



Baldwin Wallace University Disability Services for Students Accessible Housing Policy

Baldwin Wallace University recognizes the importance of providing reasonable accommodations in its housing policies and practices where necessary for individuals with disabilities to fully participate in the University housing program. This policy explains the specific requirements and guidelines that govern requests for reasonable accommodation in University housing. **Baldwin Wallace University reserves the right to amend this policy at any time as circumstances require.**

Section I. Introduction and Background

The learning environment and residential living are central to the BW experience, particularly for students who are required to live in residence halls. It is important to note that living within the BW community, sharing space and being considerate of others is part of the learning experience. Requests for single rooms (as an accommodation) based solely on a desire to have a "quiet, undisturbed place to study" will not be granted.

Because of the shared facilities, resources and number of people living under one roof, it is not logical to assume that having a private room would provide for such quiet, distraction-free space to any appreciable degree beyond living in a standard double room.

Section II. Office Responsible for Accessible Housing Decisions

Disability Services for Students (DSS) is responsible for evaluating whether to grant or deny requests for reasonable accommodation in University housing. Individuals with a disability who reside or intend to reside in University housing who believe they need a reasonable accommodation must contact Disability Services or follow the procedures below.

Section III. Procedure for Requesting Reasonable Accommodation in University Housing (Excludes Requests for Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals)

The following requirements govern requests for reasonable accommodation in University housing policies and practices:

1. Requesting a Housing Accommodation
 - a. An individual with a disability must complete the Online Student Application to request a reasonable accommodation. Please be sure to select the needed housing configuration or accommodations under "accessible housing."

- b. DSS will accept and consider requests for reasonable accommodation in University housing at any time. The student requesting a housing accommodation should complete the application and provide documentation as soon as practicably possible before moving into University housing. However, if the request for accommodation is made fewer than sixty (60) days before the individual intends to move into University housing, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to meet the individual's accommodation needs during the first semester or term of occupancy. As such, those requests will be held over until the following term, if appropriate.
 - c. If the need for accommodation arises with an individual resides in University housing, he/she should contact DSS and complete the Online Student Application as soon as practically possible. We cannot guarantee that we will be able to meet the accommodation needs during the semester or term in which the request made. As such, those requests will be held over until the following term, if appropriate.
2. Accessible Housing Deadlines
- a. New and transfer students: May 1 (for fall), November 1 (for spring) and March 15 (for summer).
 - b. Returning students (or those students that received accessible housing the previous academic year or are registered with DSS) must complete and submit an Accessible Housing Application and provide updated documentation, as appropriate. Please visit the DSS portal page in (my.bw.edu) for the application. The application deadlines for returning students are as follows: February 1 (for fall); November 1 (for spring) and March 15 (for summer).
3. Accessible Housing Documentation
- DSS requires current documentation of the disability and the disability-related need for any specific housing accommodation(s) being requested to evaluate if the reasonable accommodation is necessary to provide the individual with an equal opportunity to use University housing. The student requesting an accommodation must cooperate with DSS promptly, providing all information needed to determine whether the requested accommodation is necessary. Submission of documentation does not guarantee approval of the requested accommodation(s). The cost of the documentation is the responsibility of the student.
- A. Obvious Disability
If the disability is obvious, but the need for accommodation is not obvious, the University may require the individual may designate an appropriate third party professional who can verify that the requested accommodation is necessary.

B. Non-Obvious Disability Necessity

1. If the disability is obvious, but the need for accommodation is not obvious, the University may require that the individual designate an appropriate third party professional who can verify that the requested accommodation is necessary.
2. If the disability and necessity for the accommodation are not obvious, DSS will require the individual to complete the appropriate verification form and designate an appropriate third party professional who can verify that the individual has a disability and that the requested accommodation is necessary.

C. Appropriate Third Party Professional

An appropriate third party professional is someone familiar with the individual's disability and the necessity for the requested accommodation. This person must be duly licensed or an otherwise properly credentialed professional who has undergone appropriate and comprehensive training, has relevant experience, and has no personal relationship with the individual. A good match between the credentials of the individual making the diagnosis and the condition is required (e.g., an orthopedic limitation might be documented by an orthopedist or by a physician, but not a licensed psychologist).

If the appropriate third party professional returns the verification form without sufficient information for Disability Services for Students to determine whether an accommodation is necessary, DSS will inform the student in writing of the verification's insufficiency and may request additional information, including speaking directly with the individual supplying the third-party verification.

