

West Chester University
of Pennsylvania

OFFICE OF
SOCIAL EQUITY

ADA Policy Statement and Frequently Asked Questions



EXPECT EXCELLENCE

WCU

ADA Policy Statement

West Chester University is committed to equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination for all students, employees, applicants for admission or employment, and all participants in public University-sponsored activities. In keeping with this commitment, and in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the University will make every effort to provide equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination for all members of the University community and visitors to the University, regardless of any disability an individual may have.

Accordingly, the University has taken positive steps to make University facilities accessible to individuals with disabilities and has established procedures to provide reasonable accommodations to allow individuals with disabilities to participate in University programs.



The director of the Office of Social Equity has been designated as the ADA coordinator for the University. In this capacity, the director of Social Equity works with the University ADA Committee to advance University policies and procedures that will provide equal educational and employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. The Office of Social Equity has an established process to investigate and address any complaints of discrimination on the basis of a disability. Any individual who has a suggestion, question, or complaint regarding ADA issues is encouraged to contact the director of Social Equity, 13/15 University Avenue, 610-436-2433.

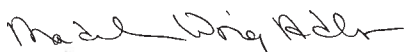
West Chester University also has established the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (OSSD), which operates as a center for addressing the needs of students with disabilities and as a resource for students, faculty, and staff. A student who wants to request an accommodation and/or receive specialized services should contact the director of the OSSD. The policies and procedures used by the OSSD are contained in the West Chester University Handbook on Disabilities, which is available in the OSSD, 105 Lawrence Center, V/TDD 610-436-3217.

Various housing facilities and services are available for resident students with disabilities. For this and other information about on-campus housing and food service, please contact the Office of Residence Life and Housing Services, 238 Sykes Student Union, 610-436-3306.

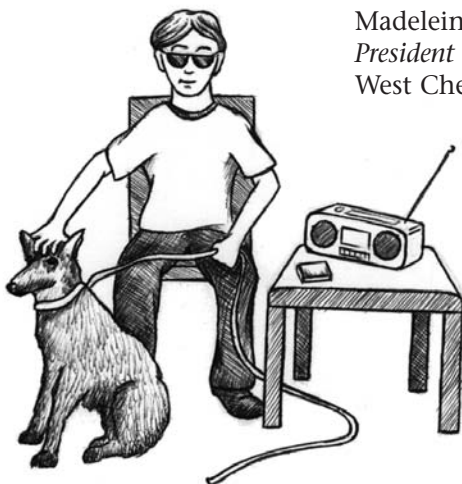
The divisional representatives of Office of Human Resource Services have been designated as the contact persons for employees and applicants seeking to request an accommodation. The Office of Human Resource Services is located at 201 Carter Drive, 610-436-2800.

West Chester University is committed to making its electronic communications accessible to individuals with print disabilities. If you have questions or need assistance to use campus technology, contact the executive director, Academic Computing Services, at 610-436-3476.

West Chester University is involved in the ongoing process of renovating campus buildings to ensure accessibility for all individuals. Many of our buildings are currently accessible, but some are awaiting renovation. To find out whether a particular location is accessible or how to access a location, please contact the space manager at 610-436-3348. To make arrangements for changes to a particular facility to ensure accessibility, please contact the manager of campus projects at 610-436-3599.



Madeleine Wing Adler
President
West Chester University



Frequently Asked Questions

What is a disability? An individual with a disability is defined as any person who (1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity such as seeing, hearing, speaking, walking, breathing, learning, and working, (2) has a record of such an impairment, or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment. Disabilities covered by legislation include, but are not limited to, AIDS, cancer, cerebral palsy, diabetes, epilepsy, head injuries, hearing impairments, specific learning disabilities, loss of limbs, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, psychiatric disorders, speech impairments, spinal cord injuries, and visual impairments. Temporary, nonchronic conditions such as broken limbs, influenza, and pregnancy are not disabilities unless accompanied by severe complications.

What is required under ADA? The Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits discrimination against otherwise qualified individuals with disabilities in all employment practices and any program or activity of a public entity.

Who is an “otherwise qualified individual with a disability”? In the context of employment decisions, a qualified individual is one who meets legitimate knowledge, skill, abilities, and experience requirements of the position and who can perform the essential functions of the job with or without a reasonable accommodation. In the context of educational programs or activities, a qualified individual is one who meets the academic or technical standards requisite to admission or participation in the educational program or activity with or without reasonable modifications to the rules, policies, or practices; removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers; or the provision of auxiliary aids and services.

What are reasonable accommodations? A reasonable accommodation is a modification to a job or work environment, or to academic or classroom policies and procedures, which will enable a qualified applicant, employee, student, or visitor to the University to participate in the application process, perform essential job functions, or participate in educational programs or activities.

What are some examples of reasonable accommodations? Examples of reasonable accommodations for employees include, but are not limited to, making existing facilities readily accessible and useable, restructuring a job, modifying work schedules, and providing adaptive equipment, readers, or interpreters. Examples of reasonable accommodations or modifications for students include, but are not limited to, having written materials available in alternate formats, providing interpreters for individuals with hearing impairments, use of note takers or recordings, extra time for exams, and providing adaptive equipment.

