

ANCHOR M APARTMENTS

2001 NORTH WALNUT
ELLENSBURG, WA 98926

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION POLICY

We are committed to granting reasonable accommodations to our rules, policies, practices, or services when such accommodations may be necessary to afford people with disabilities¹ the equal opportunity to use and enjoy their dwellings or common areas. A reasonable accommodation is a change or exception to a rule or policy that is needed because of a person's disability. For example, a housing provider that has a policy of not assigning parking spaces must make an exception to this policy in order to grant an assigned parking space to an individual who is substantially limited in his ability to walk.

One common type of reasonable accommodation is allowing a person with a disability to keep an assistance animal. An assistance animal is not a pet. An assistance animal is an animal that works, provides assistance, 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. While dogs are the most common assistance animal, other animals can also be assistance animals. We recognize the importance of assistance animals, and we are dedicated to ensuring that individuals with assistance animals may keep them in our residential rental properties.

We will not deny a request to keep an assistance animal solely because the animal has not received formal training. Some assistance animals, known as service animals, are trained by professionals, their owners, or someone else to work or perform tasks for individuals with disabilities. Other assistance animals, however, do not require any special training. The relevant question is whether the animal performs the assistance or provides the benefit needed by the person with a disability.

If an individual requests to keep an assistance animal, we will not ask about the nature or extent of the person's disability. Many times, it is readily apparent that an animal is trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability, such as a dog guiding an individual who is blind or has low vision, pulling a person's wheelchair, or providing assistance with stability to an individual with a mobility disability. If this is the case, then we will not make any inquiries at all and the reasonable accommodation will be granted.

¹ 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.

If it is not readily apparent that an animal is trained to aid an individual with a disability, then we will need to make a few inquiries before granting the reasonable accommodation. We will first ask if the animal is required because of a disability and what work or task the animal has been trained to perform. We will not, however, require documentation that an animal is trained or certified or licensed as a service animal.

If the animal is not trained to perform tasks for individuals with disabilities, then we will ask for a statement from a health or social service professional, such as a doctor, physician's assistant, psychologist, or social worker, that the individual has a disability and the designated animal provides emotional support or other assistance that alleviates one or more symptoms or effects of the person's disability. We will not ask for information about a person's disability or information about the symptoms or effects of the disability that will be alleviated by the assistance animal. In no case will a person requesting to keep an assistance animal as a reasonable accommodation be charged any fee, deposit, or other charge for making the request or for keeping the animal. Since individuals with disabilities are entitled to keep and use assistance animals in units and common areas, it is our policy to make the process of obtaining approval to keep an assistance animal as least burdensome as possible.

You may obtain a form to request a reasonable accommodation at the Anchor M office. If you require assistance in completing the form, we will assist you in filling out the form or will fill out a form based on an oral request. We are using this form to record reasonable accommodation requests so that we obtain only the information that is necessary for a reasonable accommodation decision and do not obtain confidential information that we do not need to make a reasonable accommodation decision.

All requesters shall be notified in writing of a decision within 10 days of the request. Prior to denying a request, we will attempt to engage in an interactive process with the requester in which the parties discuss possible alternative accommodations that might effectively meet the individual's disability-related needs. We recognize that an individual with a disability is generally in the best position to know whether or not a particular accommodation will be effective in meeting his or her needs. If the request is denied, an explanation for the denial will be provided in the written notification. If an individual with a disability believes that the request is denied unlawfully or that the response is delayed unreasonably, then he or she may file a complaint with:

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Office of Fair Housing & Equal Opportunity
909 First Avenue, Suite 205
Seattle, WA 98104-1000
800-877-0246 or 206-220-5170
Website: <http://hud.gov/complaints/>