



Reasonable Adjustments Policy

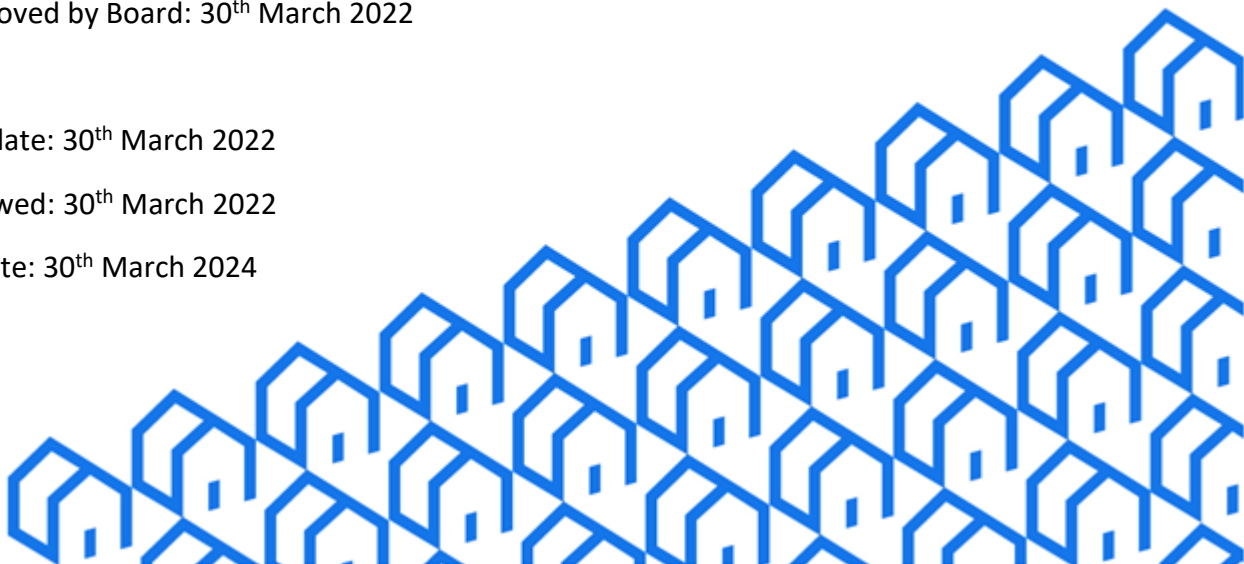
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Introduction

Empower is committed to ensuring that disabled people are not disadvantaged in accessing our services or living in our homes. We will make reasonable adjustments for disabled people.

As a specialist housing provider for people with disabilities, making reasonable adjustments is integral to all that we do and is demonstrated in our values:-

- Understanding the needs and complexity of independent living with support
- Asking your opinion and involving you in the decision making process to enable choice
- Ensuring our staff are trained to the highest standard with our service users as our focus
- Managing operating costs whilst still putting our service users first
- Constantly reviewing and improving practice to ensure a quality service
- Obtaining feedback to review performance levels

This policy confirms our commitment to improving accessibility for everybody that lives in an Empower home or wants a home with Empower. It also sets out some of the principles of our commitment to provide reasonable adjustments for disabled people and what we will take into account in dealing with requests for such adjustments.

Scope/ Legal Requirements

The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) provides a legislative framework to protect the rights of individuals and to advance equality of opportunity for all. As an employer and as a provider of services to the public, Empower commits to comply with the provisions for public bodies under the Act.

Under the Act the legal duty to make reasonable adjustments arises in three circumstances:

- Where there is a provision, criterion or practice which puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage in relation to a relevant matter in comparison with persons who are not disabled

- Where a physical feature puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with persons who are not disabled
- Where a disabled person would, but for the provision of an auxiliary aid, be put at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with persons who are not disabled

Substantial disadvantage is defined in the Equality Act 2010 s.212(1) as 'more than minor or trivial'.

What is a Reasonable Adjustment?

To make an adjustment means to make a physical change to premises or to change work practices (including policies and procedures) to avoid or correct the disadvantage to a person with a disability.

Examples of this include:

- Providing specialist equipment/aid or additional support such as a sign language interpreter
- provision of information in appropriate alternative formats (e.g large print, Braille, coloured paper etc)
- use of email or telephone in preference to hard copy letter
- use of plain English
- communication through a representative

The Equality Act's Code of Practice suggests that, when deciding whether an adjustment is reasonable, the following issues should be considered:

1. The **effectiveness** of an adjustment in preventing or reducing the disadvantage for the disabled person – for example, the adjustment should be designed to fully address the disadvantage it is meant to overcome
2. The **practicability** of the adjustment – for example, it may not be necessary or practical to have a wheelchair accessible toilet on every floor of an office, providing that at least one such toilet is available to wheelchair users

3. The financial and other costs of any adjustment – for example, if a customer requests higher specification of an aid or adaptation than the standard item issued, as long as the standard item will perform the same task, it may be reasonable to refuse on grounds of cost, provided the alternative is suitable
4. The extent of the **disruption** caused – for example, it would not be practical for a staff member to devote all of their time to one customer, as other customers would inevitably suffer
5. The availability of **financial or other assistance** – for example, a grant for funding may be available to supplement any adjustment needed

Making a Request for Reasonable Adjustments

We will always help promote independence and social inclusion and will routinely ask our customers whether they need any additional support, whether this be in person or by including a paragraph in our letters and other communications.

We will always try to meet a customer's request where it is reasonable to do so.

We will publish our Reasonable Adjustment Policy on our website and ensure that by working together with families, Social Services, Care Providers and Commissioners, we raise awareness of this policy and the adjustments we can and will make.

If a customer is unhappy with any decision made in relation to reasonable adjustments, they are able to make a complaint via our Complaints Policy and Procedure.

Related policy, documents, legislation

Equality Act 2010

Complaints Policy and Procedure 2021

Equality and Diversity Policy