

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION – CIVIL RIGHTS AND TITLE IX
POLICY NUMBER – CR 3.00
POLICY TITLE – ACCESS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES
SCOPE OF POLICY – USC UPSTATE
DATE OF REVISION – MAY 1, 2026
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER – CIVIL RIGHTS AND TITLE IX COORDINATOR
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE – OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS AND TITLE IX

Purpose

The University of South Carolina is committed to providing an inclusive and accessible university environment for all qualified individuals with disabilities.

Definitions

Disability: A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of an individual.

Fundamental Alteration: A change to a university program, service, or activity that significantly changes the essential nature of the program, service, or activity (e.g., employment, course design, degree requirements).

Interactive Process: A collaborative exchange that allows the individual and the university to provide input and feedback in determining a reasonable accommodation.

Major Life Activity: A function that most people in the general population can perform with little or no difficulty. A function includes but is not limited to: caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, sitting, standing, lifting, reaching, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working, eating, sleeping, bending, reading, concentrating, thinking, and communicating, as well as the normal operations of major bodily systems including but not limited to: functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions.

Plain Language Accommodation Request: Indicates a program-related need associated with a medical condition or disability. Someone does not need to use specific language or the word “accommodation” to indicate this need.

Education Program or Activity: Locations, events, or circumstances over which the university exercises substantial control.

Qualified Individual with a Disability: An individual with a disability (student, employee, or any other program participant) who, with or without a reasonable accommodation, meets the eligibility requirements for program participation.

Employee: Any person having an employment relationship with the university. Employees might be university officers, faculty, staff, student-employees, and other individuals employed by the university regardless of classification, including all full-time, part-time, temporary, research grant, time limited and contract employees.

Reasonable Accommodation: A modification to policy, practice, the environment, or the provision of an auxiliary aid and service that mitigates the impact of the disability and does not cause a fundamental alteration.

Substantially Limits: An impairment that restricts the duration, manner, or condition under which an individual can perform a particular major life activity as compared to the ability of the typical person in the general population to perform the same major life activity. In these instances, the following factors will be considered: (1) the nature and severity of the impairment; (2) the duration or expected duration of the impairment; (3) the permanent or long-term impact resulting from the impairment.

Undue Hardship: Any accommodation that is substantial, disruptive, or would be a significant cost to the university, or fundamentally alter the nature or operation of the program.

Policy Statement

To advance the university's commitment to providing an inclusive and accessible environment for qualified individuals with disabilities, this policy and related procedures will ensure that people with disabilities are afforded reasonable accommodations when requested. This promotes an environment where qualified individuals have full and equal access to the university's education programs and activities and are not subject to discrimination based on their disability. This policy applies to all members of the University of South Carolina- Upstate community, including students, faculty, staff and third parties such as affiliates, volunteers, vendors, contractors, consultants, guests, alumni, applicants for admission or employment, or other individuals. This policy will be interpreted in compliance with applicable law and exceptions provided by applicable law.

A. This policy applies to all programs offered by the university, including:

1. All employment practices and actions through the entire employee life cycle. This includes, but is not limited to, recruitment, application, hiring, training, disciplinary actions, advancement, transfer and reassignment, employment status, and employees engaged in telecommuting through the university.
2. All educational deliveries and practices. This includes but is not limited to recruitment, application, examination and testing, educational status, and students engaged in online education through the university.

3. All health care services and the facilities where such services are provided.
 4. All programs and activities over which the university exercises substantial control, which may occur outside of the classroom, campus, or office environment but are a vital part of the university experience (e.g., education abroad, intern/practical experiences, and sponsored events).
 5. All public access to university programs and other offerings. This includes, but is not limited to, athletic events, parking, conferences, and any other event or service open to the public.
 6. All facilities and property owned, operated by, or rented by the university.
 7. All digital information and services provided by the university, including delivery platforms.
- B. Administration: Academic- or administrative-level policies, guidelines, procedures, and practices must comply with this policy.
- C. Rights and Responsibilities
1. Qualified individuals with disabilities have the right to an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from all programs offered by the university. Individuals who choose to exercise these rights:
 - a. Are protected under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) when they meet any of the following eligibility criteria:
 - i. Have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities;
 - ii. Have a history or record of such an impairment; or
 - iii. Is perceived by others of having such an impairment.
 - b. Have a right to reasonable accommodations.
 - c. Are responsible for initiating the accommodation process in a timely fashion by identifying themselves as needing reasonable modifications to a university environment, policy, or practice and/or needing auxiliary aids and services.
 - d. Are responsible for providing appropriate documentation that confirms a disability and a description of the relevant impacts of that disability when registering with the Disability Service Office or Human Resources.
 - e. Are expected to actively engage in the interactive process to determine reasonable accommodations in a timely fashion.

