

STATE OF ILLINOIS)
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COUNTY OF DU PAGE)

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 18TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
DU PAGE COUNTY, ILLINOIS

IN THE MATTER OF POLICY ON ACCESS)
FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES) Administrative Order No. 12-31

WHEREAS, the Illinois Supreme Court has adopted a Policy on Access for Persons with Disabilities: and;

WHEREAS, the Illinois Supreme Court has directed all Circuit Courts to adopt a policy and procedures to ensure reasonable accommodation, auxiliary aids, and services to persons with disabilities who wish to participate in Circuit programs;

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED: that the 18th Judicial Circuit hereby adopts the following Policy on Access for Persons with Disabilities.

I. Introduction

The American with Disabilities Act (ADA), a federal civil rights statute for individuals with disabilities, requires all state and local governmental entities, including the courts, to accommodate the needs of individuals with disabilities to ensure equal access to court activities, programs, and services (programs). The 18th Judicial Circuit (Circuit Court) has adopted the following policy and procedures to ensure reasonable accommodations, auxiliary aids, and services to persons with disabilities who wish to participate in Circuit Court programs.

II. Policy

It is the policy of the Circuit Court to ensure that communications with and accommodations for individuals with disabilities and without disabilities are equally effective, consistent with the requirements of Title II of the ADA. Whenever necessary, the Circuit Court will provide, free of charge, the appropriate auxiliary aids and services to ensure that individuals with disabilities have an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from any Circuit Court program. This policy applies to all members of the public who seek to participate in the Circuit Court's programs.

III. Services and Accommodations

Auxiliary aids and services include a wide range of services and devices that promote effective communication with persons with disabilities. Examples of auxiliary aids and services for individuals with disabilities include qualified sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices, and real-time transcription services. The Circuit Court may also provide any other reasonable accommodation necessary to permit a person with impairments or disabilities to fully and equally participate in or to observe Circuit Court programs.

IV. Notice that Accommodations are Available

The Court Disability Coordinator (CDC) shall provide notice that appropriate accommodations are available to ensure that individuals with disabilities have an equal opportunity to participate in Circuit Court programs by posting notice containing the information on the form attached as Exhibit A in the Office of the Chief Judge and Circuit Court's website. The Court Administrator, or designee, shall serve as the Court Disability Coordinator.

V. Request for Accommodations

The CDC shall provide a request form to individuals who wish to request services or accommodations for persons with disabilities. The request form, attached as Exhibit B, shall be available in the Office of the Chief Judge and Circuit Court's website: www.dupageco.org/Courts/Facilities/2888/

Whenever possible, a request for accommodation or services shall be made fourteen (14) days in advance of the proceeding or program. The request shall be as specific as possible and include a description of the accommodation sought and the date the accommodation is needed. The request shall be mailed to the Court Disability Coordinator, c/o Office of the Chief Judge, 505 N. County Farm Road, Wheaton Illinois 60187 or e-mailed to the following e-mail address: ADA.Courts@dupageco.org. The CDC shall respond in writing, and, where appropriate, in a format accessible to the requestor, within seven (7) days from the date the request was received.

The CDC will give "primary consideration" to the request of individuals with disabilities. "Primary consideration" means that the Circuit Court will honor the choice of the individual, unless it demonstrates that another equally effective accommodation is available, or that the requested accommodation would result in a fundamental alteration of Circuit Court activities or undue financial and administrative burdens.

VI. Grievance Procedure

Individuals have the right to file a grievance when they believe the Circuit Court and its employees have not complied with the provisions of this policy or the request for accommodations procedure. The grievance shall be filed within seven (7) days after the person filing the complaint becomes aware of the action or inaction. A complaint shall be in writing, using the Circuit Court's grievance form, attached as Exhibit C. The grievance shall contain the name and address of the person filing the complaint, and briefly describe the alleged violation. The complaint may be mailed or e-mailed to the attention of the CDC.

Within seven (7) days after receipt of a grievance, the CDC or a designee may meet with the grievant, either in person or by telephone, to discuss the complaint and possible resolutions, if the CDC or designee determines such a meeting would be helpful to a determination. Within seven (7) days after the meeting, or within fourteen (14) days after receipt of the complaint if there is no meeting, the CDC shall respond in writing, and where appropriate, in a format accessible to the grievant.

If the response by the CDC does not resolve the issue to the satisfaction of the grievant, the grievant may within seven (7) days of the date of the CDC's written response, appeal the decision to the Chief Judge at the mail or e-mail address provided under paragraph V. any appeal shall be in writing. Within fourteen (14) days after receipt of the appeal, the Chief Judge will respond in writing to the grievant with a final resolution of the grievance or complaint.

ENTER:

John T. Elsner
Chief Judge

Dated:
Wheaton, Illinois

18th Judicial Circuit Court
Notice of Accommodation Availability

NEED ACCOMMODATION FOR A DISABILITY?

Hearing, Visual, and other assistance may be arranged.

Contact the Court Disability Coordinator, c/o Office of the Chief Judge, 505 N. County Farm Road Wheaton, Illinois 60187, Phone: (630) 407-8901 / TDD: (630) 407-8910 or ADA.Courts@dupageco.org.

It is the policy of the Circuit Court that:

- Communications with individuals with disabilities are as effective as communications with individuals without disabilities;
- Individuals with disabilities have an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from all Circuit Court activities.

If you require accommodations, auxiliary aids, or other services in order to participate in Circuit Court activities, please make your request to the Court Disability Coordinator.

Requests shall be made in writing on forms provided by the Circuit Court.

Copies of the following documents are available upon request in the Office of the Chief Judge, 505 N. County Farm Road, Suite 2015, Wheaton, Illinois 60187, and on the 18th Judicial Circuit Court's web site, www.dupageco.org.

Policy on Access for Persons with Disabilities
Request for Accommodations Form
Grievance Form

EXHIBIT A