

ARTICLE 12: REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

A. Purpose

To outline the steps that will be taken to allow qualified employees who are disabled or become disabled to perform the essential functions of their position. This Article provides an overview of the interactive process, accommodations for known medical disabilities, and employee and management responsibilities as related to reasonable accommodation.

B. Procedure

The employer provides reasonable accommodations, with the goal of allowing qualified employees who are disabled or become disabled to perform the essential functions of their position. The interactive process will be used to determine what, if any, reasonable accommodation will be made.

If the employer becomes aware of the need for an accommodation, the employer shall analyze and identify the essential functions of the employee's position to determine if a reasonable accommodation can be made. The employer provides employees with reasonable accommodations, in accordance with applicable State and Federal law. The Return to Work Program assists employees and supervisors in accommodating employees in need of assistance.

1. The Interactive Process

The interactive process is a dialogue between the employee and appropriate representatives of the employer about viable options for reasonably accommodating the employee's disability. Options may include but are not limited to: a modified work schedule, a leave of absence, reassignment, modified equipment, assistive devices, modification of existing facilities, and restructuring of the job. Both the employer and the employee are expected to participate in the interactive process.

During the interactive process, the employer considers information related to the essential functions of the job, functional limitations, possible accommodations, and the reasonableness of possible accommodations. This information will be used by the employer to determine what, if any, reasonable accommodation(s) can be made.

In the unusual situation that the employee cannot be reasonably accommodated, the employee will be referred to the Benefits group for counseling regarding remaining sick leave and group insurance benefits, retirement options, and the possibility of medical separation.