



## Reasonable Accommodation FAQs

Contra Costa County provides reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act and Amendments Act (ADA) and the California Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA). Part of our process to ensure that we make appropriate reasonable accommodations is to engage in the interactive process with an employee who is unable to perform the essential job functions of their position due to reasons for which reasonable accommodation may be considered.

### What is the Interactive Process?

The interactive process is the informal dialogues with the employee and Contra Costa County about the essential job functions of the position held, and if any reasonable accommodations are indicated to enable the employee to successfully perform the duties of their position. The interactive process includes both the employer and the employee participation. More information available at [Contra Costa County Administrative Bulletin 427.1 Reasonable Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities](#) and [ADA & FEHA Reasonable Accommodations](#).

### What is a Reasonable Accommodation?

A reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to a job, the work environment, or the way things usually are done that will enable a qualified individual to meet the expectations of the position and perform the essential job functions of the position.

Accommodations may include consideration of ergonomic equipment, modifying or changing schedules, acquiring or modifying existing equipment, leave of absence, or reassignment to a vacant position for which the employee is qualified.

An accommodation must be effective in supporting the employee's performance of the essential job functions to be considered reasonable. The employer may select an accommodation from several effective options if the accommodation removes the workplace barrier.

Leave as a Reasonable Accommodation requires that the leave support the employee with recovery and enables the employee to be released to work following the period of leave, with or without restrictions.

### What is NOT a Reasonable Accommodation?

Reasonable accommodation does not require removing essential job functions or creating a new job as an accommodation; it does not alter the fundamental purpose of a position; and is not an indefinite leave of absence. Accommodations must not create an undue hardship or present a direct threat to the health and safety of the employee or others.

### What is Undue Hardship?

Undue hardship is based on the impact of the potential accommodation on the department, to include:

- How is our ability to meet departmental goals and to serve the public affected?
- Is this a highly specialized job, perhaps requiring certifications or training unique to the position?
- Would an essential function be eliminated?
- Does the potential accommodation incur significant cost (other employees must work overtime, or temporary employees must be hired)? Are there a limited number of employees able to do this job?
- When considering accommodation leave, is there a Return to Work (RTW) intention and expectation?