

POLICY**ACCESS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES**

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1996, Ridgewater College affirms the rights of individuals with disabilities to equal opportunity and treatment. Ridgewater College acknowledges and adheres to the definitions and processes described in [MnSCU Policy 1B.4 – Access and Accommodation for Individuals with Disabilities](#) and [MnSCU Procedure 1B.0.1 – Reasonable Accommodations in Employment](#).

Nothing in this document is intended to expand, diminish or alter the provisions of the Americans with Disability Act or the Minnesota Human Rights Act.

“Disability services are available for students on both campuses of Ridgewater College. The college’s Chief Human Resources Officer serves as the ADA coordinator for employee issues.”

Chief Human Resources Officer

History:

3.26.09 Adopted

02.06.14 Proposed

09.22.14 Revised

PROCEDURES**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

In order to receive accommodations, a student must:

1. Initiate a request for services through the Office of Disability Services.
2. Provide recently completed documentation from an appropriate licensed professional verifying the disability and need for academic accommodations that are appropriate and effective.
3. Follow the student support plan as determined after consultation with the Coordinator of Disability Services.

In accordance with Minnesota Statute 135.a.16, Ridgewater College shall provide, at a minimum, the following for students with identified disabilities:

1. Support, counseling, information, resources and referral services.
2. Academic assistance services.
3. Advocacy services.

Students with disabilities are responsible for contacting the Disability Services Office if reasonable accommodations are not implemented in an effectively or timely way. The Disability Services Office works with college personnel and student(s) with disability(ies) to resolve disagreements regarding recommended accommodations.

If a student with a disability feels he/she has not received the requested accommodations, the following steps can be taken:

- ADA requires that accommodations be developed in a give-take dialogue process between the college and the person with disabilities. Students should meet with Disability Services to more completely discuss and explore appropriate reasonable accommodations.
- The college is not required to provide the requested or preferred accommodation. The college is required to provide reasonable, appropriate and effective accommodations for disabilities which have been adequately documented and for which the accommodation has been requested. The question, therefore, can be asked, "Is the accommodation that has been offered reasonable and effective?"
- If the student has considered both of the above and feels that the accommodation that has been offered is not reasonable or effective, he/she can appeal the action of the Coordinator of Disability Services to the Dean of Student Services.

At no time does this process preclude the student's right to contact the Minnesota Department of Human Rights.

The Chief Human Resources Officer is responsible for administering requests for reasonable accommodations in employment.

In accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreement language, employees may have the right to request and receive union representation during the reasonable accommodation process.

Current Employees:

The employee shall inform his/her supervisor or the Chief Human Resources Officer of the need for an accommodation. The Chief Human Resources Officer shall require documentation of the individual's functional limitations to support the request. Any medical documentation must be collected and maintained on separate forms and in separate locked files. No one will be told or have access to medical information unless the disability might require emergency treatment. When a qualified individual with a disability has requested an accommodation, the employer shall, in consultation with the individual:

- Discuss the purpose and essential functions of the particular job involved. Completion of a step-by-step job analysis may be necessary.
- Determine the precise job-related limitation(s).
- Identify the potential accommodations and assess the effectiveness each would have in allowing the individual to perform the essential functions of the job.
- Select and implement the accommodation that is the most appropriate for both the individual and the employer. While an individual's preference will be given consideration, the employer is free to choose among equally effective accommodations and may choose the one that is less expensive or easier to provide.
- Work with the employee to obtain technical assistance as needed. The employer will provide a decision to the employee within a reasonable amount of time.

If an accommodation cannot overcome the existing barriers or if the accommodation would cause an undue hardship on the operation of the business, the employee and the employer shall work together to determine whether reassignment may be an appropriate accommodation.

Job Applicants: The job applicant shall inform the Chief Human Resources Officer of the need for an accommodation. The Chief Human Resources Officer will discuss the needed accommodation and possible alternatives with the applicant.

The Chief Human Resources Officer will make a decision regarding the request for an accommodation and, if approved, take the necessary steps to see that the accommodation is provided.

Appeal Process

Employees or applicants who are dissatisfied with the decision(s) pertaining to his/her accommodation request may file an appeal with the President within a reasonable period of time for a final decision.

History:

03.26.09 Adopted

02.06.14 Proposed

09.22.14 Revised