

## Office of Specialized Services Housing Accommodation Request Policy

### Introduction:

Ramapo College has demonstrated its strong commitment to providing equal access to all students since the College's inception in 1969. This commitment extends to all areas of the campus and college experiences including housing. The College's goal is the total integration of qualified students with disabilities into the college community.

### Residence Life Policies & Deadlines:

Housing application forms and deposit deadlines requested by Residence Life must be submitted in accordance with the policies set by that office. Students requesting a housing accommodation are subject to the same limitations in regard to placement (i.e. credit stipulation for roommate/suitemates) as any other continuing student. Because housing selection options are limited, meeting deadlines set by Residence Life is imperative.

<https://www.ramapo.edu/reslife/>

### Housing Accommodation Request Deadlines:

While a housing accommodation request can be submitted at any time, meeting the deadlines listed below will significantly increase the ability of Residence Life to arrange for an accommodation that has been approved through the OSS Housing Accommodation Request process. Not meeting a deadline reduces the ability of Residence Life to meet an accommodation request, it also reduces their ability to meet a student's preference for residence hall, special living options, and roommates/suitemates.

### Deadlines:

For a student's housing accommodation to be considered timely the student must complete the OSS affiliation and request process by the following deadlines:

	<u>Fall</u>	<u>Spring</u>	<u>Summer</u>
Continuing students:	March 1 <sup>st</sup>	November 1 <sup>st</sup>	April 1 <sup>st</sup>
First year students:	June 1 <sup>st</sup>	November 1 <sup>st</sup>	
Transfer students:	June 1 <sup>st</sup>	November 1 <sup>st</sup>	

Students who miss the deposit or accommodation request deadline will be placed on a list for placement over the summer or during the room change process. Placement is always based on availability. Attempts will still be made to meet the student's accommodation needs, however, arrangements may not be able to be made until just before the start of the semester or may have to wait until the official room change process at the start of the semester. In some cases,

a late request will result in Residence Life's inability to meet an approved accommodation request for the semester in which it was originally requested.

#### Office of Specialized Services Affiliation:

All students requesting a housing accommodation based on a disability must affiliate with the OSS.

Students must initiate contact with OSS in order to receive services or to arrange appropriate accommodations and/or academic adjustments.

Comprehensive documentation of a disability from a licensed physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, social worker, or certified learning disabilities specialist must be submitted in order to establish eligibility and to determine which accommodations and/or adjustments are appropriate for each student.

Students requesting housing accommodations because of a disability must submit the following OSS forms:

- Completed 'Request For Disability Support' forms
- Student Housing Accommodation Request Form
- Provider Housing Accommodation Request Form
- Documentation forms corresponding to your documented disability can be found at: <https://www.ramapo.edu/oss/documentation-requirements/>

**Note:** This form is only needed if academic accommodations are being requested in addition to housing.

#### Emotional Support Animal

Students requesting permission to have an emotional support animal on campus must have their documentation completed by a mental health professional. The mental health professional must also complete the Animal Documentation Form in addition to the forms requested above. These forms can be requested by contacting the main OSS office at 201-684-

7514, [oss@ramapo.edu](mailto:oss@ramapo.edu) or in person in C – 205. For more information, please see the Emotional Support Animal policy found on the OSS web page (<https://www.ramapo.edu/oss/>)

**Submitting a request for a disability related housing accommodation does not necessarily guarantee a specific accommodation or location. Student requests for a housing accommodation will not be reviewed until all supporting documents are received.**

#### Dietary Restrictions/Allergies:

Students supplying documentation requesting removal from the meal plan for disability related reasons should anticipate living in a residence with a kitchen. Residence Halls with kitchens are limited. Please meet the deadlines outlined above to ensure your needs are met.

#### Physical Accessibility:

Accessible units are available in each of the residential areas on campus. Students approved for this type of housing accommodation may be assisted by the OSS Independent Living Counselor who will guide them in determining which of the available housing options will best meet their needs.

#### Documentation Review Process:

Requests for disability related housing accommodations are often reviewed by a committee consisting of members of the Ramapo community. Committee members include a representative from OSS, Residence Life, Health Services and Counseling Services. Housing accommodations are provided based on availability. Students can expect a decision about their request within twenty one (21) business days of OSS receiving all requested documents.

If the information provided does not contain sufficient information for OSS and/or the Housing Accommodation Request Committee to determine whether an accommodation is necessary, OSS will inform the individual in writing that more information is needed and may request to speak directly with the professional supplying that information.

#### Denial of an Accommodation Request:

OSS and/or the Housing Accommodation Request Committee may deny a requested accommodation if it is unreasonable or insufficiently documented. OSS together with the Housing Accommodation Request Committee shall determine if the requested accommodation is reasonable.

An accommodation may be deemed unreasonable if: 1) the student's documented condition does not rise to the level of a disability; 2) documentation does not provide adequate evidence

to support the request; 3) imposes an undue financial and or administrative burden on the college; 4) fundamentally alters college housing policy; 5) poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others or would cause substantial property damage to the property of others, including college property. Regarding a request for an emotional support animal, if applicable the College may also inquire as to the age, size/breed of an animal in order to determine the reasonableness of this accommodation.

#### Appeals:

If a request for a housing accommodation is found to be unsupported or unreasonable, OSS will contact the individual, in writing, within twenty one (21) business days and engage in an interactive process with the student to determine if there are alternative accommodations that might effectively meet the individual's disability-related needs. If the student is unwilling to accept any alternative accommodation offered by the College or there are no alternative accommodations available, OSS will provide written notification to the student of the denial, the reasons for the denial, the right to appeal the decision, and the procedures for the appeals process. The notification shall be in writing and made within twenty one (21) business days of the notification from the student of his/her unwillingness to accept any of the alternative accommodations offered or the determination that there are no alternatives accommodations available. All appeals are reviewed by the ADA Compliance Officer.

Appeals must state a specific reason(s) for why the owner believes the request should be reconsidered. The ADA Compliance Officer may consider records and information relevant to the owner's appeal, whether submitted by the owner or obtained from any College office or staff person, including OSS and the Public Safety Office. A decision on emotional support animal appeals shall be issued by the ADA Compliance Officer in writing and shall be the final administrative action of the College.