- f. Have the same obligation as all program participants to meet and maintain the institution's performance standards, academic and technical standards, and codes of conduct.
 - g. Have a right to be evaluated based on their ability, not their disability.
 - h. Have the right to be informed of procedures for appealing a university decision through internal and appropriate external channels.
2. The university has a responsibility to ensure access to all its programs while maintaining the standards that are fundamental and essential to programs. In meeting these obligations, the university:
 - a. Will inform its program participants about the availability of accommodations.
 - b. May select between equally effective methods of accommodating an individual with a disability.
 - c. Will identify and establish the abilities, skills, and knowledge necessary for entrance and ongoing participation in its programs and evaluate applicants and participants on those bases.
 - d. Will make reasonable modifications to the environment, policy, or practice and/or provide auxiliary aids and services in a timely fashion when an individual's program participation is negatively impacted by their disability in a substantial way.
 - e. May refuse a requested accommodation that fundamentally alters an essential element or program requirement (e.g., academic and technical standards or job responsibilities) or creates an undue hardship as determined by the ADA Coordinator's office or designated office.
 - f. Will inform the individual of the availability of internal and external appeals processes as applicable.
3. All plain language accommodation requests must be referred to the appropriate designated offices (see Procedure A3). Any individual that provides supervision, instruction, human resources support, or controls a program is responsible for making these referrals.
4. Only the designated offices (see Procedure A3) may request and review documentation in support of accommodation requests and may refuse a request that is unsupported by documentation. The designated offices may also seek permission from the requestor to interact directly with a healthcare provider to determine what accommodations may be reasonable and likely to be effective.

D. Privacy

1. The university recognizes the importance of privacy. Information received in connection with establishing and implementing reasonable accommodations, reporting, and resolutions will be treated as private and will only involve individuals whom the university determines are necessary to ensure reasonable accommodations, to provide assistance and resources to parties, to perform other appropriate university functions, or in accordance with applicable law.
2. The university will maintain any personal medical information provided as private, to the extent that maintaining such privacy would not impair the ability of the university to provide the accommodations.
3. All individuals involved in the process should observe the same standard of discretion and respect for everyone involved in the process.

Procedures

A. Reasonable Accommodations

1. All accommodations will be evaluated in accordance with the criteria established and defined by state and federal laws including the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, using an interactive process.
2. Reasonable accommodations will be assessed by the issuing designated office at least annually.
3. The Office for Civil Rights & Title IX provides oversight and review of the accommodation review process. Reasonable accommodations are initially determined through the interactive process by the designated office in collaboration with the individual with a disability and relevant unit or program. The primary designated offices include:
 - a. For student academic accommodation requests, contact [Student Disability Services](#):
 - i. Phone: 864-503-5199
 - ii. Email: dsinfo@uscupstate.edu
 - iii. Website: <https://uscupstate.edu/student-experience/student-services-resources/disability-services/accomodations/>
 - b. For students wishing to receive housing accommodations, they will need to have:
 - i. Create a profile using the Disability Services Portal located on their website [Disability Services - USC Upstate](#)

- ii. [Special Housing Request Form](#) completed and uploaded to Disability Services Portal.
 - c. For interview, talent acquisition, and all employee accommodation requests, contact [Human Resources](#):
 - i. Phone: 864-503-5322
 - ii. Email: hr@uscupstate.edu
 - d. Reporting Digital Accessibility Issues:
 - i. [Barrier Report](#)
 - ii. Internal Digital Accessibility Form- [Intranet Change Request and Accessibility Report Form](#)
 - iii. Phone: Phone: 864-503-7193
 - e. For facilities, parking, athletic programs and all other concerns:
 - i. Civil Rights and Title IX Coordinator at titleix@uscupstate.edu
 - ii. Complete a [Barrier Report](#)
 - iii. Phone: 864-503-7193

4. Appeals

- a. If an individual requesting an accommodation would like to appeal an accommodation decision determined by a designated office as outlined in the policy, they may appeal to the ADA Coordinator or designee in the Office of Civil Rights & Title IX.
- b. The appeal must be submitted in writing (by email or hard copy) and include the accommodation request being appealed, documentation of the reason for the accommodation, and why the accommodation response creates a denial of program benefit.
- c. The decision of the ADA Coordinator or designee is final.

B. Reporting

1. **Mandatory Reporting:** All University employees are required to report incidents of prohibited conduct, including disability discrimination and harassment, to the Office of Civil Rights & Title IX, which is the office with the authority to institute corrective measures on behalf of the university. Additional Information on how to report, exceptions to the reporting requirements, and the accompanying procedures can be found in [CR 1.00 Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct](#).
2. Reports can be made through one of the following ways:
 - a. Online Reporting Form at: [Maxient Report Form](#)
 - b. Phone: 864-503-7193
 - c. Email: titleix@uscupstate.edu
 - d. Mail or in person: Office of Civil Rights and Title IX, Library, 800 University Way, Spartanburg, SC 29303
3. **Anonymous Reporting:** More information about anonymous reporting options and accompanying procedures can be found in [CR 1.00 Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct](#).

Note: You can dial 11 or 1-800-735-8583 to connect voice, text telephone (TTY) or other device to call persons with or without such disabilities via a Telecommunications Relay Services (TRS) operator.

Related University, State and Federal Policies

[Americans with Disabilities Act](#)

[Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#)

[Office for Civil Rights \(OCR\)](#)

[South Carolina Code of Laws Title 43](#)

[CR 1.00 Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct](#)

[Animals on Campus Policy](#)

History of Revisions

May 1, 2026 – New Policy approved by Executive Leadership Team