

Platform Housing – Reasonable Adjustments Guide

Platform Housing Group are committed to making sure that disabled customers, neurodivergent customers and those with health conditions are not disadvantaged when accessing our services. This guidance describes our approach to making reasonable adjustments to our services for customers.

This guidance does not intend to describe how we will approach every situation but describes the basic principles by which we will make reasonable adjustments for disabled customers, and the factors that we will consider when evaluating requests.

Many of the arrangements that we offer for disabled customers can also be made available for those who do not have disabilities. For example, provision of documents in larger font than our usual font.

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) provides a legislative framework to protect the rights of individuals and to advance equality of opportunity for all.

Under the Act the legal duty to make reasonable adjustments arises in three circumstances:

- Where there is a provision, criterion or practice which puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage in relation to a relevant matter in comparison with persons who are not disabled.

- Where a physical feature puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with persons who are not disabled.
- Where a disabled person would, but for the provision of an auxiliary aid, be put at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with persons who are not disabled.

Substantial disadvantage is defined in the Equality Act 2010 s.212(1) as 'more than minor or trivial'.

What is a reasonable adjustment?

A reasonable adjustment involves us making a change to the way that we would usually deliver something to a customer to make sure that our services are accessible, and we are fair to all our customers. Reasonable adjustments can be made in a number of ways for example, changing how we might communicate with a customer to meet their specific need.

Examples of this include:

- Allowing more time than we would usually for someone to provide information that we needed or
- Providing specialist equipment or additional support such as a sign language interpreter for a workshop or event.

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How can customers request a reasonable adjustment?

- We make customers aware that we can make reasonable adjustments for them by advertising this guidance on our website and communications.
- We have a clear statement on our published materials about accessibility and alternative formats of communications.
- When providing services to customers we will also ask them if they require any adjustments to make the service accessible.
- Customers can request a reasonable adjustment from us by requesting the adjustment through a colleague they are communicating with, or by contacting our Customer Contact Centre Team.

Types of reasonable adjustment we can offer

Adjustments that we will be able to offer will depend on a customer's individual needs. We will discuss a customer's requirement with them directly and will look to reach an agreement on what may be reasonable in the circumstances presented.

Some examples of reasonable adjustments that we can make include:

- Providing information in appropriate alternative formats (e.g. large print, Braille).
- Providing documents in easy read format.
- Extending our published timescales where appropriate, e.g for a customer to request escalation of their complaint.

- Adapting our communication method for example using email or telephone in preference to hard copy letter.
- Providing a sign language interpreter for Deaf customers who use British Sign Language (BSL) if it is necessary to communicate face to face.
- Taking extra time and adapting communication methods, such as using visual aids, where a customer has a learning disability.
- Providing extra breaks in meetings.

Our response to requests for reasonable adjustments

In the majority of cases, we will be able to agree and deliver the required reasonable adjustment with a minimum of delay. In some cases, we may need to consider in more detail how best to overcome the difficulty a disabled person is experiencing or seek advice from expert disability organisations that can assist with signposting and other forms of support.

How do we decide what is reasonable?

The Equality Act does not define what is 'reasonable' but guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission Suggest that the most relevant factors are:

- The effectiveness of the adjustment(s) in preventing or reducing the disadvantage for the disabled person.
- The practicality of us making the adjustments.
- The availability of our resources including external assistance and finance.
- Any disruption to the Service that making the adjustment may cause.

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