mental retardation, emotional illness, drug addiction (other than addiction caused by current, illegal use of a controlled substance) and alcoholism. The term "substantially limits" suggests that the limitation is significant or to a large degree. The term "major life activity" means those activities that are of central importance to daily life, including but not limited to seeing, hearing, walking, breathing, performing manual tasks, caring for one's self, learning, and speaking.

A common type of reasonable accommodation is allowing a person with a disability to keep assistance animal(s)<sup>2</sup>. Dogs are the most common type of assistance animal; however, there are many other animals that can be assistance animals as well. Breed, size, and weight limitations may not be applied to an assistance animal and these animals are not required to be individually trained or certified. Payment of a fee or deposit applied to individuals with PETS may not be applied. Metro West is committed to ensuring that individuals with disabilities, who make a reasonable accommodation request, may keep such animals to the extent required by federal, state, and local law. In the case of an individual who requests a reasonable accommodation for an assistance animal, Metro West will consider the following two criteria:

- i. That the individual requesting the accommodation to keep an assistance animal meets the definition of a person with a disability;
- ii. That that individual requesting the accommodation to keep an assistance animal has a disability-related need for the animal.

If the individual meets the two criteria, Metro West will provide an exception to the no pets rule or policy to permit the individual with a disability to live with and use an assistance animal in all areas of the premises where persons are normally allowed to go unless doing so would fundamentally alter the nature of the housing provider's services, or imposes an undue financial and administrative burden.

Metro West may ask individuals who have disabilities that are not readily apparent or known to submit reliable documentation of a disability and their disability-related need for an assistance animal. Metro West may request documentation from a treating physician, psychiatrist, social worker, other mental health professional, or other reliable third party, stating that the animal provides support that alleviates one or more of the identified symptoms or effects of an existing disability. We will not ask for access to medical records, or request detailed or extensive information/documentation of an individual's physical or mental disabilities

Because Metro West is dedicated to the health and safety of all residents please note that if the specific assistance animal poses a direct threat to the health, safety, or property of others the request may be denied if it cannot be reduced or eliminated by other reasonable means. A determination that an assistance animal poses a direct threat of harm to others or would cause substantial physical damage will be based on an individualized assessment that relies on objective evidence about the specific animal's actual conduct. It will not be based on speculation or fear about the types of harm or damage an animal may cause. It will not be based on evidence about harm or damage that other animals have caused.

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<sup>2</sup> An assistance animal is not a pet. It is an animal that works, provides assistance, or performs tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability, or provides emotional support that alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person's disability. Assistance animals perform many disability-related functions, including but not limited to, guiding individuals who are blind or have low vision, alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to sounds, providing protection or rescue assistance, pulling a wheelchair, fetching items, alerting persons to impending seizures, or providing emotional support to persons with disabilities who have a disability-related need for such support.