

Contact the Fair Housing Center of WA if:

- **You have questions about how to write RA note**
- **If your note is not accepted by the housing manager or landlord**
- **If you feel threatened or harassed by a housing manager or landlord**

Contact Information:

(253) 274-9523
info@fhcwa.org
www.fhcwa.org
1517 S Fawcett, Ste. 250,
Tacoma, WA 98402

Additional Resources found at

www.fhcwa.org/education/resources

- Sample Reasonable Accommodation letters
- Guidance for Health Care and Qualified Professionals Verifying Reasonable Accommodation and Modification Requests”
- HUDFHEO 2013-01: Service and Assistance Animals under the Fair Housing Act
- HUD/DOJ Joint Statement on Reasonable Accommodations
- And many more!

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Reasonable Accommodations

A Quick Guide



What is a reasonable accommodation?

Are ADA and FHA different?

How does Fair Housing define disability?

What should an RA note say?

Do I have to sign the landlord's paperwork?

FAIR HOUSING
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Embracing Diversity, Advocating Equality

Disability under the Fair Housing Act

Q: What is a Reasonable Accommodation (RA) ?

Answer:

An RA request waives rules, policies, practices or services in order to afford a person with a disability an equal opportunity to use and enjoy their home, including common areas. RA's vary person to person, such as waiving a pet fees for a patient's emotional support animal.

Q: Why is my patient asking me to write a note for their RA?

Answer:

To verify to the housing provider that they have a disability and that the request is needed or required for their disability. This note supports your patients with a disabilities access to their rights under the FHA.



Q: How does the Fair Housing Act define "disability"?

Answer:

- 1) individuals *with, or regarded as having*, a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities,
- AND/OR
- 2) individuals with a record of such an impairment.

This definition differs from the definitions for ADA definition and to determine eligibility for SSDI / SSA. In general, FHA has a broader and more inclusive definition.

The Note Itself

Q: Do I have to fill out the housing provider's paperwork?

Answer:

No.

You may write your own note. Using your letterhead helps the landlord confirm the verification is not a fake.

Q: Who can sign the note?

Answer:

Any third party professional qualified to know about the patient's disability.

Q: Should I list the patient's diagnosis or answer a landlord's questions about their disability?

Answer:

No.

Listing a diagnosis could open the patient to discrimination. The housing provider does not have the right to know the patient's specific diagnosis or medical history.

The note should state that the patient has a disability and that the RA is **required or necessary** for the patient's ability to equally enjoy and/or access their home. Writing the request is "beneficial" or "helpful" to the patient implies that the request is not required and can be legally denied by the housing provider.

Q: What is retaliation under FHA?

Answer:

Housing providers may not call you to question your patient's disability status, to threaten you with a lawsuit, or otherwise harass or strike out against you or your patient for completing an RA request. If they do, please contact us as soon as possible to learn about your options and protections under the Fair Housing Act.