



UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTHERN MAINE

Requesting Campus Housing Accommodations

Support for Students with Disabilities
242 Luther Bonney, Portland
780-4706 TTY 7804395

Residential Life
100 Upton Hall, Gorham
780-5240

At the University of Southern Maine campus housing is an independent and highly social environment comprising shared living space, common access bathrooms, and a wide variation in noise level.

For medical reasons, students request a variety of housing accommodations (adjustments to the standard housing arrangements) ranging from dietary restrictions to medical singles. Students requesting housing accommodations must follow the procedure outlined below.

Procedure

A. Student submits a housing contract to Residential Life by contract deadline to secure a place in housing and indicates on the contract a need for a housing accommodation.

B. Student presents letter requesting housing accommodation and the required documentation materials (outlined below) to the Office of Support for Students with Disabilities (OSSD) to be reviewed by the Housing Accommodation Committee. The deadline for submitting these materials for fall occupancy is June 1 to allow time for the Housing Accommodation Committee to consider the request and coordinate placement. Students are required to follow this process each academic year. However, the need for documentation in addition to that first presented is determined on a case by case basis.

C. The Housing Accommodation Committee reviews the completed documentation or notifies the student in writing that additional information is needed. The committee is comprised of a representative from University Counseling, University Health, Residential Life and the Director of OSSD.

D. The Housing Accommodation Committee provides written notification of its decision to the student and Residential Life. A review of a previously approved housing accommodation is required each academic year and updated documentation may be required.

NOTE: Submitting a request does not guarantee an accommodation. Accommodations are approved based on careful review of the documentation provided. This may include evaluation of the student's medical condition and review by the University of Southern Maine medical staff as well as. Roommate preferences cannot be accommodated, as part of a disability/medical needs option.

E. Appeal Process – When a request for a housing accommodation is denied the student may appeal this decision following the Academic Accommodation Appeal Policy and Procedure. Copies are available upon request at the Office of Support for Students with Disabilities or on-

line at www.usm.maine.edu/oassd.

Documentation Guidelines

All requests for housing accommodations require clear documentation of a disabling condition and associated limitations in function or performance specifically related to housing to substantiate the need for the accommodation. **Substantiated need** is constituted by a **severe and chronic disabling condition** well documented by the appropriate, qualified professional. The disabling condition must significantly restrict the student's access to the residential educational environment and/or residential activities unless reasonable accommodations are provided. Approval of requests is determined on a case by case basis.

These guidelines should be shared with the appropriate qualified medical professional to ensure that the materials the student presents meet USM standards for document eligibility. Only information that meets the guidelines will be considered by the Housing Accommodation Committee. Students will receive written notification when additional information is required.

When determining the need for a housing accommodation the question at issue is "will the student be denied equal opportunity to housing if the accommodation is not granted?" The question is not, will the accommodation be beneficial to the student or will the student do better?

1. Student's written request for a housing accommodation.
2. A letter from the student's personal care physician or medical specialist on office letterhead providing the following:
 - a. Presenting diagnosis utilizing diagnostic categorization or classification from the DSM-IV or ICD-9. The diagnosis should indicate primary, secondary, etc. conditions and significant findings specifically relevant to the presenting problems.
 - b. Date the examination/assessment/evaluation was performed for the presenting diagnosis; or, if following the student for an extended time, date of onset of condition and most recent date that demonstrates current functioning level.
 - c. Identify current limitations in function or performance in activities such as mobility, self-care, and housing conditions/arrangements. Is the condition temporary or permanent? How is the requested accommodation necessary to the student's capacity to function in standard residential housing?
 - d. Is/was medication prescribed? If so, does the condition continue to affect the student's functioning in the same way?
 - e. Professional's signature and credential information
3. Student's full name and address.

Direct all questions regarding this process to OSSD.