

Reasonable Workplace Accommodations

Policy HR005

Responsible Office: Office of Human Resource Management and Labor Relations

Responsible Administrator: Vice President of Human Resource Management and Labor Relations

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Policy Statement

The Fashion Institute of Technology (“FIT or “the college”) is committed to providing an accessible and supportive environment for employees or applicants with disabilities. Any employees or applicants with disabilities may request a reasonable accommodation, regardless of title, salary grade, or bargaining unit.

Reason for the Policy

This policy is intended to ensure equal employment opportunities, as set forth in FIT’s Employee Policy Manual. This policy will help enhance the retention and upward mobility of qualified employees and applicants with disabilities. This policy is also intended to be in compliance with federal, state, and local laws prohibiting discrimination, harassment, and retaliation.

Who is Responsible for this Policy

- Vice President for Human Resource Management and Labor Relations
- The Office of Human Resource Management and Labor Relations (“OHR”).
- All supervisors

Who is Affected by this Policy

- Employees
- Applicants for employment
- Student employees

Definitions

The following definitions apply to this policy, except where otherwise prohibited by law:

- **Reasonable Accommodation:** Any change or adjustment to a job duty and/or work environment which enables an employee or applicant with a disability to perform their essential job functions without imposing an undue hardship on the college.
- **Undue Hardship:** An accommodation imposes an undue hardship on the college if it imposes an undue financial and/or administrative burden on the college or requires a fundamental alteration in the nature of employment affecting the essential job functions. This includes, but is not limited to,

accommodations that are unduly burdensome, substantial, disruptive, or those that would fundamentally alter the nature or operation of the individual's work.

- **Disability:** A disability means any physical, mental, or psychological impairment, or a history or record of such impairment.
- **Applicant:** An individual pursuing employment with the college for a specific, vacant position.
- **Employee:** Any college employee including, but not limited to, instructional faculty, professional faculty, operational, classified, hourly employees, and interns.
- **Qualified:** An employee or applicant is qualified if the individual is able to complete the essential job functions with or without a reasonable accommodation. An applicant must also satisfy the minimum qualifications for the job for which the applicant is applying in order to be considered qualified.
- **Essential Job Functions:** A fundamental function of the position, the basic duties and responsibilities required for the job, or the primary reason the position exists.
- **Cooperative Dialogue:** The "process by which a covered entity and a person entitled to an accommodation, or who may be entitled to an accommodation under the law, engage in good faith in a written or oral dialogue concerning the person's accommodation needs; potential accommodations that may address the person's accommodation needs, including alternatives to a requested accommodation; and the difficulties that such potential accommodations may pose for the covered entity."

Principles

The college will engage in a cooperative dialogue with an employee or applicant who requires a reasonable accommodation to determine the employee or applicant's needs, potential accommodations that may address those needs, including alternatives to a requested accommodation, and the difficulties that any potential accommodations may pose for the college. Once this cooperative dialogue has concluded, the college will provide the employee or applicant with a written final determination identifying any accommodation which the college grants or denies.

OHR may request additional information, including, but not limited to, medical documentation verifying the disability and the need for an accommodation.

Responsibilities

- **Vice President for Human Resource Management and Labor Relations:** The Vice President for Human Resource Management and Labor Relations is responsible for general oversight of reasonable accommodations granted or denied, as well as of the guidelines set forth in this policy.
- **OHR** engages in a cooperative dialogue with the employee or applicant requesting a reasonable accommodation. They also provide the employee or applicant with a final determination, in writing, identifying any accommodation the college grants or denies.

- **Supervisors:** Any supervisor who receives a request for a reasonable accommodation must notify and involve OHR. The cost incurred for a reasonable workplace accommodation will be determined between the OHR and the requesting employee's home department.

Procedures

Employees and applicants with disabilities who need an accommodation are encouraged to request reasonable accommodation(s), and provide adequate documentation to support their request, as set forth in the details below:

- **Applicants:** Applicant requests for reasonable accommodations during the hiring process should be made to the Hiring Supervisor or OHR. Applicants may request accommodations during the hiring process, including, but not limited to, with their application (such as a modification in the manner in which the application is filed) or interviews, where applicable.
- **Current Employees:** Current employees requesting reasonable accommodation should adhere to the following process:
 - The employee should contact OHR about the request via the [HR Solutions Center](#).
 - The employee will be asked to complete the Reasonable Accommodation Request Form [pdf]. (Please note: Depending on the nature of the accommodation requested, you may be required to provide medical documentation that is sufficient to substantiate that you have a disability, that identifies the functional limitation due to the disability, and that explains the need for the requested accommodation.)
 - OHR will review the request at the time the request is made.
 - OHR will engage in an interactive process and cooperative dialogue which may require meeting with the supervisor and employee to discuss the request for reasonable workplace accommodation which may include, but are not limited to, modifying work schedules, granting breaks or providing leave, relocating the employee, reconfiguring work spaces or equipment or providing assistive technology or equipment.
 - The Vice President for Human Resource Management and Labor relations, or their designee, will determine the accommodation, taking into account the urgency of the request, and provide, in writing, either the confirmation of the accommodation to be provided, or, for denials, the reason(s) the request was denied.

Employees may also, but are not required to, ask their supervisor for a reasonable accommodation at which time the supervisor should contact OHR via the [HR Solution Center](#).

Violations

Individuals who believe that there is an alleged violation of this policy, who disagree with a determination regarding a request for a reasonable accommodation, who believe they may have been treated in a discriminatory manner, or who are experiencing possible harassment should contact the Affirmative Action Officer/Title IX Coordinator. Complaints will be investigated in accordance with the procedure contained in the college's Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment policy. An individual who files a complaint or participates in an investigation will be protected against retaliation. Complaints will be kept confidential to the extent possible.

Related Policies

List related FIT policies that provide relevant information for this policy.

- [Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment](#)
- [Family and Medical Leave \(FMLA\)](#)
- [Religious Accommodations](#)
- [Disability Accommodations for Service and Support Animals](#)
- [Disability Accommodations and Support Services](#) (students)

Related Documents

- [Accommodation Request Form](#) (Under “General Forms”)

Contacts

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