



REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS AND FAIR HOUSING POLICY

Universal Building has a strong commitment to fair housing and peaceful enjoyment. We encourage tenants to ask for improvements or modifications to further their peaceful enjoyment of their dwelling. There are many things that we can provide and the tenant is in the best position to know what would make their living experience better. *No special reason is required to request an accommodation or modification.* Anything that will improve the living experience for the tenant will be considered and accommodated if reasonable and within the cost constraints and resources of our managerial operation.

Universal Building has a strong commitment to fairness and equal opportunity and will also make any reasonable accommodations and modifications to the dwelling to accommodate disabilities and special needs. The Federal Fair Housing Act, and local laws prohibit housing providers from discriminating against people because of their disability or the disability of anyone associated with them, and from treating disabled people less favorably than others because of their disabilities. *Universal Building* will make any reasonable accommodations to rules, policies, practices, or services, when such accommodations may be necessary to afford such person(s) equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling. We will also make or allow tenants to make reasonable modifications to the dwelling and/or common spaces to accommodate disabilities. Such accommodation must be requested and prior approval by *Universal Building* must be obtained before a modification is made as provided herein.

Universal Building requires prior written permission for any modification on a dwelling including a reasonable description of the proposed modifications. All modifications must be approved, performed, or supervised by *Universal Building* to insure reasonable assurance that the work be performed in a professional, safe, and aesthetic manner and that all laws are complied with.

Universal Building seeks to approve all requests for reasonable accommodation for the purpose of peaceful enjoyment of a tenant's dwelling. All accommodations/modification requests will be decided upon on a case-by-case basis. Whether a request is reasonable will depend on a variety of factors.

Accommodation Requests based upon Disability

Under most federal laws, a person is considered to be disabled if s/he has a sensory, mental or physical condition that substantially limits one or more major life activities (such as walking, seeing, working, etc.).

Universal Building uses a broader definition and includes any sensory, mental or physical condition that is medically cognizable or diagnosable including temporary disabilities. We strive to reasonably accommodate all disabilities.

Universal Building recognizes that tenants with disabilities may have special needs due to their disabilities and in some cases simply treating them the same as others may not ensure that they have an equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling. *Universal Building* is committed to *special treatment* or accommodation for tenants with disabilities where same treatment is not sufficient for the tenant to enjoy equal opportunity to enjoy their dwelling. A "reasonable accommodation" is a change, adaptation or modification to a policy, program or service, which will allow a person with a disability to use and enjoy a dwelling, including public and common use spaces. Examples of reasonable accommodations that *Universal Building* may provide includes providing rental materials in alternate formats such as large print, installing special faucet handles for easier operation or hand grips for a tenant with gripping problems, or allowing a tenant to have a service animal thereby waiving our "no pets" policy. Tenants must request accommodation and be granted the accommodation if it is reasonable.

Universal Building will make disability access accommodation at our own cost and bear the financial expense for such accommodation provided the accommodation is reasonable and does not constitute an undue financial and administrative burden. *Universal Building* strives to creatively employ all reasonable resources in providing all tenants, including those with disabilities, special and reasonable requests for accommodation, including modifications and waiver of regular policies, to ensure full and peaceful enjoyment of their dwelling.

Universal Building will make reasonable modification, i.e. a physical change made to a dwelling or property which is necessary to afford a disabled tenant full enjoyment of their dwelling. Modifications are reviewed on a case by case basis and in some cases it may be necessary to make the modification at the tenant's expense depending on the nature of the modification.

If an accommodation request is based upon a disability, the tenant must have a disability. *Universal Building* does not seek or require specific information about the disability, (e.g. medical records or the diagnosis or name of the condition) but the request for accommodation

disability must include documentation, as provided for by law, confirming the existence of a disability. Requests based upon disability must be necessary and have an identifiable relationship between the disability and the requested accommodation or modification. Said requests must be reasonable and cannot under law impose undue financial and administrative burden or fundamental alteration to the property or the operation of *Universal Building*. *Universal Building* may suggest alternative accommodation(s) that are reasonable and will continue to provide all other reasonable accommodation and modifications even if one or more accommodation requests are determined to be unreasonable. All efforts will be made to find reasonable solutions to all accommodation requests.