D. Current & Comprehensive Documentation

To evaluate requests based on medical, psychological or disability related conditions accurately and equitably, Baldwin Wallace University will need current and comprehensive documentation. Documentation consists of an evaluation by an appropriate professional that explains the current impact of the condition on the request.

1. Submission of documentation does not guarantee approval of the requested accommodations.
2. The cost of the documentation is the responsibility of the student. Accessible housing requests are evaluated carefully. To aid this process, corresponding documentation must include:
 - i. Documentation of the condition or need that is the basis of the request;
 - ii. A clear description of the desired housing configuration;
 - iii. An explanation of how the request explains the impact of the condition;

- iv. An indication of the level of need for the recommended configuration (and the consequences of not receiving); and
 - v. Possible alternatives if the recommended configuration is not possible.
 3. Disability Services for Students requires current and comprehensive documentation to determine appropriate services and accommodations. The general guidelines listed below are developed to assist students in working with your treating and diagnosing healthcare professional(s) to prepare the required information to evaluate your request, eligibility and need for academic accommodations. These seven elements are from the Association on Higher Education and Disability, or AHEAD. For a complete description of the General Documentation Guidelines, please visit our website: www.bw.edu/DisabilityServices. Documentation MUST include the following:
 - i. Credentials of the evaluator(s).
 - ii. A diagnostic statement identifying the disability.
 - iii. A description of the diagnostic methodology used.
 - iv. A description of the current functional limitations.
 - v. A description of the expected progression or stability of the disability
 - vi. A description of current and past accommodations, services and medications.
 - vii. A recommendation for accommodations, adaptive devices, assistive services, compensatory strategies, and collateral support services.

Please have your healthcare provider or diagnostician complete the proper verification form based on your documented disability. Verification forms are located on our website (included above) and can be sent to our confidential fax (440.826.3832) or emailed to disability@bw.edu.

4. Accessible Housing Determination of Reasonableness

DSS may deny the requested accommodation if it is unreasonable. An accommodation may be unreasonable if:

- a. It poses an undue financial or administrative burden;
- b. It fundamentally alters University housing policies;
- c. It poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others or would cause substantial property damage to the property of others, including University property; and
- d. It is otherwise unreasonable to the operation of the University.

5. Accessible Housing Approvals

If DSS determines that a requested accommodation is unnecessary and/or is unreasonable, it will contact the student in writing (via BW email address) within seven (7) days of its determination. Instructions are in the email, and it is the

students' responsibility to follow-up and complete the steps within the given timeframe.

6. Accessible Housing Denial & Appeal

If Disability Services for Students determines that a requested accommodation is unnecessary and/or is unreasonable, it will contact the student in writing (BW email address) within seven (7) business days of its determination. The students can choose to provide new and supporting documentation for reconsideration.

- a. If DSS determines a requested accommodation is necessary but unreasonable, it will 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.
- b. If the individual is unwilling to accept any alternative accommodation offered by DSS or there are no alternative accommodations available, DSS will provide a verbal explanation and written notification to the student of the denial, the reasons for the denial and information on the right to grieve the decision through the grievance procedure. The notification shall be in writing and made within seven (7) 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 alternative accommodations available.
- c. Please click this link for more information about the Grievance Procedure: <https://www.bw.edu/about/offices/disability-services/>

7. Confidentiality & Recordkeeping

In processing requests for reasonable accommodations, DSS will take all steps required by federal, state and local law to protect the confidentiality of any information or documentation disclosed in connection with the requests.

Such measures may include limiting access to such information to individuals specifically designated to determine and implement requests for reasonable accommodations. Disclosure of information will be made only to the extent necessary to determine whether to grant the request, determine if the request is unreasonable and implement any request granted. All information including the written request and accompanying documentation is in a secure area to which only those designated individuals have access, except as otherwise required by law.

8. Non-retaliation Provision

BW will not retaliate against any individual because that individual has requested or received a reasonable accommodation in University housing.

Section IV. Air Conditioner Requests

Disability Services does not approve requests for air conditioners. Air-conditioning is available in the following residence halls: 21 Beech, Carmel, Ernsthausen, Findley,

Harding, and Davidson Commons.

The Office of Residential Life processes requests for air conditioners. Please click this link for more information: [medical air-conditioning in non-air-conditioned buildings](#).