



Reasonable Adjustments Policy

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Policy developed by	Head of Communities
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Associated procedure	Reasonable Adjustment Procedure

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Introduction

1. Purpose

- 1.1 Connexus is committed to ensuring that vulnerable customers, or customers with disabilities are not disadvantaged in accessing its services. To this end we will make reasonable adjustments for people with a vulnerability or disability.
- 1.2 This policy does not seek to explain how we will approach every situation, it is intended as a general statement of our policy and:
 - Confirms our commitment to improving accessibility for our customers
 - Sets out some of the basic principles of our commitment to provide reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities.
 - Sets out the factors that we will consider in dealing with requests for reasonable adjustments.
- 1.3 Many of the arrangements that we offer as part of this policy can also be made available for those who do not have a vulnerability or disability upon request. For example, provision of documents in larger font than our usual font.
- 1.4 Scope: The policy applies to the customers and service users whole of the Group. This means Connexus Homes Limited, (ultimate parent) and all of its subsidiaries.

2. Problem to Solve

- 2.1 The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) provides a legislative framework to protect the rights of individuals and to advance equality of opportunity for all. As a provider of services to the public Connexus commits to comply with the provisions for public bodies under the Act.
- 2.2 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 people with disabilities at a substantial disadvantage in relation to a relevant matter in comparison with persons who are not disabled.
 - Where a physical feature puts a people with disabilities at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with persons who are not disabled.
 - Where a people with disabilities would, but for the provision of an auxiliary aid, be put at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with persons who are not disabled.
- 2.3 Substantial disadvantage is defined in the Equality Act 2010 s.212(1) as 'more than minor or trivial'.

2.4 To make an adjustment means to make a physical change to premises* or to change work practices to avoid, or, to correct the disadvantage. Examples of this include:

- provision of property aids and adaptations*
- provision of information in appropriate alternative formats (e.g., large print, braille, coloured paper etc.)
- extension of time limits (where it is lawful to do so or whereby no risk or concern of harm to others or serious detriment to the property exist)
- use of email or telephone in preference to hard copy letters
- communication through an authorised representative or intermediary
- rest or comfort breaks in meetings

*Our approach to changes to premises is covered under our Adaptations Policy.

3. Method/s

3.1 We will let people know that we can provide reasonable adjustments for example in the following ways:

- By including a paragraph in written communications (e.g. acknowledgement letters)
- By asking whether a reasonable adjustment might be required over the telephone or during face-to-face meetings/appointments
- By including a note on our published documents indicating that we can provide a document in an alternative format upon request
- By publishing our policy on our website

3.2 There is no prescribed list of reasonable adjustments; the adjustment will depend on the individual's needs. We will discuss the requirements with the person concerned and seek to reach agreement on what may be reasonable in the circumstances. We will not make assumptions about whether a person with a vulnerability or disability requires any reasonable adjustments or about what those adjustments should be.

3.3 In most 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 or seek advice from expert disability organisations that can assist with signposting and other forms of support.

3.4 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 person with a disability
- The practicality of us making the adjustments
- The availability (and ongoing availability) of our resources
- Any disruption to the service that making the adjustment may cause

3.5 For clarity, it may not be possible for us to provide additional time to customers if there are legislative deadlines to meet, such as extending timeframes for servicing

appointments, however colleagues are encouraged to commence the process earlier to support customers where this applies.

4. Measurement

- 4.1 We will record the reasonable adjustments that have been requested and made in line with the Reasonable Adjustments Procedure, this will allow us to review the services we provide and help us identify whether there are any wider steps that we can take to improve our services.
- 4.2 Fairness and accessibility is a key aim of this policy, whilst ensuring we meet our obligations under the Equality Act. All requests for reasonable adjustments from customers will be actioned and responded to, with a tailored solution put into place as necessary. If someone is dissatisfied with the arrangements we have made, we will respond in accordance with our complaints policy.
- 4.3 All colleagues have the responsibility to read, understand and implement this policy.
- 4.4 All contractors, consultants and partner organisations are responsible for operating in accordance with this policy when delivering services on behalf of Connexus. As such, Connexus will make contractors, consultants and partner organisations aware of any reasonable adjustment that is in place for any customer where they are required to deliver a service.