When is West Chester University required to make a reasonable accommodation for an individual with a disability? The University is required to make a reasonable accommodation to the known disability of an applicant, employee, student, or visitor. The requirement will typically be triggered by a request from the individual with a disability, who will frequently be able to suggest an appropriate accommodation. It is the responsibility of the University to have mechanisms in place for individuals with disabilities to request accommodations.

How may WCU employees request accommodations? Employees with disabilities may request an accommodation by contacting their supervisor or Human Resource Services divisional representative at ext. 2800. The Employee Accommodation Request Form with medical documentation must be completed before an accommodation can be provided.

How may WCU students request accommodations? Students should contact the OSSD at ext. 3217 to request academic or classroom modifications. Students must register with the OSSD and provide appropriate medical documentation before an accommodation can be provided. Requests for accommodations in housing arrangements should be made to the Office of Residence Life and Housing Services at ext. 3306.

What is WCU's responsibility to make accommodations for visitors? As a public institution, WCU is required to make accommodations for visitors for events that are open to the public. Every publication or notice of an event or program to be held at WCU should contain the statement: "Accommodations for individuals with disabilities are available on request by calling _____. Please make your needs known as soon as possible, but not less than one week in advance, to allow time to make the necessary arrangements." A phone number of the person or office sponsoring the event should be filled in the blank as the contact person for individuals to request accommodations. All events open to the public must be scheduled in an accessible location. To determine if a location is accessible, contact the space manager at ext. 3348.

Who is responsible for making arrangements and paying for accommodations that are requested? Each office or department is responsible for making the arrangements and paying the costs associated with providing accommodations upon request. If offices or departments sponsoring the event absolutely cannot afford to pay the costs associated with making the accommodation, they should speak with their dean or divisional vice president.

How does a department or division arrange for a sign-language interpreter? The Deaf-Hearing Communication Center, Inc. at 610-534-5025 provides sign language interpreters. A list of additional sign language interpreters and agencies that provide interpreters is available from the OSSD at ext. 3216.

How does WCU make publications available to individuals with print disabilities? All University documents that are available in print shall, upon request, be made available in alternate formats. Frequently, providing the information on a computer disk is the most acceptable and readily achievable format. Each University publication should contain the statement: "A disk version of this publication for those needing accommodations is available from _____." The office and telephone number of the contact person who will have the publication on disk should be provided. In addition, documents on the WCU Web site may be accessible if they appear in a "text only" format. As departments, divisions, and organizations design and upgrade Web pages, they should include an accessible "text only" format. If a document is available on the Web site, the statement "This publication is available on our Web site (www.wcupa.edu)" should be added to the above statement of availability in a disk version.

How may a student with a disability that impairs mobility arrange for accessible transportation on campus? WCU provides an on-demand transportation service for students with disabilities that is consistent with transportation provided for nondisabled students. To make arrangements for accessible transportation, a student should contact the OSSD at ext. 3217.

How does WCU provide accessible equipment to the University community and visitors to campus? Managers purchasing new equipment such as tables, desks, computers, water fountains, etc., for general use by the University community or the public will be responsible for ensuring that the needs of individuals with disabilities are considered. In addition, new contracts with vendors for equipment placed on campus such as vending machines and MAC machines should require that the equipment be accessible to individuals with disabilities.

How can University departments or divisions secure training for faculty and staff on ADA questions? The Office of Social Equity, in cooperation with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities and the Office of Human Resource Services, offers training for faculty, staff, and managers on ADA issues. If you would like to arrange for training, please contact the Office of Social Equity at ext. 2433.

Campus Contact Offices

Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (OSSD) collects disability documentation, determines accommodations related to academic course work and programs, and assists faculty, staff, and students with information and resources related to physical and psychiatric/psychological disabilities. The office also serves as the point of contact for requesting sign language interpreters. The OSSD policies and procedures are contained in the West Chester University Handbook on Disabilities, which is available at 105 Lawrence Center, V/TDD 610-436-3217.

Office of Human Resources Services is the designated department that obtains and files disability-related and medical documentation, certifies eligibility for services, determines reasonable accommodations, and develops plans for provision of such accommodations for employees. To request accommodations, please contact your divisional representative at the Office of Human Resources Services at 201 Carter Drive, 610-436-2800.

Director of Social Equity serves as the University's ADA coordinator and is responsible for assisting faculty, staff, and students in gaining a greater understanding of the regulatory compliance involving disabilities, to assist in identifying external resources, and to provide clarification of the University's obligation to provide particular accommodations that may be requested by students, employees, and visitors on the campus. You may contact the director at 13/15 University Avenue, 610-436-2433.

Residence Life and Housing Services provides for resident students with disabilities various housing facilities and services. For this and other information about on-campus housing and food service, please contact 610-436-3306.

Academic Computing Services is committed to making its electronic communication accessible to individuals with print disabilities. If you have any questions or need assistance to utilize campus technology, contact the executive director at 610-436-3476.

Facilities Management is involved in the ongoing process of renovating campus buildings to ensure accessibility for all individuals. Many of the buildings are currently accessible, but some are awaiting renovation. To find out whether a particular location is accessible or how to access a location, please contact the space manager at 610-436-3348. To make arrangements for changes to a particular facility to ensure accessibility, please contact the manager of campus projects at 610-436-3599.

A disk version of this publication is available from the Office of Social Equity, 13/15 University Ave., 610-436-2433.