



TAYLOR UNIVERSITY HOUSING ACCOMMODATION REQUEST POLICY

Taylor University Academic Enrichment Center · Zondervan Library

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HOUSING REQUESTS BASED ON MEDICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, AND DISABILITY RELATED NEEDS

Taylor University is a fully residential campus in which students are required to live on campus. As stated in the Student Handbook,

Taylor is a residential campus by design; therefore, all single undergraduate students must live in University owned housing or live in the home of their parents/legal guardian commuting from a distance no greater than 50 miles. Married students and/or students over the age of 25 may choose to live off campus.

The learning environment and residential living are central to Taylor University. It should be noted that living within the community and learning to share space and be considerate of others is part of that learning experience. In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disability Act (ADA), individuals with disabilities are guaranteed certain protections and rights of equal access to educational programs and services. Accommodations are made in relation to a documented disability.

We evaluate requests for exceptions to the Taylor University Housing Policy carefully. The information requested on the Disability Verification Form is to document a disability, determine the severity, and to help determine reasonable accommodations for living on campus. To aid this process, requests (*submitted yearly*) should include:

- 1)** Documentation, as appropriate, of the condition or need that is the basis of the request;
- 2)** A clear description of the desired housing accommodation;
- 3)** An explanation of how the request relates to the impact of the condition;
- 4)** An indication of the level of need for the recommended configuration (and the consequences of not receiving);
- 5)** Possible alternatives if the recommended configuration is not possible.

Students should plan to submit a Disability Verification Form to the Academic Enrichment Center. Written letters from qualified professionals are acceptable as well, assuming they contain the relevant information mentioned above.

To evaluate requests based on medical, psychological or disability-related conditions accurately and equitably, Taylor University will need sufficient information to understand how the requested housing assignment relates to the current impact of the condition. For those with disability-related conditions, such documentation generally consists of an evaluation by an appropriate professional providing treatment for the condition.

Documentation supporting a request will be reviewed by the Coordinator of Accessibility and Disability Resources, and all documentation will be held by the Academic Enrichment Center. All Information is considered confidential.

EVALUATION OF HOUSING REQUESTS

Housing assignments and the residential learning environment are integral parts of Taylor University programs. The University will evaluate all requests for need-based (disability-related) housing assignments carefully. Below is a summary of the factors we consider when evaluating housing requests. The answers to any/all of these questions may be important in our decision-making. Our goal is to provide access for all students to a safe and supportive living environment as participants in our established residence life program.

SEVERITY OF THE CONDITION

1. Does the impact of the condition substantially impact a major life function (qualify as a disability)?
2. Is impact of the condition life threatening if the request is not met?
3. Is there a negative health impact that may be permanent if the request is not met?
4. Is the request an integral component of a treatment plan for the condition in question?
5. Does the request center on room adaptations necessary for safe and independent occupancy in the residence hall?
6. What is the likely impact on academic performance if the request is not met?
7. What is the likely impact on social development if the request is not met?
8. What is the likely impact on the student's level of comfort if the request is not met?

TIMING OF THE REQUEST

1. Was the request made with initial housing request?
2. Was the request made before the deadline for housing requests for the semester in question?
3. Was the request made as soon as possible after identifying the need? (Based on date of diagnosis, receipt of housing assignment, change in status, etc.)

FEASIBILITY & AVAILABILITY

1. Is space available that meets the student's needs?
2. Can space be adapted to provide the requested configuration without creating a safety hazard (electrical load, emergency egress, etc.)?
3. Are there other effective methods or housing configurations that would achieve similar benefits as the requested configuration?
4. How does meeting this request impact housing commitments to other students?

Housing Accommodation Request Process:

Step 1 – Student submits appropriate documentation to the Academic Enrichment Center, care of the Coordinator of Accessibility and Disability Resources. This documentation should be submitted by March 1st of the academic year prior to when the request is desired.

Documentation submitted after this deadline will be accepted, but requested accommodations may not be available.

Step 2- The Coordinator of Accessibility and Disability Resources will review the documentation submitted using the above criteria and communicate to the student the approval or denial of their Housing Accommodation Request. If additional information is needed, the Coordinator of Accessibility and Disability Resources may request this from the student or ask to meet with the student for an interview.

Step 3 – The Coordinator of Accessibility and Disability Resources will communicate the approved accommodation to the Taylor University Housing Coordinator who will work with the student to find an appropriate accommodation that meets the approved request.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Is there a deadline for submitting housing accommodation requests?

In order to be able to accommodate students in the most beneficial way, we ask that you submit your medical documentation and request by the following timeline. Requests received after these dates may not be able to be fulfilled and will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

March 1st – Returning Students

June 1st – New Students

Why do you require Disability Verification Forms for Housing Accommodation Requests each year?

Many times disability documentation is only submitted once during a student's time at Taylor. However, due to changing availability of accommodations each year and the nature of housing accommodation requests, we ask that students submit a new documentation each spring as they apply for housing for the next year.

What types of accommodations are available?

Appropriate accommodations are determined by the functional limitations of an individual's diagnosis. Medical providers should make recommendations that align with mitigating these disability related functional limitations. At times this has included requests for air conditioning, single rooms, first floor housing, and/or off campus housing. Providers should recommend what they believe is appropriate being sure to clearly explain why. This recommendation should utilize the Disability Verification Form in order to provide clear information; however, a letter on letterhead with clear information may also be submitted. The University will work with the student through an interactive process to determine the best available option if a disability related accommodation is determined to be appropriate.

Can I request a single room to allow me to study better?

While each request will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, generally single rooms or off campus housing as an accommodation to allow for better studying are not an appropriate accommodation. While many students choose to study in the Residence Hall, given the communal nature of the Residence Hall there are many other locations across campus that may be more appropriate to study. These spaces include the library and other academic buildings.

Will the recommendations of my medical provider always be followed?

Each housing accommodation request and medical provider recommendation will be handled on a case by case basis and evaluated by the Coordinator of Accessibility and Disability Resources. At times this evaluation may involve an interview and/or additional correspondence to determine the most appropriate and available accommodation. Final decisions on appropriate accommodations will be determined by the Coordinator of Accessibility and Disability Resources.

Can I apply for off campus housing through Residence Life and if I do not get approved, apply for a disability related housing accommodation?

It is recommended that if you believe you qualify for a housing accommodation request, you apply for the request in order to seek the housing situation that you believe meets your needs. You may apply for off campus housing through Residence Life and a housing accommodation request, but it is recommended that you apply for each following the application or accommodation request due dates.

Will I be able to select my roommates if I am approved for a housing accommodation?

Granting your request for a disability-related housing assignment may limit your ability to choose your roommates; students without disabilities may be eligible to live in the assigned space only if they earn that option through the existing housing process.

If I am not approved for a housing accommodation request what should I do? Is there an appeals process?

If you would like to appeal an accommodation decision, you should follow the grievance process laid out in the Handbook for Students with Disabilities. This handbook is available through the Academic Enrichment Center or on the Academic Enrichment Center portion of the Taylor University website.

I have a medical condition, but I do not believe it is a disability. Can I be approved for a housing accommodation?

Housing accommodations are designed and intended to ensure equal access to housing and educational opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Each accommodation request will be reviewed and evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Students are welcome to submit the appropriate documentation as outlined in the Housing Accommodation Request Policy.

My provider has recommended an Emotional Support Animal. Do I apply for this using the housing accommodation process?

There is a separate Emotional Support Animal request process. Please contact the Coordinator of Accessibility and Disability Resources for more information.