INTERACTIVE ACCOMMODATION PROCESS

As an applicant or an employee, you may seek reasonable accommodation at any time you believe your health condition/disability impacts your abilities in applying to a University job and/or in performing your current University job. An accommodation to the application process is a reasonable modification that allows you equal opportunity to participate in the application process. An accommodation to your job is any reasonable modification within the job that provides you opportunity to perform your job. Accommodations may include, but are not limited to: structurally accessible job application site; screen reader and/or voice recognition; braille; hearing devices; work time changes; telecommute, policy changes; procedural changes; etc.

Individualized:

How health conditions/disabilities impact a person is very individualized. Difficulties you may experience in the application process and/or in your job will probably be different from another person. This difference might be due to how the health condition/disability impacts you and/or the requirements of the type of job you hold.

Examples of how some health condition/disability concerns might impact you include but are not limited to:

Applicant: reading the application, understanding the application instructions, filling in required applicant information; watching the job line for available jobs, attending an interview that is not accessible to you, verbally participating in an interview, hearing during an interview, etc.

Employee: walking to the job location or in performing the job, concentrating, sitting, bending over, using a keyboard, walking or standing, lifting or pushing heavy things, hearing, reading work materials, speaking, thinking, breathing, interpersonal relationships, etc.

Confidential:

Health and accommodation information is confidential and information is limited to staff in University Faculty and Staff Disability Services (or designee). Supervisors and HR Representatives will need to know health limitations, but not necessarily a diagnosis. They will need this information to participate in the interactive process with you in determining a reasonable accommodation.

You may share information with peers; however, no health information is to be shared by management with peer applicants or employees. Some accommodations may be visible to peer employees and management should make arrangement with you as to what you will be sharing, as management should limit information to something such as “we are pleased to be able to support this employee”.

Interactive:

We encourage you to seek assistance when you believe your health limits you in some way in application for a job or in performance of your job. Determining what assistance you need and how to provide it is an interactive process, e.g., a conversation that is between you, your employing department, and your treating health provider.

To begin the interactive process:

As an applicant, contact our office, University Faculty and Staff Disability Services, 319-335-2660 or email us at fsds@uiowa.edu for assistance.
As an employee, contact your HR Representative. The HR Representative will reach out to our office for assistance and guidance with the process.

**Medical Documentation:**

You may be asked to obtain medical documentation from your treating health provider if your health needs are not clearly understood; i.e., limited lifting but the amount is unknown, concerns with concentration, stamina, speech, hearing, etc.

The University uses two document forms to help us obtain necessary medical information. Your HR Representative will ask that you take the Medical Information Request Form (MIRF) to your treating health provider for completion and that you complete the Consent to Release Information. On completion, both forms should be returned to your HR Representative.

The Medical Information Request Form (MIRF) is a document your treating health provider will need to complete which tells us more about your medical needs. We need you to complete the Consent to Release Information form which authorizes your treating health provider to communicate with staff from University FSDS. This communication is helpful when information on the MIRF is unclear.

When University FSDS staff communicate with your treating health provider, information that we receive that is not relevant to your application process or your job is considered confidential. Information FSDS staff share with your hiring department or as an employee, your department HR Representative and supervisor is limited to restrictions that require accommodation.

**Work Status during the Process:**

If you are an employee, you may continue to work during the interactive process if your department has work of value within known limitations. In situations where limitations are not known or unclear or there is no work of value within known limitations, you will be provided authorized absence and able to use sick leave or unpaid leave, if accruals are insufficient, until the interactive process is complete.

**Conversation/Communication:**

Once the medical information is known the interactive process will continue and you, your HR Representative, supervisor, and University FSDS staff (when applicable) will review the medical information to determine your needs as they relate to work. This team will discuss and consider accommodation options. Accommodations that are believed to be reasonable and available are then obtained and implemented.

After an accommodation has been implemented, we encourage you, your supervisor and HR Representative to regularly evaluate the success of the accommodation and discuss ways to improve, as needed. FSDS may also contact you and your HR Representative to learn of the success and/or questions related to the accommodation.

Accommodations that are visible to peer applicants and/or employees will be discussed with you to make arrangements of what will be explained. Management will limit its communication to a general statement of “support provided to you” unless other arrangements are made.

**Accommodation and/or Process Review:**

When agreement on a reasonable accommodation is not achieved, you may request review of the process and/or decision by contacting the Director of University Faculty and Staff Disability Services.