A tenant with a disability can request an accommodation or modification whenever they are needed. Requests may be made when applying for a dwelling, or while occupying the dwelling. Tenants who become disabled, or their disability changes during their tenancy, may make a request or requests at any time, even if they were not disabled when they moved in.

Universal Building requests that all requests for accommodations or modifications that are based upon a disability or disabilities be made in writing. *Universal Building* has a policy of tenant privacy including medical privacy. No specific information about the disability is required or requested by *Universal Building*. But if the request is based upon a disability the request must clearly state what exception, change, adjustment or modification is requested to any rule, policy, practice, service, building or dwelling. The request should include a clear description of the nature and type of accommodation or modification that is being requested with some explanation about the relationship between the request and the disability. Tenants may provide requests on other forms or formats and provide any other verifications and letters as they deem necessary to make clear their request for accommodation.

In some cases modifications to accommodate a disability may have to be restored to the original condition when the tenant moves out. In some cases the tenant must agree to restore the premises to the condition that existed before the modification, with the exception of reasonable wear and tear. Such reversal of the modification would not be required if the modification(s) would not interfere with the next tenant's use and/or enjoyment of the premises. Some modifications that require big changes may involve an increased refundable security deposit, i.e. modification of doorways to accommodate a wheelchair or long ramps. No deposits are required for normal waiver of "no pets" policy for service animals.

Request Required

A tenant must request an accommodation or modification. A request must be clear and specific detailing exactly what is being requested. Although *Universal Building* strives to, and continually offers improvements to property based upon efforts to anticipate tenant's needs, *Universal Building* cannot guess or surmise what might be needed by a tenant, especially in regard to accommodating specific disabilities. Each tenant is in the best position to know what type of accommodation would be best for their situation and must communicate this to *Universal Building*. All reasonable accommodations will be provided upon request. In some

cases an alternative or substitute accommodation may be offered to be consistent with operational logistics or cost restraints.

Service Animals

Some disabled people require a service animal and *Universal Building* will grant and provide any reasonable accommodation for service animals. A tenant may request said accommodation at any time. *Universal Building* requests that accommodation for service animal be made using the [Universal Building Service Animal Accommodation Request Form](#) and include an original signed copy of the required appropriate documentation of the necessity for a service animal. *Universal Building* does require legal verification that the tenant is disabled and that there is a clear connection between the service animal and the disability. But *Universal Building* specifically does not want, request, or require specific information about the disability other than its existence and connection to the need for the service animal. *Universal Building* has a strong commitment to medical privacy and we cannot accept any specific information about a disability or medical condition that would violate medical privacy. *Universal Building* does not consider a service animal as a pet and therefore service animals are allowed and not prohibited under our “no pets” policy. A service animal must be trained to aid the tenant with a clear connection to the tenant’s disability. The tenant must provide *Universal building* clear and specific information about any accommodation required to house the animal including any plans to provide special needs or facilities to properly care for and house said service animal. *Universal Building* does not charge a pet fee or deposit in connection with a service animal. The tenant is specifically liable for any damages caused by a service animal the same as a tenant is responsible for any damages not including normal wear and tear. The tenant must strive to be a good neighbor and use common sense in limiting any inconvenience to other tenants in regard to the behavior of the service animal.

Fair Housing or Nondiscrimination Policy

Universal Building is committed to fair housing for all and shall not discriminate against any applicant or tenant because of race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or identity, gender, family or marital status, disability, including physical, mental and developmental disabilities, or source of income. Applicants and tenants will not be denied housing, or treated differently than others based on any of these discriminatory criteria.

This statement of policy does not constitute legal advice. All legal questions should be directed to appropriate council. Click here for [printer friendly copy](#).



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